

## Public Comments on Diridon Station Area projects sent electronically

(August 22, 2019 - January 9, 2020)

1. Submitted to [www.diridonsj.org](http://www.diridonsj.org) on August 27, 2019:

**Comments:** Google's plan is really nice, but one oversight jumped out at me. The block over where the BART station will be is marked as housing. The BART station will be delivering 10K+ riders to this point every day. This might be an ideal block for restaurants, retail and perhaps the hotel. Right now, the hotel is tucked on the other side of SAP center from the rail hub. Lots of rail hubs have hotels right there such as London's Kings Cross and Tokyo's Shin-Yokohama stations. Housing seems like the last thing that should be put on this key block.

2. Submitted to [www.diridonsj.org](http://www.diridonsj.org) on October 9, 2019:

**Comments:** I don't understand why there isn't an underground passage parallel to Santa Clara BART station from which there are entrances to the northern end of Diridon Platforms.

Not only do we save money by not elevating tracks that are already grade separated, but covering the roughly 400 feet of horizontal distances between Santa Clara and platforms should take significantly less time.

3. Submitted to [www.diridonsj.org](http://www.diridonsj.org) on October 10, 2019:

**Comments:** Please go with the Stover Street layout (Option 3). The short transfer options are going to be absolutely vital to make Diridon station successful

4. Submitted to [www.diridonsj.org](http://www.diridonsj.org) on November 16, 2019:

**Comments:** It seems like closing Cahill Street will increase traffic on residential Sunol Street to the west. Anyone driving west past the SAP center will have reduced options for turning around / getting back to a freeway or downtown. There is no u-turn allowed at Cahill street or at Stockton. It seems like more people will end up at Sunol and may use that as a connector to 280, park street or San Carlos. It already gets quite a lot of traffic for a residential street, and this may make it worse. I'd love to see Cahill closed to traffic, but fixing this traffic routing issue should happen at the same time otherwise Sunol will be a nightmare.

Thanks, Ryan Bavetta

5. Submitted to [www.diridonsj.org](http://www.diridonsj.org) on November 22, 2019:

**Comments:** Hi, my name is Sarah Springer, and I live in the Delmas Park Neighborhood.

Thank you to the staff for putting together this informative presentation.

I would ask that the impacts upon the surrounding neighborhoods be mitigated as much as possible. The track planning that includes the viaduct via I-280 freeway, would go a long way to accomplish that goal. My vote is for that option.

I would also like to refer to slide 98, which shows a beautiful artist rendering of how the concourse at W. Santa Clara could appear. It is quite troubling to me that the pedestrians, strollers and wheelchairs would be crossing W. Santa Clara from the area around the SAP Center at grade, in the direct path of oncoming vehicular and bicycle traffic. This would be disastrous! This plan lends itself to the possibility that many of the pedestrians might never make it to the station at all! The pedestrian routes should consist of a tunnel beneath W. Santa Clara leading to the BART station and a crossover of stairs, escalators and elevators leading to the station. Or, if large enough, all the pedestrian traffic could tunnel underground. Part of the stair system could also include a skyway between the SAP Center and the station for speedy exits on event nights. I hope you will incorporate something similar into your existing plans.

Thank you.

6. Submitted to [www.diridonsj.org](http://www.diridonsj.org) on November 22, 2019:

**Comments:** Wow, Very exciting & awesome. Continue working with the impacted neighborhoods, but I believe you are on the right path. And especially thank you for detailed 280 viaduct analysis and presentation. Also love all of the high quality illustrations. Very impressive work and progress to date.

David McFeely

7. Submitted to [www.diridonsj.org](http://www.diridonsj.org) on November 22, 2019:

**Comments:** I applaud the decision to elevate platforms at the station. There are many advantages to doing this, but primarily by raising the platforms, every street that crosses the tracks from Julian St south to W. Virginia St will have a grade-separated crossing, where the street crosses under the tracks on a flat, ground-level path. This is a major improvement over the at-grade option.

