

From: Board Secretary
Sent: Monday, June 05, 2017 4:52 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: June 3-5, 2017 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for June 3-5, 2017

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[VTA could bill arenas, stadiums for extra transportation costs](#) KTVU

South Bay sports arenas and stadiums may soon be forced to pay for extra transportation for special events. Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) decided Thursday night to start billing for extra buses and light rail vehicles.

Getting to and from major events could cost venue operators and promoters more money. Money problems between the 49ers and City of Santa Clara aren't new. Add to the mix, a projected balance of \$22-million for VTA's coffers next year and change is imminent.

"We're in a position where we have to re-evaluate and examine everything we can that's costing us extra money," said VTA spokeswoman Tracy Ross.

Just weeks ago, there was a euphoric glow from a U2 rock concert at Levi's Stadium. The show is long over, but the transportation bill remains. VTA officials say some 6,000 concert-goers used the agency's light rail to get to and from Levi's Stadium. The cost: \$61,000, which hasn't been paid by the tenant—the San Francisco 49ers.

"The issue is that extra service costs us a lot of money and so we've got to find other ways to pay for it," said Ross.

On average, she says it costs VTA \$50,000 to \$60,000 per event. A projected deficit won't be helped by shelling out that kind of cash, especially for the 49ers, who have eight regular season home games each year. City council member Teresa O'Neill is floating the idea of additional fees as a solution.

"Have a fee that could either be paid by the tenant or whomever is promoting the event," said O'Neill. "I'm willing to look at doing things like possibly putting a surcharge on the cost of parking."

The 49ers' cite "productive discussions" this week with the parties involved, but declined to talk on camera.

"We don't want to negotiate this in the press," reads a statement from team spokesman Bob Lange.

"We're working behind the scenes for an equitable solution for all of our partners." VTA officials say they're sending a bill over to The Stadium Authority for the U2 costs, but it's unclear if they'll find what they're looking for. The three sides, VTA, 49ers, and Stadium Authority will meet to flesh out this issue in the coming weeks. As for the other venues, Avaya officials say they'll work with the new costs of doing business, and SAP hasn't been officially notified, yet.

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[VTA fares going up](#)

Gary Richards

San Jose Mercury News

The cost of jumping on board light rail or a bus will be going up for most riders in Santa Clara County, and this promises to be just the first hike in an attempt to stem the financial bleeding at the Valley Transportation Authority as ridership continues its steep decline.

The VTA approved raising a one-way ticket from \$2 to \$2.25 as of Jan. 1, and to \$2.50 by the start of 2019. However it lowered the cost for youths and held ticket prices for seniors and the disabled at current levels at Thursday's board meeting.

The agency approved its first fare hike in eight years as it faces a \$20.5 million operating deficit, which it will cover with cash reserves. It hopes the more costly tickets will bring in more than \$17 million over the next three years without a significant drop in passengers.

But there are unknowns looming. A major change in bus and trolley service will kick in over the next year. And the opening of the BART extension to San Jose later this year could mean

thousands of more riders — and higher costs to move them from the Berryessa station to job sites in Silicon Valley.

“There are a lot of challenges coming in the next year,” said VTA board member Glenn Hendricks at Thursday’s meeting, adding that the 12-member board needed to show “discipline, discipline, discipline” to keep costs under control and boost sources of revenue.

The last significant change to VTA fares took effect in 2009, when it increased the base fare from \$1.75 to \$2. But most Bay Area transit agencies have hiked fares, and this summer Caltrain will vote on an increase despite record ridership.

Agencies have seen sales tax income plummet, people opting to drive as gas prices remain stable while others needing a ride are opting for Uber and Lyft.

“Amid this storm of conflicting and uncertain winds, we retain concerns about the sustainability of the proposed service levels,” said chair Jeanne Bruins in a VTA report, adding that there could be an “immediate course correction should these projections prove overly optimistic, to dampen the boom-and-bust cycles of hiring, layoffs, and service cuts of past years.”

Eugene Bradley, the founder of the Silicon Valley transit riders group, said in a memo that a big part of the current problems “is due to loss of ridership from prior VTA service cuts and fare hikes, since 2001.

“When has any VTA fare hike or service reduction ever increased transit ridership?” Bradley asked.

Bus ridership has fallen 10.7 percent over the last year while light rail use slipped 14.5 percent compared to the same period of the prior fiscal year.

Even college students will feel the pinch, seeing their costs for the Eco Pass more than double from \$9 to \$20.

“It would be very dissatisfying to revoke a resource that thousands on campus utilize,” said Sandeep Chandok, a San Jose State University student, noting that driving and parking on campus costs — \$200 a semester — and parking is not guaranteed as garages fill up by 9 a.m.

“For all the money we pay for tuition,” Chandok said, “taking away a consistently used tool that benefits many would be extremely unfair.”

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[BART station at Warm Springs closed this weekend](#)

Gary Richards

San Jose Mercury News

If you were thinking of checking out the new BART station at Warm Springs in Fremont this weekend, think again.

The station at the Santa Clara-Alameda county border will be closed Saturday, June 3, and Sunday, June 4, and another weekend yet to be determined.

This is for what BART calls “critical work” to install and test new software for the Fremont-to-San Jose extension that is due to open late this year.

“We will be running test trains on the track,” said spokesman Taylor Huckaby, “which precludes us from operating passenger trains safely at the same time.”

However, you can still park at Warm Springs and get to the Fremont station via a free bus that BART will provide that will run every 15-20 minutes between the two stations. However, officials suggest that passengers taking advantage of that option should add 20-30 minutes to their expected trip time.

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[Backed by Ford, this NYC startup plans to be the big wheel in Bay Area bike-sharing](#)

Antoinette Siu

San Francisco Business Times

New York City-based startup Motivate is teaming up with Ford Motor Co. to expand its bike-share program across the Bay Area.

Last year, Ford sponsored Motivate to expand its Bay Area Bike Share program from 700 bikes to 7,000 in San Francisco, San Jose and the East Bay. Beginning June 11, the aqua-colored bikes will be replaced by Ford GoBikes in phases, with 3,700 bikes coming by the end of summer and the rest of the fleet added by end of 2018.

New York City-based Motivate operates 70 stations throughout the Bay Area. Now the program is teaming up with Ford Motor Co. to expand its bike-share program across the region to 7,000 bikes.

As younger consumers move away from car ownership, the auto industry is looking to new partners and markets to expand their business. In 2015, Ford partnered with San Francisco-based Getaround to get new Ford owners to join the car-sharing service. Those customers earned extra money each month for listing their vehicles for rent on the app. In April, AAA launched its car-sharing service, Gig, in Berkeley and Oakland with a fleet of 250 Toyota Priuses.

Motivate operates Bay Area Bike Share, the area’s first bike-share program, launched in 2013 with 70 stations and 700 bikes. The company also runs bike-share programs in Boston, Portland, Chicago and a few other major cities.

The company will install 546 Ford GoBike stations throughout San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, Emeryville and San Jose as it builds on its existing downtown posts. It’s the first time

bikes can be unlocked by the Clipper card, the transit payment card accepted by 17 transit agencies in the region, including BART, Muni and Caltrain.

Twenty percent of the stations will be built in low-income communities, and a discount membership of \$5 per month will be available for those eligible.

“This partnership supports Ford’s goal of becoming part of the broader urban transportation ecosystem and working together with cities to develop smart, customized mobility solutions that change how we move,” said John Kwant, vice president of Ford City Solutions.

The expansion makes this Bay Area regional program the largest bike share network per capita in the country. By comparison, Motivate owns 10,000 bikes in New York City and saw 500,000 unique riders completing 14 million trips last year. The San Francisco usage in contrast has been “tiny,” said Jay Walder, CEO of Motivate.

“One of the things the Bay Area realized is it should be a big broad system to serve the area. It needs to be planned with the community,” Walder said.

While companies have come and gone as they attempt starting a bike-sharing service in the Bay Area, none have really matched the momentum it has gained in other cities. Bike-sharing in China, for example, is dominated by companies, from Mobike to Bluegogo, that have raised millions in recent years.

Startups like Spin and Bluegogo have removed stations and docks from their models. Riders can unlock bikes with their smartphone apps and park them anywhere afterward — a model met with resistance from city officials concerned about permits and road blockages.

Both have rolled out slowly as it works out logistics with the city: Spin reportedly will release 100,000 bikes in the next year, and Bluegogo launched with 200 bikes in February after getting warned by the city about lack of permits.

“To us, we look at station-based bike share like your trains and buses. There’s no reason why both can’t coexist. In the end, it’s about providing more transportation options to people in San Francisco that are more affordable,” said Derrick Ko, CEO of Spin.

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[Want jobs for the ‘forgotten man’? Finish high-speed rail.](#)

The Editorial Board

Fresno Bee

Disparaging California’s high-speed rail project as an overpriced boondoggle is a kind of received wisdom by now.

Self-styled protectors of taxpayers carp. Powerful congressional Republicans go out of their way to undermine the \$64 billion project. It’s the “crazy train,” or the “train to nowhere.” Tesla founder Elon Musk says a hyperloop would be a smarter alternative. Advocates of driverless cars say they will be the answer.

But rail is not crazy in Europe or in Asia. And Fresno, Madera, Merced and Stanislaus counties, home to nearly 2 million Californians, are not nowhere. They are, however, too often forgotten.

The Sacramento Bee's editorial board, which opposed the 2008 ballot measure that authorized high-speed rail, long since has come to see the life-changing potential of a transportation system that connects the San Joaquin Valley to Silicon Valley. It's not too complicated to see the short and long-term reasons why.

San Mateo County's unemployment rate is 2.5 percent. In Santa Clara County, the rate is 3.1 percent. Statewide, 4.8 percent of the workforce is out of a job. In too much of the other California that straddles Highway 99, times remain tough.

Stanislaus County's unemployment rate is 7.9 percent. Madera's rate is 8.5 percent. Fresno County's rate sits at 8.8 percent. Merced County's rate is 10.2 percent.

This is both unfair and unsustainable. The Central Valley needs to become part of the rest of the state.

An efficient way to get to the Silicon Valley is one way connect it with the rest of California. There will be mutual benefit. Consider housing. In Santa Clara County, the median price of a home is north of \$1 million. In Fresno, it slightly more than \$200,000.

High-speed rail is at a particularly perilous point now. Its director, Jeff Morales, has stepped down, after withstanding more than his share of shots, many of them cheap. His replacement will need proven skills that include the ability to manage a huge construction project and navigate the freight politics.

Gov. Jerry Brown, who inherited the project from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, has been an enthusiastic supporter, but knows his successor might not be nearly as excited, particularly if Brown fails to secure stable funding.

The most obvious source is California's cap-and-trade program by which greenhouse gas emitters such as refineries, food processors and people who drive cars powered by internal combustion engines pay to offset the damage they cause to the environment.

Sen. Bob Wieckowski, an East Bay Democrat, is carrying Senate Bill 775, which would extend cap-and-trade and lock in funding for certain public works projects including high-speed rail which, in time, will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. SB 775 requires a two-thirds vote, tough for Democrats who recently voted to raise gasoline taxes and other fees by \$5 billion a year for road maintenance.

But oil companies, always an influential lobby, should become Democrats' allies, understanding that a retooled market-based cap-and-trade system is far preferable to the alternative: a dictate by legislators and regulators that emitters cut emissions.

A shorter term benefit of high-speed rail can be seen each workday at 14 job sites in Fresno and Madera counties. After years of infuriating delay, 1,100 people, many in hard hats, attest that construction is underway.

There's foundation work on a bridge spanning the San Joaquin River at the north end of Fresno near Highway 99, and a huge trench, which will carry rail cars under Highway 180 north of downtown Fresno. At the south end of Fresno, work advances for the superstructure of a viaduct that will take the trains up and over major roads and Highway 99.

A new bridge is expected to open for traffic any day, carrying two-way traffic over Union Pacific Railroad tracks and the future high-speed train line in downtown Fresno. It will replace two one-way bridges that weren't tall enough to accommodate high-speed rail.

At last count, 380 small businesses had a piece of the project. A review of high-speed rail documents through the end of March showed more than \$1 billion in construction invoices for work between Madera and Shafter had been approved.

In time, \$6 billion will have been spent in and around Fresno. Ask experts when the last time was that such a sum was spent on a public works project in Fresno, and they will laugh. Never.

In Los Angeles, authorities have invested \$9 billion on light rail and subways. Despite up-and-down ridership, another \$12 billion is expected to be spent in coming years.

The Bay Rapid Transit System cost billions to build; a 2015 state audit said replacement value would be \$21 billion. Then there is the \$2 billion project to electrify the CalTrain commuter line between San Jose and San Francisco.

So adamant are they in their opposition to high-speed rail, House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy and the 13 other House Republicans from California signed a letter urging that Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao withhold the \$650 million federal share for the CalTrain project.

After initially bowing to their demand, Chao wisely reversed herself a week ago, and announced that the feds would fully fund their share. Construction will begin soon.

And when it is done, we all will benefit, not just commuters and businesses in the Bay Area. Like the L.A. subway and BART, an improved CalTrain will ease gridlock, enhance economic activity, and reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. The same will be true of high-speed rail.

The \$20 billion Central Valley to Silicon Valley leg won't carry commuters until 2025, give or take. But once it does, the forgotten part of California that coastal residents fly over or zip past en route to Yosemite will become connected to the rest of the state and gain their share of California's bounty. That's not a boondoggle. That's fair.

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[Trump to focus on overhauling infrastructure](#)

[Julie Hirschfeld Davis and Kate Kelly](#)

[SF Gate](#)

WASHINGTON — President Trump will lay out a vision this week for sharply curtailing the federal government's funding of the nation's infrastructure and calling upon states, cities and corporations to shoulder most of the cost of rebuilding roads, bridges, railways and waterways.

