



SAAG MEETING | Meeting #10 Summary

Date + Time *October 18, 2018 | 7-9pm*

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

Meeting Objectives

- *Presentation and discussion on the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan process.*

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review of SAAG Meeting #9 Summary Notes
3. Engagement Process Update
4. Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan
5. Public Comment
6. Adjourn

ATTENDANCE

SAAG Members: 29 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*; Eric Eidlin - *Station Planning Manager (City of San José, Department of Transportation)*; Lee Wilcox - *City Manager Chief of Staff*; Kim Walesh - *Deputy City Manager/ Director of Economic Development*

Consultants: Dave Javid – *Plan to Place*; Martin Brinkhuis – *Arcadis*; Daniel Jongtien – *Bentham Crowell Architects*

Public: There were approximately 40 members of the public present at the meeting



SUMMARY

On October 18th, 2018 the Diridon Station Area Advisory Group (SAAG) held its tenth meeting to discuss the Diridon Station Area. The primary agenda item regarding the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan (Concept Plan). Dave Javid opened the meeting with the introduction of the agenda, approval of SAAG #9 meeting minutes, and overview of the group agreements. The brief introduction led directly into discussion on the Concept Plan process. The following notes are summarized based on the major agenda items in the order they were presented at the meeting.

DIRIDON INTEGRATED STATION CONCEPT PLAN

Eric Eidlin provided an outline of the presentation, including an overview of the Concept Plan, the importance of Diridon Station, and relevant plans and transit improvements. Eric then introduced members of the design and engineering consultant team (Martin Brinkhuis – Arcadis, and Daniel Jongtien - Benthem Crouwel Architects) and Lori Severino. The following is a summary of the presentation and the discussion that followed.

Project Background – presented by Eric Eidlin

- Highlighted key goals:
 - Attracting people to downtown San Jose area
 - Foster lively public realm
 - ‘Extend’ downtown to include Diridon Station Area
 - Increased employment and enhance area as a job center
 - Cited Envision San Jose 2040 (General Plan) and Diridon Station Area Plan
- Diridon Station Facts – Why is Diridon Station so Important?
 - Diridon Station is the place in the Bay Area where the most transit modes will converge
 - Diridon Station current ridership is 17,000/day
 - Previous analysis projected increase to 140,000/day by 2040
 - Compared to current rates for L.A. Union Station (110,00/day) and SFO (145,000/day)
 - Compared to current rates for Amsterdam Main Station (250,000/day) and Berlin Main Station (300,000/day)
- Why is a train station so critical for the future of San Jose?
 - Presented question to SAAG: Why do cities exist? Purpose?
 - Train stations are space efficient – transport many people without using a lot of real estate. Uniquely compatible with dense city-centers.
 - Reinforced notion that stations are in fact public spaces.
- European Station Study Trip – Lessons Learned
 - Consider quality of life impacts, think bold and aim big, design from tracks out, use people-centered design (focus on users), prioritize seamless integration with existing/future modes
- The Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan will establish:
 - Seamless connection between transportation modes



- A harmonious relationship between the station and surroundings
- An effective organizational structure to deliver the vision

Project Overview - Co-presented by Martin Brinkhuis and Daniel Jongtein

Martin and Daniel noted that their respective firms would be working together as an integrated team on the project. The collaboration is building upon a long history of designing subway, airport, and train station projects around the world.

- Relevant Projects – presented by Daniel Jongtein
 - Discussed projects in the Netherlands that serve as positive examples of well-designed stations
 - The Amsterdam Station gives “spark” to surrounding city and provides exceptional multi-modal transit accommodations in a multi-level design.
 - Designed in a way were buses do not intersect with pedestrian traffic.
 - Largest train station in the Netherlands – experiences more ridership than some airports
 - Rotterdam station has many similarities with the Diridon Station area context
 - Business and housing districts are adjacent to the station.
 - High-speed station – building designed primarily for people
 - Connects to urban fabric – the entrance/exit to the station is a public plaza.
- Project Scope – presented by Martin Brinkhuis
 - Provided very basic outline of the project schedule.
 - Emphasized importance of identifying objectives of the partner agencies.
 - Highlighted strategy of using an interactive process to identify three scenarios that would work best for San José.
 - Explained that scope of project is ‘fuzzy’ without concrete borders in how the station will take shape – highly conceptual at this point in the process.

