

JPB CAC

CORRESPONDENCE
AS OF

October 15, 2024

From: [Tim Oey](#)
To: [cacsecretary \[@caltrain.com\]](mailto:cacsecretary [@caltrain.com])
Subject: Thanks for electric trains + Clipper Card is lame
Date: Wednesday, September 25, 2024 11:28:09 AM

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Dear Caltrain Citizens Advisory Committee,

The new electric trains are much better than the old diesel ones but still have some issues -- like not enough seats near the bicycle area on cars so you can watch your bike.

The physical clipper card system is very lame these days -- lots of bad user experiences. For instance, a while back I thought I had tagged in as a newbie but my card had tagged in and then out and I did not know it. When they came around and scanned my card on the train, I was charged an \$80 fine for their terrible user interface design.

Putting the Clipper Card on your phone at least gives you some hints that you are tagged in or out but it is still pretty lame.

Having the Caltrain app on your phone is an ok backup.

If anyone would like to see what a truly modern and user friendly transit system is like, check out public transit in Helsinki where they have good wifi pretty much everywhere, charging ports pretty much everywhere, tightly coordinated transit schedules, and their HSL app on your smartphone helps you find the best routes, tells you how long it will take and the cost, helps you check out bike share bikes too, and you can get all the tickets you need on the spot on your phone. It is amazing and easy to get around. The Helsinki system of commuter heavy rail, subway, light rail, buses, ferries, and bike share cover about the same size region as our SF Bay area but we have 27 (!!!) different semi-disorganized transit agencies stumbling about to service the SF Bay Area.

The only thing that is better about our area than Helsinki is BikeLink lockers -- they work well but we need many more of them.

Sincerely,
Tim Oey
Sunnyvale, CA 94087
<http://www.timoey.com/>
"Knowledge is Power"

From: Sarah Nabong

To: Cole Allen; Board (@caltrain.com); Michelle Bouchard; Sam Sargent; cacsecretary [@caltrain.com]

Subject: RE: New Caltrain schedule

Date: Thursday, September 26, 2024 11:10:49 AM

Dear Cole Allen,

Your message to the Caltrain Board of Directors was referred to me for response. The Board members will receive a copy of our correspondence. Thank you for reaching out to Caltrain and for your valuable feedback. We're thrilled to hear about your excitement for our electrification project and your positive experience on the new electric trains!

Caltrain has worked extensively with all its stakeholders to develop its service plan and new schedule for the electrified service. Based on market analysis, stations like South San Francisco demonstrated a strong need for additional service frequency during peak periods. Even with the addition of South San Francisco and 22nd Street stations, travel time from Redwood City to 4th/King will be reduced by at least 3 minutes, while providing more service to a broader range of riders.

We understand your concerns regarding the express train stopping patterns, and we will continue to monitor performance and ridership, considering feedback from our customers to further improve our schedules in the future. For more information regarding our Service Plan, please visit our website:

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.caltrain.com%2Fprojects%2Felectrification%2Fproject-benefits%2Fcaltrain-electrified-serviceplan&data=05%7C02%7Ccacsecretary%40caltrain.com%7C67e17aeb05414e57b42b08dcde568a80%7C1a34d2f711e24a45b4cd47ceeb1d21be%7C0%7C0%7C638629710485405769%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlloiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTil6lk1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=wH%2F1DL7eNkUGR6EDxt20iBzlqhiHzuFIPqsm0Ijw52s%3D&reserved=0>

Thank you for your continued support and for being a part of the Caltrain community!

Best regards,

Sarah Nabong, Customer Service Representative 2

1250 San Carlos Ave San Carlos, CA 94070

Websites: Caltrain | SamTrans | TA

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

From: Cole Allen <cwallen416@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, August 28, 2024 11:48 AM

To: Board (@caltrain.com) <BoardCaltrain@samtrans.com>; Michelle Bouchard <BouchardM@caltrain.com>; Sam Sargent <SargentS@caltrain.com>; cacsecretary [@caltrain.com] <cacsecretary@caltrain.com>