He will also endorse a plan to privatize and modernize the nation's air-traffic control system. That plan, which is to be introduced Monday at the White House and is the subject of a major speech in the Midwest two days later, will be Trump's first concrete explanation of how he intends to fulfill a campaign promise to lead \$1 trillion in U.S. infrastructure projects. The goal is to create millions of jobs while doing much-needed reconstruction and updating. But the actual

details of the initiative are unsettled, and a more intricate blueprint is still weeks or even months from completion.

What the president will offer instead over the coming days, his advisers said, are the contours of a plan. The federal government would make only a fractional down payment on rebuilding the nation's aging infrastructure. Trump would rely on a combination of private industry, state and city tax money, and borrowed cash to finance the rest.

"We like the template of not using taxpayer dollars to give taxpayers wins," said Gary Cohn, director of the National Economic Council and an architect of the infrastructure plan.

As a model for the approach, Trump plans on Monday to send a proposal to Congress for overhauling the nation's air-traffic control system. He would spin it off into a private, nonprofit corporation that would use digital satellite-based tracking systems, rather than land-based radar, to guide flights in the United States. There would be no cost to the government, Cohn said, because a newly formed corporation would finance the entire enterprise, using loans to handle the initial costs of equipment and other needs.

On Wednesday, Cohn said, the president will travel to the banks of the Ohio River to deliver a speech about overhauling the nation's infrastructure, including inland waterways that are in dire need of attention.

On Thursday, Trump will hold listening sessions at the White House with a group of mayors and governors. On Friday, he plans to cap off what members of the administration are calling "infrastructure week" with a visit to the Transportation Department, where he will discuss drastically reducing the time it takes to obtain federal permits for projects.

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[Roadshow: Road boulders, heed the call and move right](#)

Gary Richards

San Jose Mercury News

Q The state's wizards of messages have blown it with their electronic highway sign boards. Great for emergencies. But why has there never been a message about "Slower Traffic Keep Right"? Those would be great. With the non-enforced, non-carpool lanes being used up and in some instances only two lanes to drive in, the anger to get around our less-than-courteous drivers creates havoc, to say the least.

Don Zonic

A That may change. June has been designated Lane Courtesy time by the National Motorists Association and that means staying in the right lane, except to pass slower vehicles. When motorists use lane courtesy they are generally safer because they drive with traffic instead of continuously weaving in and out. Most importantly, there will be less road rage and less overall stress while driving, say the NMA folks.

The NMA claims that in 1973 the creation of the 55-mph speed limit caused a total breakdown in lane courtesy, as slow drivers who would have stayed in the right lane before felt they could drive wherever they wanted because they would still be going the speed limit.

And now Road Boulders rank as one of the more despised groups of drivers on the road.

Q I've been riding motorcycles for about 30 years. I've seen my share of inconsiderate, stupid behavior by both motorists (texting, changing lanes without looking or signaling) and motorcyclists (lane-splitting at unsafe speeds). But that's not why I'm writing.

I don't know what the heck is going on with people on Highway 85 lately, but we should find out and propagate it! I am truly amazed by the level of politeness, awareness and consideration being exercised toward me as a motorcyclist.

Folks are paying far more attention to what's in their mirrors than I've ever experienced. I would say somewhere close to one-third of the drivers are either paying attention and making more room for lane-sharing motorcycles or just driving to the far left of the lane. It's not this way everywhere, especially coming into San Francisco and up on Interstate 880, which are pretty much the opposite.

So, from a grateful motorcyclist to all of you car drivers in the 85 carpool lanes: Thanks for being awesome, being aware and making space. All of us on two wheels and our families appreciate the effort.

Phil Smith, San Jose

A Maybe all those "share the road" messages on the electronic signs in recent weeks have helped.

Q In answer to your article about leaving your car at home and taking Uber to the Caltrain lot in Mountain View:

There is no drop-off parking at that station. I live across the street and my road seems to be that spot, with drivers blocking the lane and our garages. We can't get in and out sometimes. It is not fun.

Kathy Morales, Mountain View

A The new transit center will add a drop-off area for shuttles, vans and other vehicles. That will be nice.

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Conserve paper. Think before you print

From: Board Secretary

Sent: Tuesday, June 06, 2017 5:04 PM

To: VTA Board of Directors

Subject: VTA Information: No Scheduled VTA Standing Committee Meetings in June/July 2017

VTA Board of Directors:

Reminder: There are no scheduled A&F, CMPP, and SSTPO meetings in June/July 2017.

The next scheduled Board/Standing Committee meetings are:

- Board of Directors meeting – August 3, 2017 @ 5:30 p.m.
- Congestion Management Program and Planning (CMPP) Committee meeting – August 17, 2017 @ 10:00 a.m.
- Administration and Finance (A&F) Committee meeting – August 17, 2017 @ 12:00 p.m.
- Safety, Security and Transit Planning & Operations (SSTPO) Committee meeting – August 18, 2017 @ 12:00 p.m.
- Board of Directors Workshop meeting – August 25, 2017 @ 9:00 a.m.
- Governance and Audit Committee meeting – September 7, 2017 @ 4:00 p.m.

Thank you.

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Conserve paper. Think before you print.

From: Board Secretary
Sent: Tuesday, June 06, 2017 5:10 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: June 6, 2017 Media Clips



Solutions that move you

VTA Daily News Coverage for June 6, 2017

1. **Google, San Jose plan search giant's downtown expansion; up to 20,000 jobs possible** San Jose Mercury News
2. **San Jose confirms talks with Google for massive downtown site** Silicon Valley Biz Journal
3. **Roadshow: Build more Bay Area lanes?! We already have** San Jose Mercury News
4. **SF demands data from Uber, Lyft on city trips, driver bonuses** SF Gate
5. **Amid popularity of ride-sharing apps, "casual carpool" not slowing down** CBS News
6. **Gov. Jerry Brown says California wants China's help on electric vehicles** LA Times

Google, San Jose plan search giant's downtown expansion; up to 20,000 jobs possible

George Avalos

San Jose Mercury News

SAN JOSE — Google and San Jose leaders are discussing the tech titan's ambitious plans to expand into the Diridon Station district downtown, which could bring thousands of Google jobs to the area and transform it into a transit-oriented village, city officials said Tuesday.

The city of San Jose's discussions with Google center on a potential mixed-use development, possibly including more than 6 million square feet of office and research-and-development space, which could accommodate between 15,000 and 20,000 jobs.

"Based on our conversations with Google, the company shares our community's vision for the future of this space, a vision of urban design that will invite the public into the station," San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo said during an event near the train station to announce the development plans.

Mountain View-based Google didn't immediately respond to a request for comment about the situation.

"We will transform this collection of industrial parcels, bars, and parking lots into a dynamic, vibrant epicenter of technology and creativity, complete with public plazas, retail, restaurants, world-class

architecture, and of course, brilliant minds of one of the planet's most innovative companies," the mayor said, referring to Google.

The potential downtown San Jose mega-campus, if it were to reach the 6-million-square-foot benchmark, could eventually become the largest collection of Google offices in the world. At present, the Googleplex in Mountain View is the nation's biggest Google work hub, totaling roughly 3.1 million square feet. The largest single building occupied by Google is a company-owned office tower, a 2.9-million-square-foot art deco skyscraper on Manhattan's Eighth Avenue.

"In partnership with Google, we can re-imagine Silicon Valley's landscape, by creating a vibrant, architecturally iconic, transit-focused village that provides a model for a more sustainable future, and a sharp departure from the sprawling, auto-oriented tilt-up tech campuses of the Valley's past," Mayor Liccario said.

Mountain View-based Google, which is owned by a tech conglomerate called Alphabet, has been on an expansion march throughout the Bay Area through an array of leases and purchases. Mountain View, Palo Alto, Redwood City, Sunnyvale and north San Jose are among the locations where Google has planted its flag.

Google's venture into downtown San Jose would re-sculpt the Diridon Station area, currently a motley collection of properties along and near Autumn and Montgomery streets a short distance from the SAP Center, an area once proposed for a baseball stadium, and a mixed-use office, retail and residential complex planned by developer Trammell Crow.

"Google's interest in potentially laying down roots in San Jose will be transformational to the landscape of downtown and the entire city," Vice Mayor Magdalena Carrasco said.

The Diridon Station area eyed by Google is deemed an attractive area for offices, homes and retail because it's a hub for Amtrak, Caltrain and a light-rail system. It's also slated for a BART station and a possible high-speed rail line connection, although those won't materialize for years. All the transit upgrades could increase the number of commuters to downtown San Jose by eight-fold.

"This proposal is exciting, because it will activate an area between downtown and the Diridon Station, helping to connect the two," San Jose City Councilmember Devora Davis said.

Google is expected to be the principal, and perhaps only, occupant of the Trammell Crow project, an 8.3-acre site that would include 1 million square feet of offices and 325 apartment units. People familiar with the situation have said Google intends to buy the Trammell Crow property.

Google's plans for downtown San Jose have emerged amid revelations that two groups of property investors have quietly launched a shopping spree for properties in the Diridon Station area, a land assembly that could eventually accommodate one or more mega campuses for tech workers, along with housing and stores. The two groups of buyers have spent a combined \$124 million in the acquisition binge.

San Jose council members expressed optimism about Google's potential entry to downtown.

"It is the best use for Diridon," San Jose Councilman Raul Peralez said. "We share the company's vision and look forward to working with them."

San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo, at a downtown San Jose parking lot, announces plans for the city and Google to partner in an effort to bring the search giant into a massive campus near Diridon Station.
Patrick Tehan/Bay Area News Group

City staffers intend to propose that San Jose enter into exclusive negotiations with Google to enable the search giant to collect properties owned by the city and the San Jose Redevelopment Agency's successor.

"We look forward to working with Google and stakeholders to bring forward a transformative project," said Kim Walesh, San Jose's economic development director.

The City Council is slated to consider the staff proposal on June 20.

Some business owners were left with misgivings about the prospect of being Google's neighbor — or being displaced by the digital behemoth.

"Looks like Google is buying up everything they can around here," said Edgar Salcedo, owner of Ed's Scientific Auto Body on South Autumn Street.

Still, city officials believe that San Jose is now in the path of progress.

"Silicon Valley's center of gravity is shifting southward," Mayor Liccardo said. "As we build Diridon to become the busiest multi-modal station in the West, the tens of thousands who will commute here daily will know that they have arrived in Silicon Valley's urban center, and that downtown San Jose has arrived."

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San Jose confirms talks with Google for massive downtown site

Janice Bitters

Silicon Valley Business Journal

San Jose officials have confirmed longtime rumors that Google is eyeing a massive landing around the Diridon Station area in downtown, where it could take up to 6 million square feet in office and R&D space, making it the company's largest campus in the country.

The Diridon Station area is envisioned by the city to be a huge, mixed-use development area surrounding several major transportation investments, including the addition of high-speed rail and electrifying the existing Caltrain route, an already popular transit mode that runs north and south along the Peninsula. Ultimately the area is expected to include publicly accessible plazas, ground-level retail, and a greenbelt and park along the Los Gatos Creek.

City officials said Tuesday that bringing Google in to fill in the office space slated for the area is a huge win for San Jose.

"We have been working for a project like this for decades," Vice Mayor Magdalena Carrasco said in a statement Tuesday. "The development of the Diridon area is at a critical juncture, this is the right place, the right time, with the right people, for the right reasons."

The announcement comes as Trammell Crow is set to build about 1 million square feet of office space alongside hundreds of apartments in the Diridon Station area in a development also named Diridon Station.

That massive project is easily already the largest planned development in the area, and the Dallas, Texas-based developer and real estate investor has been quietly scooping up more parcels nearby. The company

last month also bought a couple of properties about a half-mile away, in a spot that is set to be zoned for tall, high-density buildings with office, residential, industrial or retail uses.

If all 6 million square feet of office space is built out for Google, the property could potentially accommodate 15,000 to 20,000 employees, according to a city press release Tuesday morning. That would be a huge move for the company, which currently employs about 20,000 people in all of Silicon Valley, according to data provided from Alphabet, Google's parent company, to the Silicon Valley Business Journal on May 24.

Google's largest campus in California today spans 3.1 million square feet at its headquarters in Mountain View, which sits north of San Jose.

“Silicon Valley’s center of gravity is shifting southward,” Liccardo said in a statement Tuesday. “As we build Diridon to become the busiest multi-modal station in the West, the tens of thousands who will commute here daily will know that they have arrived in Silicon Valley’s urban center, and that Downtown San Jose has arrived.”

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Roadshow: Build more Bay Area lanes?! We already have

Gary Richards

San Jose Mercury News

Q If you have examples of more lanes and roads being built in the Bay Area, PLEASE, PLEASE list them. I can't think of any.

Larry J.

A Reaction to a column on the need for more freeways surprised me. Yes, many folks insist that failure to expand our roads is the cause of today's gridlock.

But a surprising number say we have made numerous road improvements over recent decades that others have forgotten.

Q For goodness sake! Stop already. Add lanes, add lanes, ad nauseam. That's no solution.

Look at our existing roads; 30 years ago how many lanes were there? Now the new lanes are full, too.

Mary A.

A OK, now a look at what has been accomplished over the last 35 years.

Q Interstate 880 from Oakland to Milpitas has gone from two or three lanes in each direction to four.

Ted Melvin

A Do you remember the awful two-lane bottleneck at Brokaw Road that brought traffic to a grinding halt on weekends until being widened?

Q Have critics forgotten Highway 87?

Pete Ramos, San Jose

A Six lanes from South San Jose to Highway 101 opened in 1992.

Q Don't forget the opening of Highway 85 from Cupertino to San Jose.

M.P.

A That was in 1994. Six lanes covering 19 miles.

Q Highway 101 used to be called Blood Alley until they built four lanes north of Morgan Hill.

Jody R., San Jose

A That was in the mid-1980s, and a few years later 101 was widened to eight lanes from 85 to San Francisco International Airport.