Draft Outreach Strategy for the Concept Plan process – presented by Lori Severino

The following is a summary of Lori’s presentation.

- Summarized topics covered in the Draft Outreach Strategy Plan
- Roles in the Decision-making process
 - Policy bodies of partner agencies will have decision-making authority
 - Partner agencies will consult the community and consider their input while preparing the Concept Plan
 - Key objectives:
 - Keep public informed
 - Encourage broad community participation
 - Foster a sense of pride in the concept plan
 - Graphic: Engagement Objectives by Phase
 - Emphasis on gathering feedback in the middle of the planning process
 - Fall 2019: Plan to go out into the public to identify aspirations and concerns
 - Next – discuss Scenarios and identify trade-offs



- Following – discuss the Single Preferred Option and consider minor refinements to the concepts
- Outlined proposed engagement activities: Community Meetings, Stakeholder Presentations, Interviews with Community Leaders, Focus Groups with transit users, online tools, Pop-up booths, advisory group meetings, non-concept plan events, policy body meetings
- Input Seeking this Fall
 - Questions to be asked to public (which will provide foundation for work):
 - What do you like about the station and surrounding area today? What needs improvement?
 - How can we improve transportation connections and station access?
 - What do the high-level vision statement and objectives mean to you?

Post-Presentation Question and Answer Discussion

Concluding the presentation, Dave Javid transitioned the meeting to a question and answer discussion with the SAAG. The following is a summary of the questions from the SAAG and the responses from the project team.

- Question #1 (Harvey Darnell) – Concerned that all of the potential High-Speed Rail (HSR) corridor alignments are not shown on the “Scope” graphic and asked that graphic be updated to reflect alternatives
 - *Eric Eidlin answered – We are absolutely considering all alternatives and will update graphic*
- Question #2 (Bill Souders) – Growing from 17,000-150,000 transit activities, are these connections or people passing through? Needs to be defined in order to accurately compare to Netherland stations.
 - *Eric answered – The modeling numbers are preliminary, and more thorough studies will follow. Numbers are 70,000 users per direction per day. The main point is that you can accommodate a lot of people on a small amount of land.*
 - *Daniel Jongtien answered – looking for more efficient ways to use the space.*
- Question #3 (Jon Pedigo) – European models of downtowns tend to not have as many low-income people as American downtowns. This raises a question of economic and cultural diversity along with displacement. Concerned that we can’t use the definition of ‘city’ if we exclude people from the marketplace. Whatever happens should hopefully include renovation, shared benefit, and building a complete city.
 - *Eric answered – The team heard a lot of these concerns. The focus of this plan is the efficiency of the station and the connection to the surrounding community – ultimately access to opportunity will be looked at on a certain level.*
- Question #4 (Kathy Sutherland) – What are you going to be considering for the three scenarios? Is this influenced by the alternative routes? What is the (a) scenario?
 - *Daniel answered – Many factors (modes, spatial challenges, track alignment) go into the development of each scenario*
- Question #5 (Teresa Alvarado) – SPUR organized the trip to the Netherlands to inspire the team – SPUR hosted “Transit-Centered Cities” conference. The Partners need to consider:



flexibility of purpose for rail stations, and how to create a multi-purpose, flexible space. This is a huge opportunity and challenge. Emphasized the importance of collaboration between partners. Always keep the users in mind – this is about people and moving them/giving them a great place to be. More than just an engineering problem.