Subject: New Caltrain schedule

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Hello,

My name is Cole Allen. I am a frequent Caltrain rider and I am VERY excited that electrification is now finally a reality with Caltrain. I took my first ride on one of the electric trains last week, and it was amazing! This ride felt so much more modern. There is one thing I did want to bring up with Caltrain about the new schedule that will be effective September 21. I have been riding Caltrain since 2013 - I initially rode the train every day to/from SF and my home in Redwood City, but during the pandemic that changed and I now telework for the most part, but I do still ride about 2 or 3 times a month to the city for conferences or other work-related events (or to get to the city on weekends without the hassle of parking) and with the express trains, I noticed that up until now, all peak direction express trains would run nonstop between SF and Millbrae and prior to the pandemic, there were two station stop patters for the express trains (Pattern 1 was SF, Millbrae, Hillsdale, Palo Alto, Mountain View and SJ while Pattern 2 was SF, Millbrae, San Mateo, Redwood City, Palo Alto, Sunnyvale, SJ and Tamien), but in the new schedule, it shows that the express trains will only do one station pattern (all the "baby bullet" stops rather than just half and half) and they will also stop at 22nd Street and South SF as opposed to running nonstop between SF and Millbrae. I'd like to ask: WHY is Caltrain doing this - I highly implore Caltrain to instead revert to the exact same express train stopping patterns that they previously did BEFORE the pandemic in order to decrease travel time even more, and not have express trains stop at 22nd St. since all the local trains would stop there anyway and that a popular place for peak direction commuters to disembark in the morning or board in the evening.

Best,

Cole Allen

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Roland Lebrun](#)
To: [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](#)
Cc: [cacsecretary \[@caltrain.com\]](#); [Caltrain, Bac \(@caltrain.com\)](#)
Subject: Item 12.h Diridon Design Alternatives
Date: Thursday, October 3, 2024 1:55:54 AM
Attachments: [12.h. Comments on Diridon Station Design Alternatives.pdf](#)

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Dear Chair Heminger,

Thank you and Director Gee for directing staff to carry both the “At Grade” and “Elevated” alternatives forward.

Please find my comments attached.

Key points:

- The relocation of the LRT station to the east side requires the demolition/reconstruction of the Historic Depot.
- The relocation of the LRT station conflicts with the 2018 BART to Silicon Valley Phase II SEIR.
- The relocation of the bus depot to the north side of West Santa Clara requires excessive clearance under the station's northern throat resulting in impacts on multiple buildings and the Union Pacific Warm Springs line.
- There is \$24M in RM3 funding available for environmental clearance if MTC rescinds the \$24M misappropriated by VTA for the purchase of 32-60 Stockton.

Sincerely,

Roland Lebrun

Dear Chair Heminger,

Thank you and Director Gee for directing staff to carry both the “At Grade” and “Elevated” alternatives forward.

Introduction

I started working on the Diridon redesign in 2009 through the San Jose Downtown Association in collaboration with San Jose DOT (Hans Larsen) and the RDA (Walter Rask) disbanded by Governor Brown in 2010. Our initial design was based on London’s Stratford International station and was nearly identical to what became known as Google’s “Downtown West” 9 years later.

I designed and presented “Diridon at grade” to the Willow Glen Neighborhood Association in 2019. **I spent the first 18 months of “Shelter-in-Place” (March 2020-September 2021) designing “Diridon Elevated”.**

Here are my comments on the Diridon Station Design Alternatives presented at the September 25 AMP meeting.

Positive developments

- The nexus with the CEMOF relocation has been eliminated.
- *"An elevated station would be able to be built above the Historic Annex".*

Remaining Challenges

- **The relocation of the light rail station to the East side eliminates the tunnel curve by going right through the Historic Depot.**
- **The relocation of the light rail station to the East side conflicts with the 2018 BART SEIR** which selected the “Diridon North” (West Santa Clara) alternative.
- **The “At Grade” alternative impacts the Paseo de San Fernando bike/ped corridor** by introducing significant discrepancies in elevations between the east and west sides of the station.
- **The northern tip of the station platforms is pushed at least 100 feet too far north** and introduces conflicts with a seamless BART interface as well as multiple property impacts north of West Santa Clara.
- **The southern end of the station is completely missing** (the platform layout looks like the tail end of a storage yard).