Q The San Mateo Bridge was substantially widened and the 92-880 interchange completely reworked.

A.T.

A As were numerous other interchanges along 880 in the East Bay.

Q Highway 4 is now a full freeway in Contra Costa County.

Hector Pruitt

A Thank goodness.

Q The opening of the extra bore through the Caldecott Tunnel has been a lifesaver.

Mary Phong

Oakland

A Thousands agree.

Q Don't forget the \$1 billion to rebuild Doyle Drive near the Golden Gate Bridge. And there used to be traffic lights on Highway 237.

Mary A.

A Today 237 is a six-lane freeway minus the signals. Back to Larry J. ...

Q What we need is a six-lane freeway each direction on 101 from San Jose to San Francisco and a six-lane freeway on 880 from San Jose to Oakland.

Larry J.

A You may someday have five lanes each way from Morgan Hill to Redwood City.

Q Adding lanes doesn't solve congestion any more than buying bigger pants and loosening your belt cures obesity.

Larry Affen

A You are making me feel guilty for wolfing down a tasty doughnut on National Donut Day last week.

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SF demands data from Uber, Lyft on city trips, driver bonuses

Carolyn Said

SF Gate

It's a San Francisco truism: Every other car on the streets these days seems to sport a logo for Uber or Lyft — and many double-park or block traffic as passengers climb in or out.

Now the city wants Uber and Lyft to share details on how many ride-hailing cars are roving the streets and when, so it can ensure that they comply with local laws; assess their impact on traffic congestion, safety, pollution and parking; and ascertain whether they are accessible for disabled and low-income riders.

City Attorney Dennis Herrera on Monday subpoenaed Uber and Lyft to disgorge records on four years of driving practices, disability access and service in San Francisco. The companies have steadfastly declined to share data other than that they have about 45,000 drivers in the Bay Area.

“No one disputes the convenience of the ride-hailing industry, but that convenience evaporates when you're stuck in traffic behind a double-parked Uber or Lyft, or when you can't get a ride because the vehicle isn't accessible to someone with a disability or because the algorithm disfavors the neighborhood where you live,” Herrera said in a statement.

The subpoenas seek information on “miles and hours logged by drivers, incentives that encourage drivers to ‘commute’ from as far away as Fresno or Los Angeles, driver guidance and training, accessible vehicle information, and the services provided to residents of every San Francisco neighborhood,” Herrera's office said.

The companies already compile that information for their regulator, the California Public Utilities Commission. But Uber and Lyft maintain that they need to shield the data from each other for competitive purposes — and have persuaded the commission to keep it under lock and key. Herrera is simultaneously pursuing a public records request against the commission for the ride-hailing companies' annual reports.

The companies have 15 days to comply or face court-imposed penalties.

“We’re more than happy to work with the city to address congestion,” Uber spokeswoman Eva Behrend said in a statement, “but it should be a comprehensive solution including construction, the city’s population increase, and the rise of online delivery services.”

She noted that San Francisco wants to encourage more shared rides and pointed to a fall 2015 survey by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency that said ride-hailing accounted for just 2 percent of car trips in the city. However, given the companies’ rapid growth, that statistic would now be outdated.

She didn’t address whether Uber might try to quash the subpoena, as it is currently doing with a subpoena from the city treasurer’s office seeking drivers’ names and addresses so they can be notified about the city’s business license requirement. Uber previously provided this data under protest, but now says it is fighting to protect drivers’ privacy.

Lyft, which said it is reviewing the subpoena, said its goal is to improve access to transportation. “In San Francisco, nearly 30 percent of rides take place in underserved neighborhoods and 20 percent of Lyft rides begin or end at a public transit station,” said spokeswoman Chelsea Harrison in a statement. “We also have a track record of working collaboratively with policymakers who regulate us, including the (PUC) here in California, to ensure that our service complements existing transportation options.”

Herrera said the subpoenas will fuel his investigations of possible violations of laws regulating public nuisances, willful obstruction of streets, equal accommodations by businesses, access to streets by disabled people, and minimum compensation for contractors who work more than 20 hours a month.

Eric Goldman, a professor at Santa Clara University School of Law and co-director of the High Tech Law Institute, said that while government has an obligation to enforce the laws, the city’s request looks like a fishing expedition.

“Herrera thinks there might be problems, but needs the data to confirm,” he said. “Normally we disfavor the government coming and saying, ‘We think you’re doing something wrong, so tell us what you’re doing and we’ll decide.’”

Similarly, Arun Sundararajan, an NYU business professor and expert on the so-called “sharing economy,” said the subpoenas seem overly broad.

“It’s perfectly reasonable for a city to periodically request information ... but one would expect that to be more surgical, not a blanket request for a wide range of data,” he said.

The SFMTA, which oversees the city’s streets and transit, chimed in to say that ride-hailing is a problem.

“We are hearing a growing number of complaints from residents, businesses, and our own traffic enforcement staff and Muni operators about the behavior of these drivers and the congestion and pollution caused by the sheer volume of these vehicles on our city’s streets,” SFMTA Director of Transportation Ed Reiskin said in a statement. “As stewards of the city’s transportation system, we need to understand the effects of these private companies and their impact on San Francisco’s transit, safety, accessibility, and climate goals.”

The SFMTA regulates taxi service in San Francisco, but not ride-hailing companies. Uber and Lyft have a long history of butting heads with lawmakers by entering markets without a regulatory framework for their model of providing paid rides in private cars. California was the first state to craft regulations to legalize ride-hailing, and the companies welcomed the statewide laws as an approach that fosters innovation.

The latest contretemps underscores the ongoing need for clear-cut regulations, especially as on-demand transportation moves toward an even more complex system of driverless cars, Sundararajan said. “It doesn’t serve anyone’s interest for multiple competing regulatory authorities to have jurisdiction,” he said.

Herrera pointed to the issue of “long-distance” Uber drivers who commute from far-flung corners of California to San Francisco because it has relatively lucrative payouts for drivers, both in terms of high rates and a dense population of riders. He cited a February Chronicle investigation finding that about 10 percent of drivers may log commutes of up to 200 miles before putting in lengthy shifts to meet goals set by the companies for earning bonuses and incentives. Studies show that fatigue can be as dangerous as alcohol on the road, with about one-fifth of fatal accidents attributable to drowsy drivers, according to the AAA auto club.

“These fatigued drivers are not only a threat to themselves, but to San Francisco pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers,” Herrera said. “Policies that encourage or turn a blind eye to drowsy driving by drivers with little or no familiarity with San Francisco’s roads or weather conditions make our city less safe. They are a public nuisance.”

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Amid popularity of ride-sharing apps, "casual carpool" not slowing down

CBS News

The traffic and navigation app Waze is launching a new carpooling service today across California that allows passengers to request a ride with someone already driving along their route, costing them only a share of the gas money.

Other ride-hailing apps like Uber and Lyft have already connected millions with their carpooling options.

But long before they came along, there was casual carpool.

The grassroots commuting option has sprung up in places like Washington and Houston, reports CBS News correspondent John Blackstone who recently tested the concept where it all started-- San Francisco.

Shortly after 8:00 a.m. on a typical weekday morning, both Meghan Christenson and Shoshana Gould are getting ready for work. They live within blocks of each other in Oakland, California, but have never met.

Both women work about 10 miles away across the bay in downtown San Francisco and both face the same frustrating traffic obstacle known as "the maze."

Three major interstates all converge at the east end of the Bay Bridge, creating a bottleneck that often delays drivers by more than an hour.

For almost 40 years, the solution for thousands of commuters like Christenson and Gould has been something called "casual carpool."

At more than 20 locations scattered throughout the East Bay region, people who need a ride into San Francisco line up each weekday morning and jump into the next car that pulls up.

"It's like ad hoc carpooling," Gould said.

Typically the rider is expected to chip in a dollar for the toll, but the real draw for solo drivers like Christenson -- adding at least two passengers gives them access to a restricted car pool lane onto the bridge.

Christenson said this can save her about 35 minutes.

According to University of California Berkeley researcher Susan Shaheen, "about 6,000 people are doing this daily." Shaheen is one of the few social scientists who has studied the almost 40-year-old phenomenon that was born during a crippling 1979 public transit strike.

"We found that the median wait time for a driver was just two minutes and they were doing this long before Lyft and Uber," Shaheen said.

And there's no app involved.

"It's completely organic!" Shaheen said.

"You don't need an app to do everything, there are ways to live your life without that," Gould said.

While some casual carpoolers are attracted to the system's analog appeal, many feel it was the modern sharing economy that erased fears about getting into a stranger's car.

"The tech world has actually made us a little bit more trusting of people around us, because we hop in the car all the time with Uber drivers and Lyft drivers," Christenson said.

"Yeah, I feel like if you can rent a room in a stranger's apartment and sleep there comfortably, then you can get a ride comfortably with a stranger in the city," Gould said.

In an age when Uber claims its users have taken more than 600 million uberPOOL rides, and Lyft boasts of 28 million rides on its Lyft Line feature, casual carpool is the little transit system that pre-dates them all, and shows no signs of slowing down.

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Gov. Jerry Brown says California wants China's help on electric vehicles

Jessica Meyers

LA Times

The "Star Wars" theme song blared as participants entered Nanjing's environmental conference on Monday, a fitting lead-in to Gov. Jerry Brown's fervent speech about climate change and the new frontiers he pledged to conquer.

The Democratic governor gave his usual rally cry in this coastal Chinese city, imploring the packed ballroom to help reinforce a global commitment to climate change. But a more specific theme also emerged, an undercurrent in his five-night trip that he's echoed in several meetings with officials: Brown is looking to China for the future of California's electric vehicles.

The state aims to put 4 million to 5 million electric cars on roads by 2030, he said at the event, "and we aren't going to get there until Chinese business people, Chinese government leaders make it a priority to develop batteries and electric cars. And we will too."

Brown emphasized a partnership again when signing a clean-tech agreement with the Communist Party head of Jiangsu province. He told reporters that he highlighted the issue with Sichuan officials a day earlier, and stressed battery and electric car improvement as a tangible goal to reduce carbon pollution.

For the state to reach its environmental goals, "California and the world will need the cost of batteries and electric vehicles to come down," said Yunshi Wang, director of the China Center for Energy and Transportation at UC Davis, who is in Beijing for a different international clean-energy summit this week. "China is a leader in this area."

It works like this: More competitors in the market lower the cost, he said, and raise the quality.

Brown spent much of his afternoon Monday on another project he envisions for California — high-speed rail. California Air Resources Board Chairwoman Mary Nichols and members of Brown's staff snapped photos as a sleek, white bullet train pulled into Nanjing.

Four years ago on his last visit, the governor walked the aisles on another high-speed train. He wanted Chinese investment to fund his longtime dream — one still far from fruition.

"There is Japan, China, Germany, maybe more, they are all in the running," he said about assistance building the bullet train, the state's biggest public works project.

If the project proceeds as planned, it will deliver people from San Francisco to Los Angeles in less than three hours. Work has started on a section in the Central Valley but the effort still faces economic and political obstacles.

“The high speed rail in California is under construction,” he said, standing comfortably between compartments as the train neared Beijing. “We have money and we are spending. And we will continue to do so.”

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Conserve paper. Think before you print.

From: Board Secretary
Sent: Wednesday, June 07, 2017 4:32 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: June 7, 2017 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Wednesday, June 7, 2017

1. [San Jose RV Fire Affects VTA Service From Diridon Station](#) (NBC Bay Area)
2. [Community college VTA 'Eco Pass' fees will increase, but not as much as proposed](#) (Mercury)
3. [Roadshow: BART ignores seat hogs, lice-riddled rider, passenger complains](#) (Mercury)
4. [Poll: Marin voters support half-cent sales tax extension for transportation](#) (Marin)
5. [Twin Peaks Tunnel repair back off track](#) (Examiner)
6. [Trump officials meet with transportation groups, lawmakers on tax reform](#) (The Hill)

[San Jose RV Fire Affects VTA Service From Diridon Station](#)

NBC Bay Area

A Winnebago caught fire early Wednesday morning, affecting VTA service from the San Jose Diridon Station.

Firefighters made quick work of the fire at West San Carlos and McEvoy streets, but the recreational vehicle was a total loss. It was parked in a lot along with another Winnebago right next to an apartment construction site.

No buildings caught fire and no one was hurt, but a column of thick black smoke could be easily seen from the nearby Highway 280 and 87 interchange.

Meanwhile, VTA officials were forced to provide a bus bridge between the Fruitdale and Diridon stations. The lightrail service is said to be recovering from the earlier delays.

Source: [San Jose RV Fire Affects VTA Service From Diridon Station | NBC Bay Area](http://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/San-Jose-RV-Fire-Affects-VTA-Service-From-Diridon-Station-427019083.html#ixzz4jMLgEglc) <http://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/San-Jose-RV-Fire-Affects-VTA-Service-From-Diridon-Station-427019083.html#ixzz4jMLgEglc>

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[Community college VTA 'Eco Pass' fees will increase, but not as much as proposed](#)

San Jose Mercury News

Students from De Anza College in Cupertino mobilized to sway the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority board of directors to not increase the cost of student fees for public transit passes by quite as much as planned.

The "Eco Pass," which every student at De Anza and Foothill colleges pays \$9 for annually as part of their fees, allows students to use the agency's public transportation for free.

VTA proposed raising the fee from \$9 to \$39 by January 2023 as part of larger plan to increase fares the board approved June 1. If the proposal had been approved, the annual pass fee would have increased by \$5 every January until it reached \$39.

In response to the transit agency's plan, De Anza students put together an alternative proposal that will increase the community college student fee from \$9 to \$20 in January 2018, but then keep the fee at that price for four years before being reconsidered by the board.

After hearing from more than 25 student speakers at the meeting, VTA board member Ken Yeager made the motion to adopt the students' proposal, saying it was "reasonable."