However, I am hopeful that the decision to maintain the existing southern approach to the station and to reject the elevated viaduct over the 280/87 interchange will be reconsidered. This decision will place hundreds more trains through the neighborhoods, requiring the corridor to be expanded from the current two tracks to three or perhaps four. This will cause significant impact to the North Willow Glen, Gregory Plaza, and Gardner neighborhoods. Putting all electric trains on an elevated viaduct over the freeways is the least intrusive, least damaging option for the neighborhoods, and it is the best way to preserve a 100-year investment. I hope you agree and that this option will be considered further.

Finally, I want to congratulate staff on the fantastic job they have done in such a short time. So much thought and effort have gone into this project. Good job!

Bert Weaver

Delmas Park Neighborhood

8. Submitted to [www.diridonsj.org](http://www.diridonsj.org) on November 22, 2019:

**Comments:** What will happen to the historic Diridon Train Station. As best as I can tell, it is missing from current images shown today.

9. Submitted to [www.diridonsj.org](http://www.diridonsj.org) on November 30, 2019:

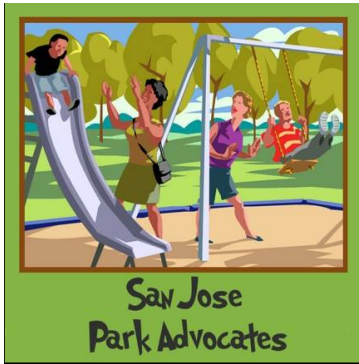
**Comments:** Being born and raised in San Jose, I don't approve of Google coming in and gentrifying our loved downtown area. They are driving out small, local businesses -- businesses that have been a part of San Jose's history and identity for years. San Jose is rich with culture and Google will be the death of that.

10. Submitted to [www.diridonsj.org](http://www.diridonsj.org) on December 9, 2019:

**Comments:** Promising option overall. Please continue to prioritize pedestrians and active transportation/bicycles.

- Trains upstairs is great, allows for easy, pleasant people circulation and clear sight lines
- After showing the Euro station visits and comparison pictures, it is disappointing that bikes share the pavement with cars and do not have protected lanes. Please fix this - we may need dedicated bike routes!
- Need excellent transfers between all trains and busses. TNCs/dropoffs can walk a bit more.
- Please de-prioritize individual cars. Focus roads for busses and shuttles, OK to put them underground, re-route cars elsewhere
- Preserving a few historic elements of the old Cahill station may be nice but please DO NOT COMPROMISE on transit
- On the Southern options, plan for 4 tracks, avoid tight curves but do not pour too much concrete if the existing corridor will work

Thanks for your work to build for the future.



## *San Jose Parks Advocates*

September 10, 2019

To the Google Design Team:  
*Via email*

Thank-you for sharing your conceptual framework for Diridon Station Area design with the community. Your outreach day was very helpful in understanding the direction for your project.

San Jose Parks believes parks are the heart of the City. Healthy parks help create healthy people. We are comprised of about 150 neighborhood leaders and Adopt A Park volunteers. We seek to raise awareness of city-wide park concerns in our advocacy work.

Thank-you for considering green features from the Diridon Station Area Plan. The unifying thread of linear green space will do much to create a sense of place and neighborhood. Your consultant from the SF Estuary Institute was very informative about the types of plants and habitat that are under consideration. We appreciate the emphasis on California natives since they contribute so much to a healthy biodiversity that will make the Diridon Station area interesting to visit for its natural elements as well as whatever architecture Google builds.

However, we have several concerns:

--It is unclear what entity will own what and how the green space will be managed. How much of this space be POPOS (privately owned, public open space) and how much will be dedicated to the City of San Jose? What portion will be part of your "Community Benefits" agreement and which will be part of your obligation to replace the Fire Training Center? Parkland should be dedicated and deeded in fee simple to the City. By way of example, in the recent past, City leaders have cancelled easements and sold land that community members were using for gardens and open space through a single vote at a Tuesday hearing. About three years ago, there was a movement to sell a large swath of open space until we demonstrated the grant monies underlying the property put onerous restrictions on re-sale. The community should be confident that the parkland that comes from your project will be parkland for generations to come and not subject to the political vagaries of a large city.

In addition, the landscaping between the older buildings you propose using as community centers should not count as “open space.” All buildings in San Jose have some level of landscaping and none of it gets credit as park or open space. We are aware there has been between Google and the community in other jurisdictions where you have built; they also took the position that landscaping between buildings is not open space or parkland. We look forward to seeing the calculations as your project moves forward.