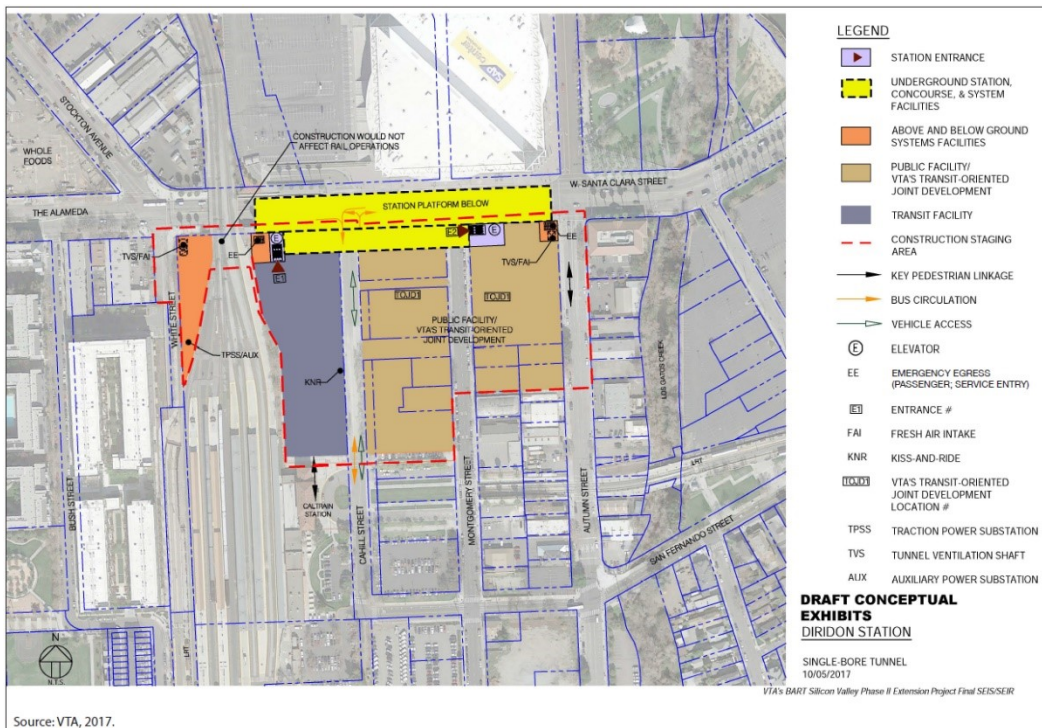
- The single “BART tunnel” to the single-bore tunnel “knock out” panel cannot possibly handle the flow of passengers transferring to/from BART.
- The “Diridon BART station” platform cannot possibly handle the flow of passengers from Caltrain, ACE, Capitol Corridor, Amtrak and HSR, let alone a crowd of passengers leaving an event at the Arena.
- The bus depot and the drop-off are on the wrong (north) site of West Santa Clara.
- The raising of West Santa Clara back to grade eliminates the opportunity to repurpose the existing at-grade track bed as a pedestrian plaza above West Santa Clara and Park as requested by the community back in 2019.
- The raising of West Santa Clara back to grade and the relocation of the bus depot under the northern station throat triggered a requirement for excessive elevations (at least 15 feet more) which resulted in impacts extending all the way to CEMOF (and the Union Pacific Warm Springs line which was not discussed at all in the presentation).
- The estimated costs of both alternatives are excessive (it is unclear how a 2-mile 4-track viaduct extending from West St Julian to West Virginia could possibly cost more than \$2B).

Opportunities

- 1) The relocation of the light rail station to the environmentally-cleared West Santa Clara station box (designed like one of San Francisco’s Market Street stations) eliminates the following challenges:
 - **Impacts on the Historic Depot (Complete Demolition/reconstruction)**
 - Suboptimal transfers between LRT, BART, Caltrain, ACE, Amtrak and HSR.
 - Necessity to relocate the bus station to the north of West Santa Clara.
 - Conflicts with the 2018 BSVII SEIR which states:

“The North Option would maximize the potential and flexibility for development by consolidating transit infrastructure close to Santa Clara Street, whereas the South Option would bisect the station area and would restrict future underground parking garages and development densities. Near-term, the North Option would provide opportunities to reduce construction impacts to transit rider and business patron parking through construction sequencing and coordination efforts.”

[Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report Certification and VTA's BART Silicon Valley Phase II Extension Project Approval - Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority \(iqm2.com\)](#)



- 2) The extension of the environmentally cleared station box under the heavy rail tracks (potentially up to White Street) enables the addition of 3 escalator tubes (total 9 escalators) down to the 300X90 ft LRT/BART concourse.
- 3) The extensions of the West Santa Clara and Park underpasses to Montgomery Street provide the following opportunities:
- The extended overpasses can be repurposed as pedestrian plazas linking the station to the Arena thereby eliminating the need for LRT and BART entrances on the north side of West Santa Clara.
 - The bus bays and the drop-offs can be relocated under the Cahill Plaza “Just like Denver” as recommended by chair Davis, rescinding the \$24M in RM3 funding expended on 32-60 Stockton for environmental clearance.
 - The relocation of the bus bays and the drop-offs to the underground Cahill location facilitate seamless connections between the underground parking garages and the station concourse.