The board voted 12-1 to support the student plan, but just for community college passes in the county. San Jose State students currently pay a \$36 fee toward the Eco Pass. Their fee will increase \$2 every year until it hits \$40 in 2019.

Neil McClintick, a lead organizer with De Anza's Political Revolution club that helped lead the effort, said the students' proposal was a compromise. VTA is

facing a deficit \$20.5 million for fiscal year 2018 and a \$26 million deficit in 2019, said Ali Hudda, deputy director of finance and budget.

"In the short run, it hurts us now and that's unfortunate, but it addresses (VTA's) needs now," McClintick said. "But in the long run, it sets a much better precedent because (\$20) is much more affordable than \$40."

Under the original proposal, the increase in Eco Pass fees would have provided \$1.3 million in revenue for 2018, \$3.1 million in 2019 and \$3.8 million in 2020.

McClintick said the student group gathered 2,000 signatures opposing the increase in just over a month. Of 21,000 students on campus, he added, more than 7,000 use the pass. According to the De Anza Institutional Research Office, 51 percent of students come from the greater San Jose area, 12 percent from Sunnyvale, and 7 percent come from Santa Clara. Only 4 percent come from Cupertino.

Students were well represented at the meeting, holding signs with slogans like “support our students.” They spoke about struggling to get by financially in an expensive region.

“The Eco Pass represents a sustainable and alternative form of transportation for our students,” Elias Kamal, a De Anza student who commutes from Fremont, told this newspaper. “And in this time of increasingly high living costs, the increase in a pass like this, that was once a lot cheaper, is yet another barrier to an affordable and accessible education.”

Keerthana Muthukrishnan, an avid Eco Pass user, has worked on transit issues at the college in the past through TRANSition De Anza, a student group that advocates for transportation options to the campus.

“I take the bus all the way from Fremont,” she told this newspaper. “Personally, I’m from a low-income family so I’m getting a lot of financial aid, so right now all I’m paying at De Anza is \$47. To think that is the same (amount of money) as I would be paying for an Eco Pass, that’s ridiculous.”

The board also voted to increase fees for the VTA express buses associated with the Eco Pass program by an additional \$9.

[Roadshow: BART ignores seat hogs, lice-riddled rider, passenger complains](#)

San Jose Mercury News

Q After contacting BART several times regarding people sleeping on the train across two seats, I stumbled across your BART story one morning as I waited for the first train out of Pittsburg. I’ve sent a video to BART officials via Twitter showing a sleeping man with lice on his clothes. However, they never respond.

Why can police remove a person for being disorderly or eating on the train but not if that person is a public health concern? BART police say, “He’s a paying customer and there is nothing we can do.”

Doug C.

A If you see people sleeping on the train who are taking up multiple seats, here’s all you can do for now: Using the BARTwatch app, request a welfare check from an officer who will come and awaken the passenger to ensure they’re OK.

Although the board of directors voted in April 2016 to start fining “seat hogs,” no enforcement policy has been developed, which means that officers do not have the authority to force riders to stick to one seat.

As for the lice, Jim-the-BART Man said: “Lice do not represent a dire public health hazard. They give people the creeps but can’t kill you.”

Q Also, I have noticed a BART janitor get on the train when it comes to its end destination and randomly clean one train, then sit down and sleep until the doors reopen. I brought this up to BART as well, with no response. It seems as though BART officials wait it out and hope either the problem will go away or the rider's concerns will.

Doug C.

A You've got BART's attention now. They are looking into this and I may have more later

Q I think the real reason for increased traffic in Orinda since April was the closure of Canyon Bridge, which cut off a popular back route to Alameda County, forcing drivers to get to Highway 24 instead.

Q The Canyon Bridge closure has forced every single driver who took the back way to Oakland and beyond to take Moraga Road to Highway 24, which is exactly where the Orinda BART car entrance and exit is. That's 6,000 more drivers a day funneled directly to the Orinda-24 on/off ramps. Ouch!

Dan Beaver

Moraga

A Ouch indeed. The road has been closed since April 18 after it slid away during a storm. There is no timetable for its reopening.

Q All the cars that used that road to get to Oakland and, in my case Castro Valley, now must travel along Moraga Way to get to the freeway. It has doubled my commute time. I loved that back road over the mountains.

Susan Wright

Moraga

A As do so many other now Orinda-bound folks.

Q I hate to tell you, Gary, but many of those Altamont Pass potholes have returned.

Ray-the-Tow-Truck-Dude

A More repairs are coming.

Join Gary Richards for an hourlong chat noon Wednesday at www.mercurynews.com/live-chats. Look for him at [Facebook.com/mr.roadshow](https://www.facebook.com/mr.roadshow) or contact him at mrroadshow@bayareanewsgroup.com.

[Poll: Marin voters support half-cent sales tax extension for transportation](#)

Marin Independent Journal

Marin voters appear willing to extend the half-cent transportation sales tax in the county, but bumping that up by a quarter cent is less certain, according to a new poll.

The Transportation Authority of Marin last week reviewed poll results of about 1,850 voters to see how they view potential sales tax measures for November 2018 and November 2020. San Mateo-based Godbe Research did the work for the agency, which approved up to \$45,000 to pay for a poll.

The poll showed that for a 2018 ballot measure there is 61.5 percent support for renewing the half-cent tax and adding a quarter cent to that. In 2020, during the presidential election when more people turn out, approval grew to 65.2 percent. A two-thirds approval — 66.67 percent — is needed to pass a sales tax.

“I think it’s a little conservative,” Bryan Godbe told the Transportation Authority of Marin board Thursday of the percentages. “I think the real world would be higher than this. We are in striking distance without a doubt.”

If the tax was kept at the current half-cent, approval in 2018 jumps to 72 percent and 74.1 percent in 2020.

“There is solid base support for some sales tax measure,” Godbe noted.

While the numbers appeared positive, TAM board member and Marin Supervisor Dennis Rodoni wondered how a measure would fare if other tax issues appeared on the same ballot.

“I’m concerned about countywide measures,” he said.

The answer: It’s too early to know, Godbe said.

The poll, conducted last month, was done by telephone and via the internet. The margin of error of the 2018 poll was 3.60 percent and 2.93 percent for the 2020 poll.

There were no decisions made by the board Thursday about whether to move ahead with a sales tax measure, but the panel did approve an Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee and OK’d up to \$75,000 for a consultant to guide that process and provide public information.

In 2004, county residents passed Measure A, a 20-year half-cent sales tax to raise millions of dollars that has since helped pay for the completion of Highway 101 carpool lanes in the county, Safe Routes to Schools programs, and bus service and road work, among other projects.

That tax will continue to 2024, but transportation officials want to determine if voters might want to vote to extend that tax and maybe add another quarter cent to bring in more revenue for projects.

At a half cent, the tax yields close to \$25 million annually. Another one-fourth cent increase would add another \$11.5 million, transportation officials say. While a simple extension of the tax would start after the current one expires in 2024, any additional tax could be tapped sooner to expand funding for transit projects, officials have said.

This spring, transportation officials spoke with city and town councils to explain the process in hopes of garnering support for a ballot measure. If the transportation authority wants to increase the sales tax beyond a half cent, it will need the cities’ support.

The transportation authority has discussed state legislation that would authorize a sales tax cap exemption to consider extending and increasing Measure A beyond California’s prescribed Transactions and Use Tax Law limits, which some cities are now bumping up against.

With fewer dollars coming from state and federal sources in recent years, the sales tax has become an essential way for Marin transportation programs to be funded. Measure A pays for 40 percent of local bus services and has provided millions for street upgrades, pedestrian improvements, paratransit, bike projects and senior mobility transit, while funding Safe Routes to Schools for students.

But in April, the Legislature approved a state gas tax increase which will bring in roughly \$14 million a year to Marin for local roads, bus transit and the possibility of more funds for commuter rail and highway work.

In addition, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission — the Bay Area's transportation planning agency — is considering a 2018 ballot measure to raise tolls to pay for projects, and Marin would receive transportation funding from that as well if approved.

If approved by voters, a \$1 toll increase would raise \$127 million annually for transportation projects in Marin, Alameda, Contra Costa, Napa, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Sonoma, Solano and San Francisco counties. A \$2 increase would generate \$254 million a year, and a \$3 hike, \$381 million annually.

Reach the author at mprado@marinij.com or follow Mark on Twitter: @MarkPradoIJ.

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[Twin Peaks Tunnel repair back off track](#)

By Joe Fitzgerald Rodriguez on June 7, 2017 1:00 am – **San Francisco Examiner**

For riders taking the 80,000 daily trips on three of Muni's light-rail vehicle lines, slow-moving trains and delays are a way of life.

Now, work planned to repair the Twin Peaks Tunnel — which would lessen those Muni slowdowns — is itself delayed, the San Francisco Examiner has learned.

The delay will also cause other Muni construction projects to start later than planned, as these projects are often timed in sequence.

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency has terminated its \$32 million contract with NTK Construction, Inc., for that repair work, after the agency met "logistical issues" planning tunnel shutdowns that would have necessitated 40,000 riders to take replacement shuttle buses.

The work will eventually repair the century-old Twin Peaks Tunnel, speed up service and enhance seismic safety. Work was first set for fall 2016, then delayed to January, again put off to April, and again delayed to July.

This final delay, however, will see the repair work delayed even longer, perhaps even another year, SFMTA Director of Transportation Ed Reiskin said at the transit agency's Board of Directors meeting Tuesday.

“It’s work we’re eager to see happen,” Reiskin told the SFMTA board, “particularly for the Castro and West Portal communities.”

Reiskin said the SFMTA was unable to schedule certain tunnel closures that would impact riders within the contract with NTK Construction, and the agency would reach out to the construction community for advice.

The SFMTA will send the project out to bid again to find a new construction firm for the project.

The Twin Peaks Tunnel Replacement Project would replace the entire track inside the 2-mile-long tunnel connecting Castro and West Portal stations, as well as portions of the tunnel ceiling, and install controls at West Portal Station, according to an SFMTA staff report. The tunnel funnels three Muni Metro lines: the K-Ingleside, L-Taraval and M-Oceanview lines.

Those repairs are needed, staff wrote, to “lift the speed restriction currently in place for trains moving through the tunnel and cut down on unexpected service disruptions.”

For eight years, that restriction was 35 mph, and a year ago became 40 mph, but may jump to 50 mph after repairs, said John Haley, SFMTA’s director of transit.

The delays were met with resounding skepticism.

“We can’t keep kicking the can down the road for 40,000 people on this trip,” said Rachel Hyden, the new director of the advocacy group San Francisco Transit Riders.

Hyden pointed to the Muni Metro stoppages with which riders are so well-acquainted and that the repair work would alleviate, according to an SFMTA staff report.

M-Oceanview rider May Ling said she’s experienced 30- to 40-minute delays on her way to work at a hotel downtown.

“Always the M [is] late,” she said. “[I] wait [a] long time, always, it’s slow.”

Hyden said delays are a common rider experience. “If there’s an issue in the tunnel, if something is wrong in the track, people get stuck, and it makes a worrisome frustration,” she said.

But in addition to speed changes and breakdowns, the work is also about the safety of Muni riders.

The repair work addresses seismic safety needs identified in a 2012 SFMTA assessment, which prompted the agency to plan reinforcing the tunnel with steel columns and girders, strengthening column and girder connections, and adding fireproofing material to columns and girders, as well as replacing a fire alarm system and a fire detection and suppression system at West Portal Station and valves used by firefighting water lines.

All that safety work will also wait at least a year, and other Muni construction projects will see delays as a result.

The SFMTA confirmed another construction project has been rescheduled due to the Twin Peaks Tunnel Replacement Project delay, as work at Junipero Serra Boulevard and 19th Avenue was “supposed to

align with the Twin Peaks shutdown for pedestrian improvements, but will have to be rescheduled to perhaps beyond July," said SFMTA spokesperson Erica Kato.

Multiple projects may ultimately be rescheduled, Kato confirmed.

"Our project teams are currently re-evaluating their plans and making the necessary adjustments to ensure that these projects are completed efficiently," she said.

At Tuesday's meeting, the SFMTA board asked Reiskin for more answers.

"There's a little bit of tension on this for me," said board director Malcolm Heinicke. He said he was concerned the repair work would not occur in time for the arrival of the next generation of Muni light-rail vehicles at the end of this year.

"We don't have a set timeline as to when the work would be done?" he asked Reiskin.

Reiskin answered, "We don't."

Trump officials meet with transportation groups, lawmakers on tax reform

© Greg Nash – **The Hill**

Trump administration officials met with transportation groups and congressional leaders to discuss tax reform Tuesday, as the White House works toward its goal of cutting taxes this year.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn held a listening session with leaders in the transportation sector, including representatives from Airlines for America, the American Association of Railroads, the American Trucking Association, UPS and FedEx.

The meeting is one of about a dozen listening sessions with business leaders that the White House plans to hold in the coming months on tax reform.

UPS spokesperson Kara Ross said that the company appreciated the administration "for bringing together stakeholders to discuss tax reform priorities."

"The White House meeting was productive and UPS looks forward to working with both the Administration and Congress to modernize the corporate tax system," Ross said.

"UPS is committed to supporting policies that will spur economic growth for our business, customers and employees. Among the many opportunities to bolster American competitiveness, UPS supports comprehensive tax reform that gets to a globally competitive rate because it will stimulate investment and make the U.S. a more attractive place to do business."

Later in the day, Mnuchin and Cohn met with congressional GOP leaders and the chairmen of the congressional tax-writing committees. This group has been meeting regularly in recent weeks, since the White House and Republicans in Congress want to agree on one tax bill.

Attendees gave few clues about what was discussed as they left the meeting Tuesday.

Mnuchin said the administration officials and lawmakers had a "very productive meeting on a lot of important issues."

When asked about the timeline for legislation to repeal and replace ObamaCare as well as tax reform, Cohn responded, "We're on schedule."