- Question #6 (Jeffrey Buchanan) – Primary focus of group is looking at spatial layout; have there been any discussions about development partnerships within the goals of the projects. Regarding the constraint of public financing - will this project include space where agencies can consider a framework for financing?
 - *Eric answered – configuration of infrastructure will determine the development opportunities and development of urban spaces. Too early at this stage to know what those opportunities are. The finance tools are more part of the organizational scope of the project and there needs to be state-wide discussion to leverage investments for stations.*
 - *Martin answer – We have consulted and intend to design something which actually can be built and will work on this more in the coming months.*
- Question #7 (Sarah McDermott) – Are there socio-economic factors that are taken into consideration to ensure that it is accessible and useable for people commuting from other parts of the city? It would be helpful to identify specifics on transit users.
 - *Eric answered – Research on train stations has indicated that stations need to facilitate mobility across scales; for pedestrians across town, regional commuters, etc. It has to be for more than people from outside the area; it needs to serve the local level equally.*
 - *Daniel answer – Transit projects are most successful when public transportation serves the public. Design should account for ‘door-to-door’ journeys.*
- Question #8 (Kevin Christman) – “Build from the tracks out” makes it sound like building from the tracks out. There are still alternatives on the table (below, at, and above grade). Until we know exactly where the tracks are it is hard to propose three scenarios. How do we get a world-class design without watering down the process?
 - *Eric answered – The focus is the station looking outward. When discussing the scenarios, we are talking about the station. The options we are looking at consider different track approaches.*
 - *Daniel answered – We could have three different options all together, not approaching this in a linear way of thinking.*
 - *Martin answered – Some elements are more flexible than the track alignment; needs to be done right to last 100 years.*
 - *Eric answered – There are only a few ways/paths the tracks can make. The tracks are structuring elements (inflexible), more so than light-rail lines or taxi stops (more flexible).*
- Question #9 (Glen Williams) – The size of the Diridon Station relative to European models – Can you be more definitive in what the size of the station will be in acreage? How do you calculate that?
 - *Martin answered – It is still too early to say. The European stations are currently the same size that Diridon will be in the future. More calculations need to be made.*
 - *Eric answered – an example includes Leon station railyard, which is 15 acres. Diridon is 11 acre. Leon accommodates 550 trains/day while Diridon accommodates 115/day.*
- Question #10 (Jean Cohen) – Would be good to get input from operational employees at transit agencies/organization that represent them to get idea of day-to-day operations and



functions. An image of proposed housing/construction projects in pipeline would be useful to see again.

- *Eric answered – We will work on that.*
- Question #11 (Harvey Darnell) – Didn't hear anything about retail, entertainment, restaurants within the footprint of the station. Is that part of the plan? Also the group has talked about the tracks as a barrier that blocks pedestrian/bike traversal.
 - *Martin answered – in regard to the mix of uses, that is certainly part of the plan. As done in other projects, we want to integrate uses and services for commuters as well as non-commuters.*
 - *Martin answered – in response to the tracks as a barrier, the goal is for open connections for various modes of transit and increased connectivity within different parts of San Jose that are divided by different swaths of infrastructure.*
- Question #12 (Nadia Aziz) – Want to know more about the relationship with the vision of the station and the Google project.
 - *Eric answered – We need to think about the transit project and the development project together. This said, the facility must also work on its own as a public transportation hub.*
- Question #13 (Norma Camacho) – Large open public spaces can attract homeless, such as the case in the creek areas. How is this factor being incorporated into the design? Crosstown transit is often used as place for homeless to sleep.
 - *Eric answered – This is something that is recognized and has been discussed quite a bit by the project team. European plaza design includes methods that address this that we need to study more.*
- Question #14 (Kathy Sutherland) – The impact of Uber/Lyft (ridesharing). Will this create gridlock?
 - *Martin answered – Absolutely considering ride-sharing as part of the planning process. This is something we can expect more of and is something we need to prepare for by being flexible.*
- Question #15 (Edward Saum) – Anyone who has used transit in the Bay Area can relate to lack of transit connectivity (not seamless). Also Diridon Station is currently on the CA Register of Historic Places.
 - *Martin answered – In regard to transit connectivity, the team is fully aware of this issue and potential solutions. In regard to the historic station, this is also something the team is aware of and in discussion about how to proceed.*

PUBLIC COMMENT

One member of the public signed up to speak. The following is a summary of that comment.

- There is hope for a sustainable community future as we are living an era of war. I hope the final SAAG report can create a clear list of ideas for the Google Village and downtown as an educational document resulting from an inclusive community process. This document can offer a good guide for the City of San José and surrounding cities. Noted that Google is implementing regionally-based practices that the City should be aware of, and Google should respect the City's processes.