Constructability of the elevated option

Q: "How do you build another level of infrastructure over an operating railroad?"

A: By using a launch gantry designed to lift two tracks at a time through the erection of 10-foot prefabricated viaduct segments cast offsite.

<https://youtu.be/s56v97fPKEQ?t=70>



Funding for environmental clearance

The relocation of the bus bays and the drop-offs to the underground Cahill location invalidates VTA's purchase of 32-60 Stockton Avenue thereby releasing \$24M in RM3 funds for environmental clearance (MTC Resolution Nos. 4606, 4607 and 4608).

*"While staff recommends approval of the allocation to VTA for the San Jose Diridon Station Project, **reimbursement of expenses related to the Project with RM3 funds is contingent on the following:***

- *Satisfaction of the requirement that appropriate determinations under CEQA/NEPA have been made by the lead agency prior to disbursement of RM3 funds;*
- ***Agreement between MTC and VTA on the mechanism to ensure the return of RM3 funds used to purchase property for the Project in the event that the Project does not proceed to construction and/or the property in question is not used for the Project;***

Respectfully presented for your consideration
Roland Lebrun

From: [Anne de la Rosa](#)
To: [cacsecretary \[@caltrain.com\]](mailto:cacsecretary [@caltrain.com])
Subject: Public comment 10/16/2024 - Vibration issues at new San Mateo Set-out Track need to be resolved so you can learn for future rail corridor home construction projects
Date: Tuesday, October 15, 2024 11:51:20 AM

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Dear Citizens Advisory Committee members -

Vibration issues at new San Mateo Set-out Track need to be resolved so you can learn for future rail corridor home construction projects

Hayward Park residents protested the San Mateo Set-out track being moved to our Hayward Park residential neighborhood to this committee back in 2019. We worried about damage to our foundations and our homes. It now appears that we had good cause for that worry as ever since August 25, 2024 when the southbound mainline was connected to the new Set-Out Track there has been a very high level of vibration that shakes our homes whenever a southbound train - at higher speed - goes by the homes at 1017, 1093, 1095 and 1099 S B St in San Mateo. We love trains, and have lived here for 40 years and this has never been an issue before now. Mitigation is needed to remedy this issue that has been caused by poor soil preparation and construction of this new track, so that Caltrain can learn from mistakes and prevent this from happening when new residential construction projects are built along the rail corridor.

There is obvious new cracking and settling in our homes since this construction and we worry that there will be long term issues if this vibration isn't mitigated. It feels like an earthquake, our bed actually shakes when a southbound train goes by and it has adversely affected our sleep and general quality of life and the value of our properties. There are no issues with the northbound trains, so this issue was definitely created by either improper preparation of the ground beneath the new track, lack of utilization of vibration absorbing materials, or poorly designed frogs. We have a great deal of photographic and decibel recording evidence of how many times the ground behind our homes was dug up, then dug up again because they had forgotten to insert a pipe at the creek drainage. They moved soil from the old set-out track area to the new area without any soil testing. As far as we know, no soil - or any other environmental testing took place.

Given the impression of complete lack of concern by Caltrain when we brought the vibration issue up to workers, were denied a vibration monitor in our home, and were told that there were no recordings of vibration monitors on the project, we worry about future projects going forward. Caltrain has made no effort whatsoever to stay on top of this. We'd hope to see vibration monitors on site, and still nothing! Last thing they told us, was that they would wait til the project is completed to address the issues. It seems like it would be way more cost-effective to deal with the issues now, rather than when the new road is placed and completed.

We are quite concerned about the high speed rail project going ahead and worry that lack of investigation into vibration issues with high speed trains can open the railroad up to huge issues in the future. For the Community and high-speed rail moving forward, Caltrain needs

to work on finding solutions for this particular vibration issue. This issue, if unresolved, can be a huge setback to the push to increase housing density along the rail corridor (such as San Mateo Measure T). Rather than hiding this issue under the rug, now is the time for the railroad to learn from mistakes, connect vibrational engineers with those within the community being adversely affected by this problem so that you can learn from this issue and it can be prevented in the future.

Thank you for all you do for the citizens that you represent. It is greatly appreciated.

Anne de la Rosa

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