President Trump also met with congressional leadership on Tuesday to discuss the legislative agenda. At the beginning of the meeting, the president said that if things go according to plan, Congress will pass "the biggest tax cut in our country's history."

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Conserve paper. Think before you print.

From: Board Secretary
Sent: Wednesday, June 07, 2017 5:19 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors; VTA Advisory Committee Members
Subject: VTA Connections Newsletter - June 2017

VTA Board of Directors and VTA Advisory Committee Members:

Below is VTA's newsletter for June 2017. It can also be accessed using this link:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/CAVTA/bulletins/1a0597c>

Please share with your constituents.

Thank you.

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June 2017

VTA Connections

Stay in the know about
transportation in Silicon Valley



Blossom Hill Pedestrian Overpass, San Jose

VTA's Policies and Budget Receive Board Approval



VTA Board of Directors meeting, June 1, 2017

VTA's Board of Directors took significant actions during its June 1, 2017 meeting. The Board adopted VTA's Fare Policy, Biennial

IN THIS ISSUE

- **VTA's Policies and Budget Receive Board Approval**
- **Ready, Set... Go!**
- **Get Your 2017 Summer Youth Pass Today!**
- **Red Light, Green Light: Behind the Scenes with Ron Roberts**

For questions or more information about VTA please contact Customer Service

Budget and Special Events Service Policy, in consecutive 11 to 1 votes.

The newly adopted fare policy includes a base fare increase, free VTA-to-VTA transfers on Clipper only, modification to VTA's Eco Pass Program, and continuation of the Transit Assistance Program, a pilot project that provides discounted fares for low-income adults.

[Read More](#)

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Ready, Set... Go!



It's time to stand up to diabetes and get active. On June 11 join in on the fun as the American Diabetes Association (ADA) kicks off their [2017 Silicon Valley Tour de Cure](#).

Thousands of participants from around the county are set to take part in ADA's largest fundraising event and VTA has joined forces with ADA to help spread the word and get you moving.

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Get Your 2017 Summer Youth Pass Today!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

June 14, 15, 6 p.m. - [Bascom Complete Streets Public Mtg.](#)

June 30, 10 am - [Santa Clara Caltrain Undercrossing Opening](#)

August 3, 5:30 p.m. - [VTA Board of Directors Mtg.](#)



VTA is doing summer right with the 2017 Summer Youth Pass, which allows unlimited rides all summer long on VTA light rail and buses.

This #VTASummer gets sweeter with the purchase of a Summer Youth Pass. Take advantage of special offers from our partners: California's Great America, CREAM, Pizza My Heart, Raging Waters, and Yogurtland.

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Red Light, Green Light: Behind the Scenes with Ron Roberts



Ron Roberts, VTA Senior Signal Maintainer

Faces of VTA is a Headways series that shares a behind-the-scenes look at VTA employees and the work they do to provide solutions that move you.

Have you ever wondered who ensures light rail trains and cars safely navigate throughout Santa Clara County? Signal Maintainers inspect, maintain, and repair the signals that tell light rail trains when to go and when to stop, keeping VTA customers and the general public safe.

Ron Roberts, a Senior Signal Maintainer, has been recognized for his hard work and dedication to VTA.

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From: Board Secretary
Sent: Thursday, June 08, 2017 4:45 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: June 8, 2017 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Thursday, June 8, 2017

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[What's Up With Phase II Of VTA's BART Silicon Valley Extension?](#)

VTA - SANTA CLARA VALLEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

06/08/2017 | Press release 10:11 AM| Cody Kraatz

This is a recording of a live webinar presenting information about the second phase of VTA's BART Silicon Valley extension.

The short presentation by Leyla Hedayat, Phase II Planning and Program Manager, was followed by a Q&A in which we answered as many on-topic questions as possible.

Later this year, key decisions will be made about the project. We wanted you to have the chance to learn more about those specific decisions and about Phase II generally.

The webinar covered the following Phase II topics:

Schedule & Overview

Environmental Process

Tunnel Boring Options

Station Options

Public Engagement & Key Decision Dates

We appreciate your feedback after watching the webinar through this short survey.

Learn more about both phases of this project at www.vta.org/bart

Caltrain electrification funding plan OK'd; Atherton objects

By **JOHN ORR** – San Jose Mercury

The Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board on June 1 approved a funding plan for the Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project, which would see non-diesel Caltrains zooming along under powered electric cables, and possibly pave the way for high-speed rail.

But the plan faces some stumbling blocks, as far as the town of Atherton is concerned.

The Electrification Plan depends on \$600 million in money from Proposition 1A, which California voters approved in November 2008 to fund the high-speed rail project. The Joint Powers Board cut a deal with the High-Speed Rail Authority to take the \$600 million in Proposition 1A money in return for partial ownership of the Peninsula rail corridor, along which the high-speed rail is to run, if it is built.

But, according to attorney Mike Brady, that deal is illegal. Brady and attorney Stuart Flashman have already filed a suit in Sacramento County Superior Court, on behalf of Atherton, Kings County, two citizens groups and five individuals, challenging the constitutionality of the JPB/HSR plan.

“Proposition 1A has many rigid protections in it for how the money is to be spent,” Brady said on Wednesday. “They have not been complying with Proposition 1A.”

The proposition authorized a \$9.95 billion bond issuance to build the high-speed rail system from Anaheim to San Francisco.

As planning proceeded, the HSR Authority started having trouble meeting some of Proposition 1A’s requirements, including having all the money for the entire project in

hand, and it was suggested that the project be broken up into regional parts — including the electrification of the Caltrain tracks on the Peninsula.

Brady said that the state legislature, in 2016, passed AB 1889, to give more flexibility to the HSR Authority in how it used the bond-measure funds.

Which is where the legal issues arise: “1A is voter-approved,” Brady said. “An ordinary statute such as AB 1889 cannot change a voter-approved initiative.”

The court has set a management conference for the case for June 15, said Brady, at which time a hearing date would be scheduled.

Meanwhile, planning and meetings between Caltrain and Atherton staffs are continuing. Stacy Cocke, principal planner with the Caltrain Planning / Caltrain Modernization Program, said Monday that a work order is to be issued to Balfour Beatty Inc. on June 19 “that will enable us to start the physical work, tree removals, purchase of long lead items” and other needs for the project, which if it happens is likely to take three to four years of construction.

On Monday, Cocke said she thought 29 trees would have to be removed in Atherton, but Atherton Community Services Director Mike Kashiwagi told the town’s rail committee on Tuesday that he thought that number was down to 26, following a meeting he had that morning.

Atherton City Manager George Rodericks said Wednesday that the town “is not in favor of removing the trees.”

Caltrain can remove trees that are in its legal right of way; but if it wants to remove trees not in its right of way — such as some in Holbrook-Palmer Park — then it must apply to the town for permits, and if allowed, must replace each tree with three new ones.

“And not twigs,” Rodericks said.

The town has asked that Caltrain use center poles for hanging the power cables, instead of poles on either side of the tracks, which would possibly require more removal or pruning of trees.

Cocke explained that each pole must be 10 feet from the tracks. In the case of center poles, that would mean more than 20 feet between the northbound and southbound tracks, including the width of the poles themselves.

The exact number of center poles or side-to-side poles has yet to be determined for Atherton. “We’re still in preliminary design stage,” said Cocke. “We’re at about 35 percent out of a 100 percent design.”

If high-speed rail does come to Atherton, it will mean several other key changes along the tracks, most of which would be paid for by the HSR Authority. Quad gates (four-way traffic-stopping arms) would be installed at the Watkins Avenue crossing, and a system of fencing and pathways would be built at Atherton Station, to keep people from moving across the tracks when two trains are stopped there, or passing through.

Brady sounded a warning about that.

“They’d have to close the crossings every three minutes — they plan 10 trains an hour southbound and 10 trains an hour northbound. Can you imagine what that would do to traffic in the area?”

The only solution to that, Brady said, would be grade separations, where the street is tunneled under the tracks, or bridged over them.

“They don’t have the money to do that,” Brady said.

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[Chao: Infrastructure plan will include worker wage protections](#)

By Eric DuVall | June 8, 2017 at 2:03 PM - UPI

June 8 (UPI) -- Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao said Thursday that President Donald Trump's proposed infrastructure spending would include wage protections for construction workers Democrats have demanded in exchange for their support.

Chao, testifying before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, said Trump's proposed infrastructure spending -- one of the few issues on which he and Democrats agree in principle -- will include language guaranteeing fair market wages for workers on the projects. The wage protections, enshrined in federal law more than a century ago under the Davis-Bacon Act, were seen as a precursor to attracting Democratic support for Trump's infrastructure spending plan.

"If [Trump's infrastructure bill] targets unions or leaves Americans worse off, I will fight it every step of the way," Rep. Cedric Richmond, D-La., chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, said during a builders conference in April, according to The Hill. "And if it doesn't include prevailing wages and protect Davis-Bacon, it's a nonstarter -- at least for me."

Trump and congressional Democrats generally agree the nation's transportation system -- highways, bridges, airports, railroads, etc. -- needs a major overhaul. The spending plan could create tens of thousands of construction jobs and boost local economies. Such a plan appeals to the traditional

Democratic support base of organized labor, but also the millions of blue collar workers who supported Trump.

"We are here to talk about rebuilding our nation's infrastructure. Isn't it about time?" Trump said in a speech in Ohio on Wednesday. "We are spending money all over the world, except here. We don't spend our money here, we spend it all over -- and we'll do it using American labor, American energy, American iron, aluminum and steel."

Though Trump has yet to lay out any specific plans, it's likely the cost of a major infrastructure bill would stretch into the hundreds of billions, a price tag that GOP spending and deficit hawks might oppose.

The inclusion of Davis-Bacon wage protections in the legislation could complicate the effort to win over some Republican lawmakers. In the past, conservatives have fought to water down wage protections on federal spending projects, arguing they make it more expensive for taxpayers and more difficult for contractors to complete on budget.

It's time for 100 percent clean energy for all

By **Billy Parish** on June 8, 2017 1:00 am – San Francisco Examiner

Amidst all of the news about climate change, it's easy to overlook one major cause for optimism: Clean energy is winning. Here in California, renewables have come so far, so fast that we're breaking our records almost as quickly as we set them. For a few hours in March, we got 50 percent of our state's electricity from clean energy for the first time. Less than two months later, on May 13, we blew past that milestone, briefly achieving an 80 percent renewable electric grid.

Now, our legislators are preparing to consider whether it's time for the world's sixth largest economy to go all the way and set its sights on the clean energy holy grail: a grid powered by nothing but wind, water and sunlight.

On May 1, California Senate leader Kevin de Leon announced Senate Bill 100, which would mandate that California hit its current goal of 50 percent renewable electricity four years early (by 2026 instead of 2030), while also aiming for a new, 100 percent renewable electricity goal in 2045. Initially introduced on the same day that Congress voted in Scott Pruitt as head of the Environmental Protection Agency, the bill is a symbol of California's resistance to backwards federal energy policy. More than that, SB 100 is a milestone in a global effort to reinvent our energy system — and an incredible opportunity for California to lead the way in finishing the job.

Not long ago, SB 100 wouldn't have even been imaginable. But for years now, state policy makers, urged on by Californians, have done everything they can to make clean energy a Golden State brand. California today has six times more solar power, 10 times more electric vehicles and four times more clean tech patents than any other state.

California's leadership in clean energy has also translated into growth in clean energy jobs. A national census conducted last year found that California had more solar workers than the next 15 states combined. To put the numbers another way: We currently have more people employed

in solar in California than the whole country does in coal. Thanks to these successes and forward-looking research out of California universities, we can now see the path to building a completely clean electric grid. We know the goal is achievable. The question is whether we have the political willpower. So why should California aim for 100 percent?

In economic terms, a transition to 100 percent would create not just a new batch of companies but whole new industries. California would not only have to accelerate the deployment of wind and solar, but also craft the policy and make the investments to integrate and scale technologies, such as batteries and advanced smart grid and efficiency applications, necessary to create a fully renewable grid. These technologies exist and they will grow into huge global businesses as the next era of clean energy unfolds. The question is whether it will be California, China or another state or country that will lead that new era.

Aiming for 100 percent would also have a profound impact in determining who benefits from clean energy. Clean energy brings economic benefits, but it's currently easier for wealthier people (think: those who own homes and have good credit) to access those benefits. A lot of good work is being done to expand access clean energy, but we need to set a bigger, north star goal. Everyone should have access to the economic benefits of clean energy. No one should have to raise their kids in sight of a power plant or a polluted river. It's time we aimed at 100 percent clean energy for all, as fast as possible.

Above all, it's time for California to aim for 100 percent because it would show, once and for all, that a strong, equitable economy can go hand in hand with powerful climate action. The fossil fuel industry's strongest tactic has long been to argue that the modern economy can't go on without it. That argument has already begun to look worn, as nearly a hundred major corporations, cities from San Francisco to Atlanta, states like Hawaii and Massachusetts and even countries like Denmark, have begun to set 100 percent renewable energy targets. California, though, operates on a whole different scale. SB 100 would stand as one of the most ambitious renewable energy goals ever adopted anywhere in the world. If we can do it here, it can be done anywhere.

Like most concerned about the future of our planet, de Leon understands that 2017 is a special year. It's a year of peril for the environment, but also a year in which California has a unique opportunity to aim high. At this point in history, it's clear that clean energy will inevitably replace fossil fuels. The question is how long it will take, and the answer to that question matters.

I, for one, don't want to pass up an opportunity to leave my grandkids a fossil fuel-free state. It's time for California to do once again what it has done so many times before on clean energy: lead.

Billy Parish is founder and CEO of Mosaic, the largest lender for home solar in the country.

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[Chariot expands in S.F. and eyes Seattle, London, Toronto](#)

SF Gate

Commuter-shuttle service Chariot is adding routes at home while setting its sights on an ambitious national and international expansion.

