



## Diridon Station Area Advisory Group (SAAG)

### Draft Meeting Notes | March 11, 2019

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**Date + Time**     *March 11, 2019 | 6:00 PM*

**Location**         *San Jose City Hall, Committee Rooms 118-120*

**Meeting Objectives**

- *Reorientation and review of SAAG role.*
- *Update and discussion on the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan.*

### AGENDA

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1. **Welcome and Introductions**
2. **Review of SAAG Role and Expectations**
3. **Diridon Integrated Station Concept Update**
4. **Next Steps and Meeting Schedule**
5. **Adjourn**

### ATTENDANCE

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**SAAG Members:** 30 of the 38 SAAG members were present at the meeting (*please see the Meeting Minutes posted to the project website for the names of SAAG members that were present*)

**City Staff:** Lori Severino – *Civic Engagement Program Manager for the Diridon Station Area*; Lee Wilcox – *Chief of Staff to the City Manager*; Kim Walesh – *Deputy City Manager*

**Partner Agency staff:** Liz Scanlon – *Program Manager for the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan (Kimley Horn)*

**Consultant Team:** Dave Javid - *Principal (Plan to Place)*; Matt Raimi (*Raimi + Associates*); Leah Chambers – *Outreach Specialist (Plan to Place)*

**Public:** There were approximately 30 members of the public present at the meeting.



# SUMMARY

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The primary agenda items were to discuss the role of the SAAG for 2019 and receive an update on the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan (Concept Plan) process. The following notes summarize the presentation and discussion of these two agenda items.

## REVIEW OF SAAG ROLE AND EXPECTATIONS

Lori Severino provided an overview of the 2018 process and next steps for 2019, outlined the role of and expectations for the SAAG, summarized feedback received from SAAG members, and highlighted opportunities for improvement in the engagement process moving forward. Below is a summary of the discussion and comments from the SAAG following the presentation. The *italicized* bullets below represent the responses to the questions asked.

- Since the last meeting, the sale of the SARA properties to Google has closed. This signals the first tangible public benefit as the taxing entities (such as the school district) have received \$62 million this year.
- When will the City do the General Plan amendments related to affordable housing?
  - *Amendments will come forward as part of the update to the Diridon Station Area Plan.*
- Request for City Staff and Consultant Team to provide SAAG with documents in advance of each meeting, to have adequate time for review.
- Google recently hired a San José District Director, Alexa Arena, to oversee the Diridon project.
- What will be the SAAG's role in the Community Benefits discussion?
  - *That discussion will be coming back to the SAAG in the future; staff is still working on a timeline for the process.*
- What is Google's development application timeline?
  - *Fall 2019*

## DIRIDON INTEGRATED STATION CONCEPT

Liz Scanlon provided an update on the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan (Concept Plan), a collaborative effort by the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA), Caltrain, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) to plan for the expansion and redesign of Diridon Station. These four Partner Agencies intent to complete the Concept Plan in two phases, with the first phase resulting in a spatial layout for the future station. Since kicking off the process in fall 2018, they have developed an initial high-level vision statement, key objectives, and preliminary options for the vertical position of the platforms and general station location. Next steps include: preparing multiple scenarios that include all of the other elements comprising the station, evaluating these scenarios, and developing a single preferred layout. The Partner Agencies are preparing a possible evaluation framework to help guide this work.

As part of the presentation, Lori Severino gave an overview of the community engagement process for the Concept Plan, including a summary of key themes from input received to date. The Partner Agencies completed one round of outreach in the fall 2018 and are currently seeking feedback on the possible evaluation framework. They are planning to conduct additional outreach in the May-June timeframe.

The presentation was followed by an opportunity for the SAAG to discuss and ask questions. The *italicized* bullets below represent the responses to the questions asked.

- How is coordination between Google, Partner Agencies, and design team occurring? Specifically, around access and entrance locations.
  - *Google and the project team are collaborating to ensure those elements will be consistent between the Concept Plan and Google's plans for the Diridon area.*
- Evaluation Criteria should expand to look at the broader system and consider impacts beyond the station itself, including track alignments to the north and south. We want to know the current and future amount of trains passing through the neighborhoods, since we are hearing different numbers. Are you considering the relocation of CEMOF (Caltrain maintenance facility)?
  - *Yes, the Partner Agencies are considering these broader effects and relocation of the CEMOF.*
- Appreciate the additional points on equity. What is the timeline for developing a partnership organization and financing plan? The SAAG should hear about this at future meetings so we can understand how it overlaps with financing for other district-level priorities.
  - *The Partner Agencies are discussing ideas on these topics now in Phase 1, but will be fleshed out in Phase 2. It is a big policy discussion with the Partner Agencies.*
- The Concept Plan should consider future alternative transportation technologies as part of the multi-modal integration, such as scooters and automated vehicles.
- This is a complex process, with possible collisions with schedules and decisions. What is the overall program management, and how is the multi-partner agency held accountable? Who is staffing this partnership, and when? Who arbitrates?
  - *The four Partner Agencies have signed a Cooperative Agreement to work together. The consultant team is beginning to develop a program management plan, with work continuing into Phase 2. The agency boards, including City Council, have decision-making authority now to accept the vision and move forward, but will probably need to give up some control when establishing a new board in the future that would be responsible for managing resources and held accountable. We have to be thoughtful about how to accomplish this.*
- It will take a long time to construct this project and get to the point where Diridon Station has 140,000 passengers (2040 estimate). We are already hearing construction noise from Caltrain electrification work. We want to improve the relationship with the railroad. High-Speed Rail is telling the Gardner neighborhood that they will not need to take out any properties or parks to add one track, but it seems like they will need to add more tracks in the future to handle all of those passengers. Plans should consider future impacts of the full build-out of the Concept Plan on existing neighborhoods, and locate tracks such that expansions will not obliterate neighborhoods in the future, not just the first phase of construction (futureproof).
  - *We are working on a phasing roadmap, and developing criteria to help us understand and weigh the different types of impacts to the various neighborhoods.*
- Consider increased bus service as part of the multi-modal integration. Be outcomes-focused for transit modes, and include a metric for roundtrips to and from the Downtown core (such as done in Seattle). Bus and other alternative transportation options can mitigate increased trips from additional jobs.