--How will the linear space be maintained? San Jose’s park system is woefully underfunded with downtown parks maintenance budgeted at about one person for one hour per week to care for one acre. (1 Person: 1 hour: 1 week: 1 acre).<sup>1</sup> The system does a very poor job of maintaining native habitat and depends extensively on volunteers for native habitat which does not always work out well.<sup>2</sup> Landscaping has been removed or not replaced throughout the system in order to reduce maintenance cost.

--If you want complex landscaping to look nice and habitat to thrive, you’ll need to identify ongoing funds to pay for it, given San Jose’s weak funding for parks. The City of San Jose’s low funding level for parks ensures that maintenance will fail to meet expectations Google may have from other jurisdictions. Are you thinking of a Business Improvement District? A park maintenance district? A new conservancy? Or will you be expecting the Guadalupe River Conservancy or the San Jose Downtown Association to take this on?

--Will any of the green space be used for stormwater management? We are opposed to the use of new public parkland for private or city stormwater management. Stormwater reduces the recreation benefit and generally looks un-aesthetic throughout the year due to the poor maintenance by the underfunded city park system. Although the City may be forced to use its existing park system to meet new state mandates, there is no excuse for newly redeveloped areas to use this sub-optimal solution. If you choose to place your stormwater facility on POPOS, we recommend a one-for-one reduction in “Community Benefits Fund” credit. San Jose Parks Advocates would be deeply disappointed if your project’s “Community Benefits Funds” were high-jacked to pay for a large municipal stormwater project.

We believe trees are critical to providing a quality park experience as well as for carbon sequestration. Parks and POPOS are the only place that we can be certain that they can thrive and grow to full size to do their work of cleaning the air and reducing the heat island effect. Trees in open space are associated with most of the research on the health benefits: increased cognition, memory, lower depression, lessened anxiety. San Jose’s Stormwater Management plan shows large swaths of treeless biofiltration swales and bio-retention ponds. Existing facilities are roasting hot in the summer. You can do better.

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<sup>1</sup> Current maintenance staff levels are roughly about half of 2000 when the dot com bust forced layoffs. There were additional layoffs in 2009 that have been recently recovered. Only St. James Park is funded for more maintenance and current funds will run out in about 6 years unless future developments near the park elect to make a one-time payment to the fund.

<sup>2</sup> For example, due to inadequate supervision, a volunteer removed trees and bushes in a large native planting.

--How will you provide security for your POPOs? If the property will be owned and managed by the City of San Jose, do you intend to provide funding for security? The City is understaffed for rangers after laying off most of its rangers more than a decade ago and it has been unable to rebuild the department. Similarly, the police department is understaffed. Phone calls for “quality of life issues” in parks are referred to park rangers, who are stationed miles away, with many service hours not covered. Due to low police staffing, quality of life issues on private property receives a very low priority and rarely rates a response. How will you design for security? What will Google fund? Will you expect a future management group to solve this?

--How do you intend to integrate the additional park land that will be required as part of your planned construction of housing? Will it be one large piece near the housing, or do you intend to distribute it as smaller parks? We support pocket parks that have high percentage of square feet dedicated to hard-working natural habitat and green living plant life. We oppose pocket parks that are primarily pavers or hardscape.

--The idea of retaining some of San Jose’s older buildings near Diridon Station is a nice nod to the history and fabric of the area. However, it was not clear from your presentations how you envision using them and their relation to the park system. There was mention of “community centers” and space available for “non-profits.” Are you planning to fund the operations and maintenance of these buildings? Are you expecting to have the city operate these centers?<sup>3</sup> Will these be buildings be available to the public for a nominal fee or will they be operated as a profit center? They are not a “community benefit” if they are operated as a private business available only to the well-to-do or if the park system must cut some other program in order to manage and operate them. We would want to see the financial details in order to determine whether they would be a community benefit. We prefer spending City resources in targeted residential neighborhoods that are already suffering from decades of inequitable spending.

--On August 6, the City of San Jose passed on ordinance that will charge a fee on commercial buildings in the Diridon Station Area that will fund plazas. How do you expect to integrate those plazas into your overall conceptual design?