The San Francisco company will begin providing rides from Potrero Hill on Monday, with plans to expand into the Sunset District in July and elsewhere in the Bay Area by the end of the year.

Meanwhile, job listings indicate the company has plans to serve Seattle; Chariot is now hiring drivers there. It is adding sales, marketing, management and operations staff in New York and Los Angeles. It is also seeking to place general managers in London and Toronto.

While the company said in January that it planned to expand to more cities, including one international location, this year, it has not previously disclosed expansion plans. A spokeswoman said Chariot is “exploring several markets in the longer term.” It also operates in Lake Tahoe and Austin, Texas.

The Potrero Hill addition is the first service expansion in the city since Chariot added a route in the Mission District in February 2016 — not long before it was acquired by Ford Motor Co.

CEO Ali Vahabzadeh said Chariot is looking to double the number of routes it serves in the Bay Area this year. The company has long solicited route ideas from prospective riders and allowed them to sign up for proposed routes. It has now introduced a refined version of that route-proposal tool on its app and website.

ALSO

Waymo-Uber trade-secrets case set for October trial

Uber fires 20 workers in harassment probe, hires 2 women execs

Vahabzadeh said Chariot is considering routes in Fremont, San Jose and the North Bay. (It is seeking approval from regulators to take commuters between counties, which it currently cannot do.) Once requests hit a certain number in an area, vans will start serving it.

Users who start successful campaigns to bring Chariot into their neighborhoods will get free rides for a month.

“Because we are under Ford now, we can scale up the supply much more reliably to fulfill our goal to meet demand for first- and last-mile commutes,” Vahabzadeh said.

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency is seeking new guidelines to regulate Chariot and future services like it.

At its Citizens Advisory Council meeting in March, the agency said it is considering requiring a private transit vehicle permit for Chariot, which would include a review of its routes, stops, fees and administrative penalties. The agency may also require private bus services to have safety

training for drivers, provide ridership and location data and offer equal access to people with disabilities.

Chariot provides training for drivers and allows people with disabilities to request a wheelchair ramp.

“We will continue to monitor their services to better understand how their operations impact San Francisco’s transportation system,” said spokesman Paul Rose.

Analysts said that while the service meets a need among commuters, it also risks creating a two-tiered transportation system divided by income.

Susan Shaheen, co-director of UC Berkeley’s Transportation Sustainability Research Center, said that while companies like Chariot can in theory complement existing public transit by reducing crowds at peak periods, it’s not clear whether that’s happening to any significant extent.

“What we are seeing is it is possibly competing with public transit so much that it hurts the ability of public transit to play a role,” she said.

Vahabzadeh believes Chariot helps feed people into public transit. One in 5 Chariot riders uses the service to go to BART, Caltrain, a bus or a ferry to get the rest of the way home, he said.

“We are providing them a way to access these transit stations where otherwise they would continue driving to Palo Alto or the East Bay in cars,” he said.

Chariot costs on average \$1.50 more per ride than Muni, and requires a smartphone and credit card.

The technology is “potentially leaving demographic groups behind,” Shaheen said.

Still, Chariot has clearly tapped into a source of demand. Software engineer Ajay Prakash, 28, who lives and works in Potrero Hill, has a bus stop in front of his office building and often takes public transit to get to the Mission and Financial districts.

“There are a lot of shady people on the bus,” he said. “So if there was a better alternative, I would definitely use that.”

Nicholas Cheng is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. Email: ncheng@sfchronicle.com
Twitter: @nichocheng

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[**Marin IJ Editorial: Making guinea pigs out of Marin commuters**](#)

Marin Independent Journal

State and regional authorities should respect Marin officials’ request that the ramifications of extending the hours for the Highway 101 HOV lanes be carefully studied before they are changed, even for a summertime trial.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Bay Area's regional transportation authority, wants to not only extend the hours throughout the Bay Area, but make them more uniform from county to county.

For instance, on Highway 101 through Marin, the southbound lane is reserved for high-occupancy vehicles between 6:30 and 8:30 a.m. MTC wants to conduct a summer-time trial, extending the hours to as late as 10 a.m.

The case made by the regional agency is that opening the lane during the commute simply jams it with traffic, undermining its effectiveness for those who carpool or take the bus.

MTC's proposal would be to extend the hours for northbound 101 during the afternoon commute.

Last month, local officials appeared publicly complacent to a trial. That response has changed in recent weeks. Marin's two state lawmakers, Sen. Mike McGuire and Assemblyman Marc Levine, have called for a study before changing the hours on Highway 101.

The Transportation Authority of Marin finally joined them, complaining MTC is moving too fast and that the ramifications of traffic not using the HOV lane need to be studied.

TAM has estimated that it could worsen commute traffic by as much as 25 percent. The estimate is reason for caution.

At an April TAM meeting, the California Highway Patrol predicted the change, even as a summertime trial, would increase the duration of the daily traffic jam and increase the possibility of traffic accidents.

TAM is worried that more of the congestion will spill over to local streets.

Unlike other Bay Area counties, Highway 101 is Marin's "Main Street." There isn't a second or third highway crossing the county. That's one of the reasons why the HOV is already jammed long before it is opened to all cars.

As TAM Executive Director Dianne Steinhauser puts it: "Our system is very fragile."

There is logic behind MTC's desire to bring uniformity to the rules for the region's HOV lanes, getting them to flow better and wooing more motorists into buses and carpools.

MTC says the trial period will give authorities a better idea of benefits and drawbacks of the change.

Instead of using Marin commuters as their guinea pigs, it is wiser to listen to those who depend on the freeway in question and take their advice and address their concerns before making any changes. TAM should have delivered that message in April, but better late than never for the tens of thousands of Marin commuters who rely on Highway 101.

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Sent: Friday, June 09, 2017 2:46 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: June 9, 2017 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Friday, June 9, 2017

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[Downtown San Jose will feel Google's ripple effect](#)

Silicon Valley Business Journal

Google's arrival downtown would be the enabler of a vision for San Jose's core that was first crystallized in its master plan.

It's a vision - long-anticipated but never realized - of a dense urban place where people live, work and shop downtown. They have succumbed to their suppressed desire to abandon cars because, at last, it's possible to do so without abandoning the spontaneous jaunt to Willow Glen, L.A. or Beijing.

"We have fast-moving plans to transform this sleepy station into the busiest multi-modal station in the West," Mayor Sam Liccardo said of Diridon Station, epicenter of the new dreams of Googledom. "And as we do so, it enhances the potential for economic development here at Diridon and throughout the downtown."

San Jose's new buildings will be taller and they will spread farther to the east as well as the west if it occurs as planners and downtown interests hope. They will stretch along the city's newest transportation artery - the BART subway beneath Santa Clara Street set to open in nine years - as now-vacant parcels controlled by the Valley Transportation Authority for subway construction staging become available again for development.

"I honestly believe that San Jose is finally at the tipping point after years and decades of conversations," said Matt Mahood, president and CEO of the Silicon Valley Organization, formerly known as the chamber of commerce, who said we need to be thinking about stuff like flying cars, not road-bound personal vehicles.

"I think it's paramount that we think big and think long term. If we don't build big enough and grand enough, it's really hard to go back and redo that. You want to think about not just the transportation nodes of today but of the future."

A lot was happening before Google, but Google means the planners' vision for downtown was not a pipe dream.

There are already dozens of smaller projects in the pipeline, including more than 8,000 residential units and millions of square feet in office, retail and industrial space. Vacancy rates are at a 17-year low at 9.6 percent.

"It seems that for most deals in the suburban market, there's no sense of urgency because there's enough available space that tenants don't feel the need to move quickly," said Anne Ralston, senior managing director at Newmark Cornish & Carey. "In downtown San Jose, with a very limited Class A office market (just 2.8 million square feet, less than half Google's reported need), tenants are feeling the pinch and are snapping up deals ... I can feel the difference."

The beginnings of today's downtown date to the now-defunct San Jose Redevelopment Agency. It pumped \$1.8 billion of special tax district funds into projects ranging from the Fairmont Hotel,

McEnery Convention Center and what is now called the SAP Center, home of the National Hockey League's Sharks, until Gov. Jerry Brown successfully pushed for the dissolution of such agencies statewide in 2011.

Adobe came downtown in 1996, but no other tech giant followed, though Jonathan Francom, an Adobe VP, said "our experience has been defined by growth and progress and our space has been through many changes."

Nevertheless, those projects and more recent new downtown housing never achieved the critical mass necessary for a truly dense urban core.

Yet in a place of San Jose's size, where the Diridon area's development on the west is only 13 blocks from downtown's unofficial eastern border along Fourth Street, there is no imaginable rival to Google in size or potential impact on what the city's central core could become.

If the company brings 15,000 to 20,000 employees to downtown, as city officials said in their announcement, then previous No. 1 employer San Jose State University's 5,000 faculty and staff will be outnumbered by up to four to one.

Which is all to the good, said SJSU President Mary Papazian, who believes the BART subway to the East Bay just a block from her campus will expand the city's physical downtown as well as residents' concept of what their downtown is.

It will create "expanded concentric circles that balance out the city's focus," she said.

In San Jose, a downtown that can spread away from its center is a downtown whose skyline can grow taller as it moves away from the flight path to Mineta San Jose International Airport. It opens up millions of square feet of office, retail and living space that the same footprint between the Guadalupe Freeway and Market Street can't accommodate.

There are two efforts under way to raise the Federal Aviation Administration's building heights downtown even as some projects already under construction are pressing beyond The 88, a 286-foot (22 stories) residential and retail tower on East San Fernando Street, which is the city's tallest building.

Under construction is the 228-foot Silvery Towers condo project on West St. James and twin 23-story residential towers on the site of the former Greyhound Station. Proposed for 2019 completion is the 24-story Gateway Tower residential structure on South First Street.

See also: Is this San Jose's big renaissance? Watch it happen with Crane Watch

The city has restarted talks with the FAA over raising height limits, according to Kim Welsh, deputy city manager and director of economic development. The Downtown Association, Silicon Valley Organization and Bay Area urban planning nonprofit SPUR will soon solicit proposals

from aviation consultants to explore additional possibilities for taller buildings.

"I'm starting to have the feeling that folks are getting it," said the Downtown Association's Scott Knies.

[Indian American lawyer Kirtee Kapoor dies after being hit by Caltrain in California](#)

The American Bazaar

Kapoor was the head of Davis Polk & Wardwell's India group and a partner at the firm in Menlo Park.

Indian American lawyer Kirtee Kapoor died on Monday after he was hit by a train at a crossing near Atherton of northern California.

Follow @ambazaarmag

The 46-year-old Kapoor, the head of Davis Polk & Wardwell's India group and a partner at the firm in Menlo Park, California, was killed by Caltrain at the Watkins Avenue crossing, Mercury News reported.

"Early reports indicate this was an intentional act," Palo Alto online quoted Caltrain spokesperson Tasha Bartholomew's statement. He was trespassing at the crossing and was in the train's right-of-way, she said.

Thomas McGovern from the San Mateo County Coroner's office told Mercury News that the death is still being investigated.

"Kirtee was truly wonderful man. His optimism, warmth, honesty and wisdom were inspiring. He will be remembered as a great partner of the firm, a beloved colleague and adviser, and a steadfast friend to so many," according to a statement released on Davis Polk website read.

Kapoor was born in Bangalore and earned his LLB from the University of Delhi Faculty of Law, where he was Editor-in-Chief of the Student's Law Review and Moot Court Society's president. He received his BCL from Balliol College, University of Oxford and was an Inlaks Scholar. He earned his LLM from the New York University School of Law.

Kapoor joined Davis Polk's New York office as an associate in 1999 and was elected to the partnership in 2007. He joined the Northern California office in 2015.

Kapoor is survived by his wife and daughter, who live in Menlo Park.

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Californians give big thumbs down to new gas tax, poll finds

San Jose Mercury

SACRAMENTO — Californians may hate swerving to avoid potholes, but a new law that will charge drivers an extra \$10 a month to pave over the state's problem roads is provoking its own kind of road rage.

People up and down the Golden State — and all but the most liberal of Democrats — are against the gas tax that the Legislature narrowly passed in April, according to a new poll by UC Berkeley's Institute of Governmental Studies.

Caltrans typo sparks the question: Do you know the way to the 'Corona na Fwy.?'

Proposed urban village near Diridon Station: 300 units on 1.22 acres

Feds fault pilot for striking trees in 2014 Yosemite crash

Community college VTA 'Eco Pass' fees will increase, but not as much as proposed

Collision in San Jose injures 3

"When you're digging into somebody's wallet, it's when they sit up, pay attention and start to object," said Mark DiCamillo, who directs the Berkeley IGS Poll.

Fifty-eight percent of registered voters oppose the tax, while 35 percent favor it and seven percent have no opinion, the poll found.

While there is little they can do about the law, voters might make their outrage known in next year's elections.

"No doubt, some of these legislators will be in peril in 2018," said Larry Gerston, a political science professor emeritus at San Jose State. "It's happened before — you go out on a limb and you pay for it."

Deep potholes on Stone Ct. off Villa Stone Drive which is in bad need of road-repairs in San Jose, Calif., on Wednesday, March 29, 2017. (Josie Lepe/Bay Area News Group)

Deep potholes on Stone Ct. off Villa Stone Drive which is in bad need of road-repairs in San Jose, Calif., on Wednesday, March 29, 2017. (Josie Lepe/Bay Area News Group) Josie Lepe/Bay Area News Group

The Legislature could already be paying the price. Its public approval rating dropped to 50 percent — down 7 points since March, the poll found. One effort is underway to recall freshman Sen. Josh Newman, D-Fullerton, who voted for the tax — while volunteers gather signatures to overturn the law through a long-shot ballot initiative launched by Assemblyman Travis Allen, R-Huntington Beach.