- How does the recent Governor announcement about High-Speed Rail funding affect the Concept Plan? Does it create additional uncertainty? My concern is that this could affect the funding for the project.
  - *The announcement does not affect the current planning, since we are planning that the 100-year investment into the station and tracks can accommodate high-speed rail at some point. The California High-Speed Rail Authority has already committed funding for Phases 1 and 2. The Governor's speech matches the Authority's 2018 Business Plan, which calls for completing construction in the Central Valley and environmental work in Northern and Southern California (2-5 years of work). We are committed to supporting the bookend projects such as Caltrain electrification. The Authority will continue to work with other partners to secure funding for the Diridon project. Funding could come from local, regional, state, and federal sources.*
- Do you envision a role for the existing historic depot structure?
  - *All of the concepts developed to date affect the depot building, so we will have to do something with it. We know that it is important to the community and that it is a protected resource – meaning that we will have to follow a specific process to change it.*
- What assumptions are you making about the airport connection?
  - *We are making sure the plan leaves space for a future connection ("space-proofing").*
- The California High-Speed Rail Authority said that they are going to move forward with a preferred alternative [for the San José-Merced section] in the next few months. This seems like putting the cart before the horse, because it could close out all of the other alternatives that should be on the table. Will it clear a sufficient range of alternatives that reduce impacts to neighborhoods?
  - *There is a federal mandate that the Authority's environmental process needs to have a preferred scenario by fall of 2019. We have to keep on schedule but we recognize that the Concept Plan may result in a different alignment that the four Partner Agencies all agree to. In that event, we would clear a different alignment through the environmental process for the Diridon Concept Plan. The Partner Agencies may need to adjust course overtime to achieve consistency among all of the projects affecting the station and surrounding area.*
- As the governance structure is developed, it would be helpful to consider the opportunity for a Project Labor Agreement, which would help advance the City Council's goals for job training and small business support. The San Francisco Transbay Terminal has a model that can serve as an example.
- Bring back the Downtown Dash Shuttle, as a great way to connect neighborhoods to the station.
- Fiscal stability and funding for the project seem missing from the Evaluation Criteria.
- The Sharks are concerned about parking, which is noted as a detail to be addressed in Phase 2. We want to share information that we also shared with VTA. We believe that the Concept Plan needs to provide 5-6,000 spaces for vehicles, and that Phase 2 needs to include an unconstrained parking analysis. We are concerned with the Santa Clara station location due to impacts on parking for the arena. The San Fernando location seems to provide more benefits with less conflicts with Santa Clara Street.
- The SAAG should be aware of a recent memo from the Mayor and Councilmembers Davis, Perales, and Alvarez that says at least one scenario should have an aerial track alignment going south.
- The City's presentations on development potential in the Diridon area have focused on commercial development in the first ring around the station, but the SAAG has talked a lot about the benefits of below-market rate housing around transit and goals to minimize displacement from gentrification. As



the Partners consider massing and options for other public lands, think about innovative possibilities for how to address these housing goals.

- Separate out “Neighborhood” and “Environmental” Effects as individual criteria, since it seems like habitat restoration could get lost in the shuffle, and Los Gatos Creek and Guadalupe River could be affected by development in this area.
- When you mentioned Urban Integration, you talked about street life and public space. I am assuming that you are thinking about the people that are unhoused and would use that space as a member of the public. How are you thinking about this?
  - *Yes, we are thinking about equity including the use of public space and how each scenario enables access to public spaces and a quality experience for everyone.*
- Second the suggestion on environmental impacts, and want to ensure that the creeks and walkways along it conform to strict riparian corridor criteria.
- Consider locating the Light Tower at Diridon Station, instead of within Arena Green.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

Following the discussion by the SAAG, there were three members of the public who provided comments on the agenda items. The major points from the public comments are below:

- Thank you to the SAAG for all the work you did over the last year. It was an impressive process and created a good example. Amazon has to change its tactics back east.
  - Concern over building heights around the airport, seems irresponsible and like we are trying to become like San Francisco.
  - Likes the idea of creating public trusts.
- Why aren't BART and Google at the table, as the most important partners? Why are the Partners looking at development potential, since I thought we agreed on a Google master plan for Diridon? If not, how could this possibly be an integrated plan?
  - The concourse should move to the north to be directly adjacent to Santa Clara Street, but there is no need to also move the platforms north.
  - The solution to phasing is trains that can go through the construction zones without diesel.
  - There is opportunity for a direct High-Speed Rail connection from Diridon to Fresno (without stopping in Merced).
  - Harvey said that he received extensive materials. If a quorum of SAAG members also received that material, then you have 72 hours to make it public under the Brown Act.
- A third rail line through the North Willow Glen/Gardner/Delmas Park neighborhood does not seem like enough and they will eventually need a fourth, as ridership increases and more trains are added in particular if CEMOF moves south. Therefore, any new passenger rail tracks added should be over 280, leaving the existing tracks for freight or emergency bypass.

## NEXT STEPS AND MEETING SCHEDULE

Lori Severino presented upcoming meeting dates, along with information where public comments could be submitted, and reminder to visit the project website for updates and meeting summaries.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 pm.