



Memorandum

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Mayor Sam Liccardo
Vice Mayor Chappie Jones
Councilmember Raul Peralez
Councilmember Magdalena Carrasco
Councilmember Dev Davis

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: August 21, 2020

Approved

Date 8/21/20

SUBJECT: AIRPORT CONNECTOR AND STEVENS CREEK RFI

RECOMMENDATION

Accept staff recommendation with the following direction:

1. Ensure City Department of Transportation (DOT) and Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) coordination on further development of the Airport Connector and Stevens Creek Line.
2. Incorporate lessons learned on new technology into VTA's "High Capacity Transit Study", soon to be launched Stevens Creek "Vision Study", and the "Next Gen" study, which is currently underway, and slated for completion by the end of the year.
3. Continue staff advocacy with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to include the Airport Connector and Stevens Creek corridor transit solutions as part of the transportation element of Plan Bay Area 2050 – preferably under Period 1 projects scheduled to be completed prior to 2035.
4. Ensure staff coordination between DOT, Public Works, City Attorney's Office, and VTA to fully investigate and work through legal questions and framework for private option.
5. Include in future workplans for the Office of Racial Equity and DOT - and in partnership with VTA and transit advocacy groups – the development of a strategy focused on Airport Connector and Stevens Creek Lines accessibility and affordability.

BACKGROUND

The Airport Connector and Stevens Creek transit solution present enormous opportunities to move people along critical corridors – and between key public infrastructure assets like SJC Airport and Diridon Station. Through the Airport Connector and Stevens Creek RFI effort, staff has sampled the market, and learned a great deal about emerging transit technology solutions, and their potential to deliver more cost-effective transit systems compared to traditional transit infrastructure. Thank you to staff, the surrounding cities of Cupertino and Santa Clara, the County and VTA, the team at Kimley-Horn, as well as the next generation of transportation of technology companies that have engaged with the City on this effort.

As staff moves forward to advance these projects along parallel paths – both traditional public procurement as well as the exploration of a private option – integrating this work with VTA’s High Capacity Transit study and related Vision Study for Stevens Creek corridor is critical. That effort will build on the results of the evaluation of the corridor, and work with the four jurisdictions (San José, Santa Clara, Cupertino and the County of Santa Clara) and the community to develop a common vision and implementation plan for the Stevens Creek Corridor. The Vision Study builds from a joint submission from all of the cities and VTA to the Plan Bay Area update process for a high capacity transit solution along this corridor. The study is anticipated to be completed by June 2022, and is contingent on the partners securing funding commitments.

Additionally, staff should coordinate this work closely with VTA’s Next Gen study that will analyze alternative technologies for the future of VTA’s Light Rail Transit system and is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year. While the RFI results make it clear that at this point there is no one horse to ride, with 23 submissions to the RFI, we do see significant innovation and options in the transit solutions market. With hundreds of millions of dollars of light rail replacement costs looming in the not too distant future for VTA, DOT staff should closely coordinate with VTA studies and staff work that is pointed towards modernizing the light rail system over the coming years. Future transit solutions connecting the Airport and Diridon – as well as Diridon and key locations along Stevens Creek like De Anza College and the Apple campus – should strive for a seamless user experience, and the efficiencies associated with standardized solutions if at all possible.

The Plan Bay Area Draft Blueprint is scheduled to be adopted by the MTC in September, and given an already strained transportation system and the substantial increase in jobs and housing growth pegged for San José, we must be diligent about inclusion of critical South Bay transportation infrastructure in the Plan to accommodate the projected growth. We know staff has been working to that end. Continued engagement with VTA and MTC staff is necessary to make San José’s priorities known, and to secure regional funding to deliver these projects. Accessibility and affordability must be top of mind as we envision future investment along these corridors. To that end, our Office of Racial Equity should partner with DOT to ensure that we are addressing any - and all - barriers to transit access in the earliest phases of project development.

Finally, staff recommends exploration of the private option as a possible path to delivering the Airport Connector and/or Stevens Creek transit solution. In order to best understand the opportunity, legal questions that must be answered, and necessary framework, Public Works,

COUNCIL AGENDA

August 21, 2020

Subject: Airport Connector and Stevens Creek RFI

Page 3

PBCE, DOT and the CAO should fully investigate what would be required when they report back to Council by August 2021.

Brown Act Disclaimer

The signers of this memorandum have not had, and will not have, any private conversation with any other member of the City Council, or that member's staff, concerning any action discussed in the memorandum, and that each signer's staff members have not had, and have been instructed not to have, any such conversation with any other member of the City Council or that member's staff.