Mark Carbonaro, a self-described independent voter from Monterey, describes the tax as "punitive" and harmful to Californians coping with skyrocketing housing prices and other costs.

He sees it as another example of Democrats making life harder for the people they should be trying to help.

“You look around and you say, ‘These people claim to be the friends of the poor, but all of these things they’re doing end up raising the cost of living,’” he said.

While the Bay Area was evenly split on the subject, a whopping 72 percent of voters in the state’s more conservative Inland Empire and 65 percent in the Central Valley said they opposed the law — enough to make incumbent Democrats facing re-election shudder.

State Sen. Jim Beall, D-Campbell, was the lead author of Senate Bill 1, which will raise the gas tax by 12 cents per gallon starting in November and increase the annual vehicle registration fee next year by \$25-\$175, depending on the value of the car. The state estimates the increases will cost the average driver about \$10 a month.

Beall worked for years to craft a proposal that would help California bring the state’s crumbling roads back into shape after years of neglect. Delaying maintenance and repairs will only drive the cost up, he said when asked about the poll.

SJM-GASTAXPOLL-0609-90“Nobody likes these kind of things,” Beall said. “But they understand that unpleasant things have to happen when you get to the point where the roads are going to fall apart. It’s an ongoing expense that has to be paid for.”

Beall suggested voters might feel differently if the survey question had included more information about the degree of the problem, the average cost to drivers, and how the money would be used.

The Berkeley poll surveyed 1,628 Californians, including 1,271 registered voters, by phone between May 4-29. The maximum margin of error for the likely voter sample is plus or minus 2.7 percentage points.

The tax, which Gov. Jerry Brown championed and signed into law, received the most support among younger voters, Bay Area residents, Californians with advanced degrees, and Democrats. But dissatisfaction was high even among those groups.

The results underscore just what Gerston calls “the famous disconnect of American politics: People want things done, but so often the people who want them done don’t want to pay for it.”

Chris Clark, a retired teacher living in Santa Clara, said she feels differently about the tax. She thinks of her 1978 Cadillac, which has taken a beating from the roads. It recently hit a pothole off Highway 17 that was so big, she said, her first thought was: “My God, I’m lucky I didn’t get stuck in there.”

She is hoping the tax ends up being a good trade-off for drivers — even if most Californians are more skeptical.

“It’s better to put the money there,” she said, “instead of getting our cars fixed.”

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[State analyst recommends lawmakers create accountability measures for spending billions from higher gas tax](#)

Los Angeles Times

The California Legislature should develop methods for holding the administration accountable for effectively spending \$5.2 billion annually from recently approved increases to the gas tax and vehicle fees, the Legislative Analyst's Office said Thursday.

Gov. Jerry Brown signed the tax and fee hikes to provide money to maintain and repair state roads and highways and expand mass transit.

“Though SB 1 establishes various long-term performance outcome measures for highway conditions, the legislation does not include specific mechanisms for holding the administration accountable for achieving these outcomes nor does it set interim benchmarks against which to measure the administration's progress in the near term,” the LAO report said.

The analyst said the Legislature could pass a law that sets “interim outcome measures against which to measure the administration's progress in achieving the longer-term outcomes.”

“It also could consider consequences should the administration not achieve these interim outcome measures,” the LAO report said. “For instance, the Legislature could consider reprioritizing funding across programs (such as from rehabilitation to maintenance) or enacting organizational or governance changes to state transportation agencies to improve their effectiveness.”

One LAO proposal would strengthen the California Transportation Commission to oversee Caltrans' rehabilitation projects by authorizing the commission to approve or reject individual projects, rather than an entire program of projects.

The analyst noted SB 1 does not explicitly determine how to allocate money between state highway maintenance and rehabilitation programs. The governor's budget proposes slightly more money for maintenance.

“As maintenance projects can help prevent more costly rehabilitation projects in the future, the Legislature could consider allocating more funding to maintenance to achieve long-term savings,” the report concluded.

[If you don't like California's gas tax increase, you're not alone](#)

BY CHRISTOPHER CADELAGO – SACRAMENTO BEE

California voters overwhelmingly oppose a recent tax and fee package pushed by Gov. Jerry Brown and the Democratic-dominated Legislature to pay for road repairs, a new poll finds.

The gas tax law, which ushers in a 10-year program to raise more than \$52 billion for transportation projects, is so unpopular it could backfire on Democrats in upcoming elections.

IGS POLL: GAS TAX

More than half of California's registered voters oppose the new state law raising taxes on gas and vehicle registration fees.

Source: Berkeley IGS Poll

Fifty eight percent of voters oppose Senate Bill 1, including 39 percent who say they strongly reject the legislation, according to the survey from UC Berkeley's Institute of Governmental Studies. Only 35 percent favor the law, which raises taxes on gasoline and diesel and hikes vehicle registration fees to fix roads and highways.

The opposition is widespread. Voters in all major regions of the state other than the Bay Area, all listed races and ethnic subgroups, and all age categories over 30 are unhappy about it. Strongly liberal voters are the only group in which a large majority supports the law.

Senate Bill 1 endeavors to raise \$5.2 billion annually through a 12-cent gas tax increase that begins in November and a new fee based on the value of vehicles.

The bottom line, said poll director Mark DiCamillo, is that people don't like to have their taxes increased. He recalled how the late pollster Mervin Field, who chronicled public opinion for decades in California, was fond of saying that the pocketbook nerve is the most sensitive political nerve in a person's body.

"When you are reaching into somebody's pocket for more money, people start to pay attention and get alarmed," DiCamillo said.

Democrats in closely contested legislative districts could pay a price for raising taxes, he said. "That's where you might see it rear its head – in competitive districts," he added.

An early indicator for how the gas tax could play out in next year's legislative elections is the pending recall effort of Democratic Sen. Josh Newman in Southern California.

Newman, a freshman lawmaker who supported the tax hike despite winning by fewer than 2,500 votes last fall, would stand before voters again if his opponents can gather enough signatures to put the recall on the ballot.

Josh Newman vows to beat recall attempt: 'We are not giving this seat back'

Separately, Assemblyman Travis Allen, R-Huntington Beach, has begun an effort to put a repeal of the gas tax on the statewide ballot.

The gas tax survey suggests lawmakers are already feeling the effects of their votes, DiCamillo said. It showed a large drop in voter assessments of their job performance since the last Berkeley IGS Poll in March. As many voters disapprove (50 percent) as approve (50 percent) of the job they are doing, compared with the 14-percentage point advantage they held in March, when they had 57 percent approval.

Still, one politician who appears to have emerged from the tax hike politically unscathed is the man who helped orchestrate – and sell – the deal: Brown. After the vote, he repeatedly defended offering nearly \$1 billion in district-specific funding projects to win skeptical lawmakers' support.

The Democratic governor, in his final term, saw virtually no change in his positive job performance rating, which now stands at 59 percent approval and 41 percent disapproval.

DiCamillo attributed the status quo in Brown's popularity to voters not paying much attention to the lobbying effort behind the gas tax.

"Most Californians aren't following the day-to-day machinations of how the laws gets made, who's doing what," he said. "They are not process people. That's inside baseball."

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[Self-driving vehicle involved in collision with San Francisco bicyclist](#)

San Jose Mercury

SAN FRANCISCO – A bicyclist suffered minor injuries in a collision with a self-driving vehicle in San Francisco's South of Market neighborhood last month, the California Department of Motor Vehicles reported today.

The collision, which the DMV reported as part of its tracking program for autonomous vehicles, involved a 2017 Chevrolet Bolt EV equipped with autonomous driving technology driving on May 25.

The collision occurred shortly before 5:30 p.m. when the vehicle, which was driving north on 11th Street, made a left turn onto Mission Street in the outer of two turn lanes.

When a vehicle in the inner turn lane began to cut in front of the Bolt, it braked, causing a bicyclist who had been crossing closely behind to ride into the rear of the vehicle.

The vehicle's occupant reported that the bicyclist suffered a scraped knee and expressed an intention to seek medical attention, but police and paramedics were not called to the scene.

The vehicle suffered a minor scratch in the collision and the bicycle was not damaged, according to the DMV report.

The DMV requires companies to obtain permits before testing autonomous vehicles in California and tracks data including collisions, making that information publicly available.

General Motors has been testing Bolt EV prototypes equipped with autonomous driving technology in cities including San Francisco since last year.

The vehicles have been involved in three other collisions in San Francisco so far this year, one of which resulted in a minor injury.

SFMTA reduces speed limit on major city streets

San Francisco Examiner

San Francisco's transit agency is reducing the speed limit along major thoroughfares on the west side of The City, as well as other neighborhoods, as part of its plan to eliminate traffic deaths.

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency reduced the limit from 35 to 30 mph on sections of Fulton Street and Sunset Boulevard, as well as from 30 to 25 mph in various locations in South of Market, Haight Ashbury, Parkmerced, Dogpatch and Westwood Highlands neighborhoods, according to the SFMTA.

The Sunset Boulevard speed limit was reduced between Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and Lake Merced Boulevard, and on Fulton Street between Arguello Boulevard and the Great Highway.

The changes were implemented earlier this year and were authorized Tuesday in the Transportation Code by the SFMTA Board of Directors.

"People don't realize how much impact speeding has," said John Knox White, a transportation planner for the SFMTA. "You are twice as likely to kill someone if you drive 35 mph instead of 30."

The reduction supports the Vision Zero plan, a campaign that aims to eliminate crashes leading to fatalities and severe injuries by 2024.

"We have been focused on improving pedestrian, bike and traffic safety on The City's High Injury Network, the 12 percent of San Francisco streets where 70 percent of our severe and fatal traffic injuries occur," Rose said.

To achieve the goal, city officials and community members are working on improving the streets, campaigning for new traffic safety laws and educating the public, said Cathy DeLuca, the program manager for advocacy group Walk San Francisco.

The Vision Zero plan “exists because you shouldn’t have to die if someone makes a mistake,” DeLuca said.

To measure the danger of a street and choose where to implement changes, the Department of Public Health analyzes the number of collisions there that led to injuries, said Knox White of the SFMTA.

The locations where the speed limit was reduced are considered dangerous by The City, meaning more people are injured in crashes on those streets, SFMTA spokesperson Paul Rose said.

At one of the locations where the speed limit was reduced, an 87-year-old man died in a car crash at Sunset Boulevard in 2016, according to the Vision Zero Map.

A 64-year-old woman died while walking near the part of Monterey Boulevard that is also seeing a speed reduction.

In total, around 30 pedestrians die in San Francisco car crashes each year, according to The City’s Performance Scorecards website.

The speed reduction won’t affect The City’s budget and is exempted from environmental review, according to the SFMTA.

John Zwolinski, a Sunset District resident, said he welcomes the lower speed limit along Sunset Boulevard, where he has witnessed speeding cars on multiple occasions.

“If reducing the posted speed limit is what it takes to bring speeds down on the Sunset ... then I am for it,” said Zwolinski. “The new reduction might have a calming effect.”

“If you want folks to go 35 [mph], post the speed limit at 30 [mph],” Zwolinski said. “Folks frequently hit 50 [mph] on Sunset, even though the lights are kinda-sorta timed.”

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[New sea trail, Village sidewalks and Hakone’s Koi ponds highlight](#)

[Saratoga plans](#)

San Jose Mercury

Saratoga’s proposed \$41.73 million budget sets aside money to initiate the extension of a popular hiking trail, make safety improvements to the Prospect Road/Saratoga Avenue corridor, rehabilitate Village crosswalks and sidewalks and add a deputy city manager position.

The City Council was scheduled to consider adopting the 2017-18 fiscal year budget at its meeting Wednesday night, after the Saratoga News goes to press. The new fiscal year begins July 1.

Included in the budget is \$250,000 to begin the design and environmental review phase for extending the Saratoga-to-the-Sea Trail project. Part of the Santa Clara County Trail Master

Plan, the Saratoga-to-the-Sea Trail will start in Saratoga Village, pass through Hakone Gardens and Quarry Park and connect to the Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail in Sanborn Park. An additional \$50,000 will go toward work on a Saratoga Village to Quarry Park walkway, an essential starting point to the Saratoga-to-the-Sea trail that is expected to increase pedestrian traffic into the Village.

The budget also allocates \$4.75 million toward improving safety conditions along the Prospect Road/Saratoga Avenue corridor and almost \$2 million toward annual roadway improvements. Money for those projects will come from state gas tax revenue and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's half-cent sales tax, which county voters approved last November.

City officials estimate that property taxes will exceed \$12.1 million, a 3 percent increase from last year. Property taxes account for the largest source of the city's general fund revenue—56 percent. More than half of the city's property tax revenue goes to its schools.

Although the overall property tax revenue is expected to increase, revenue from a transfer tax imposed when property changes hands is projected to decline because of a slowdown in home sales. The sales tax also is projected to decrease.

Among the capital improvement expenditures budgeted for the next fiscal year is \$382,000 for Village crosswalk and sidewalk rehabilitation that, when completed in 2020, will feature bulb outs, enhanced crosswalks, decorative landscapes and benches near Fifth and Sixth streets.

Because wet winters the past two seasons caused landslides and fallen trees, the budget allocates \$350,000 to repair and maintain retaining walls so they don't fail and damage streets and properties.

Park and trail infrastructure will get a \$100,000 boost in necessary improvements.

Also budgeted is \$250,000 for improvements to Hakone Gardens Koi Pond. An analysis of the Koi pond during development of the Hakone Gardens Master Plan revealed that the water filtration system needs to be replaced for the health of the Koi pond ecosystem. The money will pay for plumbing, mechanical and electrical upgrades needed for the filtration system and construction of a small structure to house all of the necessary equipment.

In addition, the budget allocates \$95,000 for traffic safety, \$25,000 for America in Bloom, \$20,000 for senior transportation and \$15,000 for a new public arts committee.