--The alternate linear trail you proposed would be expected to be an important bicycle commute path to Diridon --an employment and transit center. This limits the usefulness for recreational users. By way of example, we see a substantial amount of weekday user conflict between bicycle commuters and recreational users along the Los Gatos trail near eBay and Netflix and would expect the same here. We recommend an approach similar to Los Alamitos trail where there are two parallel, but quite separate trails. Originally designed to separate horse riders from dog walkers, the two trails now separate walkers from bicyclists. We believe that for both safety and enjoyment, there must be two separate pathways. Further, we hope that a final design will include better connections over Park Avenue and West San Carlos. We have observed that bicyclists and scooter riders commonly do not conform to using signal light crossings that are far from the trail. A good solution would be bridges along Caltrain’s bridge at

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<sup>3</sup> The City operates 11 community centers and about 30 additional centers are rented to non-profits at far less than market rate. These centers were previously operated by City staff who were laid off as a budget strategy during one of the downturns.

Park and under the new West San Carlos viaduct that must be replaced. Please design so these ideas remain possible.

--The design shows no apparent area for active play. The linear design and large proposed habitat areas in non-creekside locations appear to preclude active recreation and play. We believe there must be a balance between passive and active recreation. While this area may not be appropriate for a large sports field, there is a need for space to burn off energy. San Jose's gender gap for ages 20-35 is a ratio of 134 to 100, with men outnumbering women. In Diridon Station Area, we can expect many young, energetic men who would benefit from active exercise during the day or after work. While you might build indoor private gyms, these employees also need exposure to nature for their health; time outdoors increases serotonin levels and provides Vitamin D. The design should include active play areas including spaces for small-group versions of sports popular among young men.

Thank-you again for tours of the site, the preview night Aug 17 at Guadalupe Conservancy, the wonderful Saturday Aug 24 outreach meeting in beautiful Arena Green West and the opportunity to comment. We look forward to working with Google as your design further evolves.

Sincerely,  
/s/  
Jean Dresden  
Executive Director

Cc  
Dave Sykes  
Kim Walech  
Nanci Klein  
Rosalynn Hughley  
Jon Cicirelli  
Nicolle Burnham  
Board, SJ Parks Advocates  
San Jose Parks Commission c/o Melrose Hurley  
SAAG c/o Lori Severino  
Guadalupe River Gardens Park Conservancy  
SJ Downtown Association  
SPUR

**From:** [Steve Wright](#)  
**To:** [Severino, Lori](#); [Dave Javid](#)  
**Subject:** My Thoughts On Google & San Jose ...  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 2, 2019 9:16:37 AM

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I would be very happy, if the people, representing the people of San Jose, in negotiatinos with Google, took a hardline wiht Google. One thing, in particular, which should be promoted as the ' new normal ' in regards to large employers wanting to come to and or expand, in the SF Bay Area, is a new requirement. And that would be, that for every TWO floors, of office / work space, in any building, that the third floor, be dedicated to employee housing. It could be in the form of several, little apartments, to employess can stay in, while employed at that location.

This would help keep, as many people as possible, from spilling out onto the streets, twice a day with their cars, and would help minimize their adverse effects on the local housing market. This may seem abit extreme, but housing, crowding, and over all congestion, has passed a tipping point, in the Bay Area, and now, drastic measures MUST be presented.

Another idea / demand, should be, to have ALL large employers in the Bay Area, to pitch in, to pay for a feasability study, to put pre fabricated housing, on the roofs, of one, and two story commercial structures through out the Bay Area. These roof tops, of strip malls, of office buildings, of Home Depots, or Target Stores, of warehouses, should ALL be considered, the new, ' Open Space ', left, in the Bay Area.

And, finally, I would also like to see, the City of San Jose, request that Google, pay the costs, of completing, the bike trail, along Los Gatos Creek, from Meridian Ave, to Lincoln Ave ( with connections of both sides of the street ), and on to the tressle bridge, where it could meet up, with the exisitng trail. To be able to ride your bike, on a bike trail, from Alviso to Lexington Reservoir, shoud be a TOP PRIORITY to help get more cars off the road.

LET'S MAKE THESE THINGS HAPPEN !!!!!!!

S. Wright  
San Jose