The total salaries and benefits of city employees grew by \$236,000, primarily through creation of a full-time deputy city manager position. In all, the city will spend a proposed \$7.8 million on salary and benefits for its employees.

A continuing budget priority is paying down the city's unfunded pension liability with the California Public Employees' Retirement System.

Saratoga made a one-time \$3.3 million payment in early 2015 to reduce its share of the liability and committed to annual payments of \$500,000 toward the remaining balance over 15 years. This year's budget allocates a \$750,000 payment

Also included in the budget is almost \$5.52 million for Santa Clara County Sheriff's Department services, an increase from last year's \$5.37 million. The bump is attributed to the city's Neighborhood Watch groups, whose vigilance has led to more calls to the sheriff's West Valley office, which oversees Saratoga.

To view the completed city budget, visit saratoga.ca.us.

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Conserve paper. Think before you print.

From: Board Secretary

Sent: Friday, June 09, 2017 4:52 PM

To: VTA Board of Directors

Subject: VTA Correspondence: Eco Pass; VTA Response Regarding Statements Made During KTVU 2 Investigative Story

VTA Board of Directors:

We are forwarding you the following:

From	Topic
Members of the Public	Eco Pass
VTA	Staff response to member of the public regarding statements made during the KTVU 2 investigative story

Thank you.

Office of the Board Secretary
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
3331 N. First Street
San Jose, CA 95134
408.321.5680
board.secretary@vta.org



From: Christy Riggins
Sent: Tuesday, May 09, 2017 12:38 PM
To: dave.cortese
Cc: AS Transportation Office Mailbox
Subject: Elimination of the Express Bus

Supervisor Cortese,

While we all know progress needs to happen in order to keep things working around here, too many times people who are dependent on how things work now are ignored and they suffer for it. I work for San Jose State and am aware of the extreme need for alternative ways to get people from one place to another other than by car. We are in the middle of a congested downtown area with no place to expand. Our students need ways to get from outer areas to the campus without high fare costs as well as parking. Please add the use of the Express Bus to the Collegiate Eco Pass Program. You are affecting the area in more ways than you can imagine and it's time to consider what your changes are going to do to the community.

Christy Riggins

From: Brian Belet
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2017 1:49 PM
To: dave.cortese
Cc: transportation@sjsu.edu
Subject: Save SJSU access to Collegiate Eco Pass Clipper program

Dave Cortese, President

Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors

Dear Mr. Cortese,

I am a Professor at San Jose State University, and I use VTA to commute from my home in Campbell to SJSU on a daily basis. I use a combination of bus routes and light rail, and the SJSU Eco Pass is crucial to my work environment. Please note that I have used VTA for my work commute since 1994, so I am long-time user of the SJSU program that makes VTA transportation a viable option for both faculty and students.

The new VTA Strategic Plan contains several problems, mainly because VTA is looking primarily at saving money, often to the detriment of the riders, especially those in under served

areas. That is one problem, and it runs the risk of driving more people away from using VTA, which hurts revenue in the long run.

Another issue is the VTA's intention to exclude express bus service from the SJSU Collegiate Eco Pass Clipper program. While I do not currently use express buses often (simply because my normal commute does not present that option) I know that several of my students rely on this mode of expedited transportation for their commute. It is simply imperative that the express bus service remain part of the SJSU commuter program. Many students survive on a very limited fixed income budget, and adding a \$9/day expense for transportation will add up to a most serious financial burden. SJSU is a major economic factor in San Jose, and I know that the campus provides an enormous economic boost to the overall San Jose (and greater Santa Clara County) financial picture. This is not the time, nor is this VTA Strategic Plan the proper way to "nickel and dime" the students and faculty of the university. The negative press and 'bad will' such a move will generate promises to cancel out any short-term perceived revenue savings. I will certainly be on the protest line should VTA remove the express bus service from the Collegiate Eco Pass Clipper program. And, unlike students, I live here permanently, and will be here for many years. I vote in every election, and my vote on future tax and bond measures that provide millions of dollars to VTA rests now on this single issue.

I urge you to employ your political influence and human sense of fair play to work with SJSU to retain the express bus service within the larger Collegiate Eco Pass Clipper program. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian Belet

From: Tarun Saini
Sent: Thursday, May 25, 2017 12:17 PM
To: dave.cortese
Subject: Stop the VTA eco pass fee increase

My name is Tarun. I'm a student at De Anza College, and I'm reaching out to you because I am asking you to oppose the VTA fare increase to the Ecopass for Foothill/De Anza, when voting on June 1. While I certainly do wish the ecopass fare program to be sustainable, the quadrupling of the fare increase is unreasonable without further negotiations.

I oppose the fee increase because of the following reasons: First, most of the students rely upon the public transportation. Second, there is already a high tuition fee that the students are paying each year. Third, it is related to environmental issues because if there is an increment in the fee students will rely upon personal automobile rather than public transport. This issue is very important to myself and my fellow students. Already, nearly a thousand students have signed a petition opposing the fee increase, as a 400% raise is not reasonable. Large numbers of students have attended community and board meetings. We ask that you oppose the fee increase so that students can be involved in negotiating the price increase. We don't want VTA to die, but we want students to succeed.

From: Sybil Leonard
Sent: Friday, May 26, 2017 9:53 AM
To: dave.cortese
Subject: Eco Pass Program

Dave Cortese, President, Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors
Email: dave.cortese

To The Honorable Dave Cortese, President, Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors.

My name is Sybil Leonard. I am a student at San Jose State University. I am 65 years old back in school learning the golden rule. I am proud to do this with the help of financial aid and scholarships. I have to work hard for this.

Medicare and all other insurance goes up for me all the time. This is hard for me to make ends meet. I solicit your help with your consideration to ease up on rising costs to seniors and to me as a student.

I have earned my Associates Degree, Paralegal Certification, and I am working on my

BA in Political Science. Maybe law school in the future. That depends on how you can help me by eliminating rising bus service costs. Cup of noodles helps me budget to put myself through school. Kindly help me by not raising bus service.

I need your help in keeping the express buses in the Eco Pass Program.

I understand the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is proposing to exclude the express bus service from Eco Pass Clipper and increase the cost of the program in Spring 2018. This could cost me \$4.50 per one-way trip. These proposed changes are against the interests of San Jose State University (SJSU) and other college communities. They are also against VTA's Strategic Plan of "making it easier for people to get around, and help reduce traffic congestion."

Kindly let me help you.

Regards and thank you.
Sybil Leonard

From: David Fournier
Sent: Tuesday, May 30, 2017 4:56 PM
To: mayoremail@sanjose; dave.cortese
Cc: AS Transportation Office Mailbox
Subject: Eco Pass

Hello,

I am writing to express my opposition to the latest anti-ridership proposal. I am a student at San Jose State University and I cannot afford private motor transportation. The plan as it stands would restrict access that I have to express buses and harm both students and the VTA. \$300,000 is far too high a price to pay and cutting down the number of cars on the road is necessary in order to decrease congestion in San Jose and improve air quality for all.

Regards,

David Fournier

From: Martin Tran

Sent: Wednesday, May 31, 2017 10:00 AM

To: dave.cortese; mayoremail@sanjose

Subject: Concern disabled student at SJSU and frequent VTA Rider

Dear Mr. Cortese and Mayor Liccardo

My name is Martin Tran, and I am a disabled student at SJSU who suffered a vision loss in my left eye. I received an email from the transportation department at SJSU that stated that VTA would restrict students and employers to continue using the VTA Ecco pass. I was very disappointed to read that email because it would affect my future. The VTA Ecco pass has beneficial to me and others at SJSU because we don't have regular transportation and finances is difficult at times. Without the pass, students at SJSU wouldn't be able to obtain an education. I understand there are discounted prices for disabled citizens and outreach, but some don't qualify for that because their disabilities are not severe. If I don't have a vta ecco pass, I would lose my chances to go to school and work in the future. Evergreen Valley College had faced this issues for numerous years but they were able to obtain the passes for students last spring. VTA should continue their partnerships with schools to allow students to have a way to get to work or school. Some of us are not financially fortunate to have everything in life. I understand that some people have to cut cost on necessities. I hope that you and the Mayor of San Jose can help students and workers find ways to meet their transportation needs. Share rides get expensive for most people despite class structure.

From: Dave Kessler
Sent: Wednesday, May 31, 2017 12:59 PM
To: dave.cortese
Subject: SJSU students loss of Express Bus priviledges

Mr. Cortese,

I'm writing you today to express my concern about the proposal of VTA to remove SJSU student access to Express Bus service unless it pays an additional \$300,000 annually to cover ALL students. Obviously not all SJSU students need to use the Express Bus service so why can't VTA only charge for those that do instead of the charging ridiculously high amount to cover all students that will never use it. SJSU can't afford that additional cost. VTA will be taking money for passengers not carried as well. In my case, there is no alternative to the Express Bus 168 from Gilroy. I've taken this route for years and this proposal will force me back into my car along with all the other students coming from south of Santa Teresa. There is no light rail service to south county and the only other bus takes two hours in each direction. I will have no choice but to drive to downtown San Jose if Express Bus service is removed from the SJSU Eco Pass plan. The exact opposite of what we all and VTA itself claims to accomplish with the new proposal. Please help!

-----Original Message-----

From: Sandeep Chandok
Sent: Thursday, June 01, 2017 11:39 AM
To: dave.cortese
Subject: SJSU Clipper Card

Greetings Dave,

As a San Jose State student that uses VTA, it would be very dissatisfying to revoke a resource that thousands on campus utilize. For many, the cost of driving + parking on campus (\$200 a semester) is quite expensive. Not to mention, parking is not guaranteed as garages fill up by 9am. For all the money we pay for tuition, taking away consistently used tool that benefits many would be extremely unfair.

Respectfully,

Sandeep Chandok

From: Vinay Puttanna

Sent: Monday, June 05, 2017 3:27 PM

To: dave.cortese

Subject: Opposition to the fare restructuring plan to create a separate class of Eco Pass

Dear Cortese,

I am an MS Computer Engineering graduate student at SJSU. The Eco Pass program offered by the Associated Students Transportation Solutions is one of the main reasons for my academic success and a dignified living here in the US. Fare restructuring will affect many students including me to commute to the university, to buy groceries and to lead a better life. I kindly request you to reconsider fare restructuring that would benefit student community. Thank you.

Regards,

Vinay Puttanna

From: Board Secretary
Sent: Friday, May 26, 2017 11:30 AM
To: 'RJ Payomo'
Subject: VTA response to your email dated May 25, 2017

Dear RJ Payomo,

We at VTA apologize if you think any of the statements made during the KTVU 2 investigative story appeared insensitive. The statement regarding taking out an ad was in response to notifying the public of accidents in general. The comment was not about any past accident, policies, operational procedures, trainings or safety procedures. In the case of the selectively edited segment that aired, the news outlet chose not to include critical information VTA provided about our safety record, training procedures, accident investigations and follow up actions. VTA employees are not able to comment on any incident that is still under investigation or in litigation, but does and did provide specific information on accident evaluations and retraining procedures as well as accident history. This was not reported by the news outlet.

Safety is first and foremost at VTA. While VTA makes every effort to avoid accidents, they unfortunately do occur and the circumstances vary in each incident. Accidents by definition are unexpected and unintentional. VTA provides accident reports quarterly (Transit Operations Performance Report) at its [Safety, Security, and Transit Planning and Operations \(SSTPO\)](#) committee meetings and VTA Board of Directors meetings. All these meetings are open to the public.

Regarding the memo you referenced as “leaked;” please note that all VTA communications are public record. This means that the information is available to the public and the reporter should have known this or chose to mischaracterize that document. The memo notified VTA staff of a valued retiree’s passing and was issued the morning after the tragedy. When more information became known that the cause may have involved a VTA vehicle, that information was conveyed to all employees. This information was shared with over 2,000 people at the time.

VTA cannot provide unconfirmed information, especially in cases involving investigations, and potential or pending litigation. Although this response at times can be frustrating, especially when a media outlet insinuates intentional wrongdoing, please know that we are not at liberty to draw our own conclusions and pass them off as official statements. The media outlet in question was or should be well aware of that basic fact. Please also be reminded that in addition to dedicating their time to careers in public service, VTA employees are contributing members of this community and would not purposely set out to cause harm or pain.

VTA Communications Team
408.464.7810

From: RJ Payomo
Sent: Thursday, May 25, 2017 9:58 AM
To: Board Secretary
Cc: VTA Media Relations <media.relations@vta.org>; 2invesitgates@ktvu.com
Subject: "Take out an ad in the newspaper."

Dear VTA Board Secretary,

Attn: Rufus francis, Stacey Hendler Ros & Lin Hoang

Please relay this to the board, and heed the words yourself.

Today, your spokesperson, responding to an inquiry by KTVU2 on the negligence of your policies and death of Benny Chung said, "What are we supposed to do, take an ad out in the newspaper?"

Yes, please. Please explain how actions taken by the agency were insufficient for you and the agency which resulted in a death. A full page ad, or perhaps a few, as much as it takes. I've read your media statements in email, and they are insufficiently complicit. Your policy failed and you are negligent. You could have prevented the death of one of your own and you swept it under a policy rug. Imagine if this was your relative, would you act then? Please do your jobs.

Do you have a family to go home to? Do you have no compassion and take no responsibility? Would you care if this happened again? What if it was a child? You are all complicit, a memo had to be leaked to show you don't take responsibility.

Hold your board and your agency accountable with transparency.

Please take an ad out explaining why you tried to feign compassion but failed to take responsibility and a memo had to be leaked. Explain that you take responsibility to make things right instead of holding questions in contempt like your spokesperson. Show your face in an interview, free of smugness and dismissal, on how you are making this right. Please don't be complicit by just ignoring the problem, then going home to your families and feeling like you accomplished a good day of work. Please don't be terrible, irresponsible, murderous people.

What will you do to make this right?

Thank you,

RJ Payomo

Conserve paper. Think before you print.