

San José Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan

FREQUENTLY-ASKED QUESTIONS

February 1, 2019 (question added May 2021)

1. What is the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan?

The Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan (Concept Plan) is a collaborative effort among four partner agencies to plan for the expansion and redesign of San José Diridon Station. In the future, electrified Caltrain, BART, and High-Speed Rail service will add to the trains, buses and light rail that currently use the station - bringing in many more passengers. To ensure coordination of these investments, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA), Caltrain, City of San José, and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) – referred to as the Partner Agencies – have joined together to develop the Concept Plan. The Concept Plan will broadly identify the spatial layout of the future station and its integration with the surrounding community, as well as a governing structure to deliver the shared vision for the station.

2. What is San José Diridon Station?

San José Diridon Station is a historic train depot located at the western edge of downtown San José, which is the nation's 10th largest city with a population of over 1 million. Diridon Station opened in 1935 and has grown into a major transit hub for the Bay Area, with about 17,000 daily passengers. Multiple transit systems serve the station, including Caltrain, Amtrak, Capitol Corridor, the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE), VTA light rail, VTA bus service, and other bus services. Several transit projects are underway that will increase transit services and bring over 100,000 daily passengers to Diridon Station by 2040 (based on preliminary estimates). The station is named after a local official, former Santa Clara County Supervisor Rod Diridon.

3. What are the planned transit improvements and land use plans affecting San José Diridon Station?

- Caltrain is currently constructing the Electrification Project, installing the needed infrastructure from San Francisco to Tamien Station in San José and assembling the new electric trains that will replace the aging diesel fleet. The Electrification Project, scheduled to be complete in 2022, will increase Caltrain commuter service and improve regional air quality.
- Caltrain is also developing a Business Plan to better understand the region's future transportation needs and identify opportunities and strategies that will allow Caltrain to help meet those needs. The Business Plan will include a long-term service vision for the Caltrain corridor, define the infrastructure needed to support that service vision, and identify potential funding mechanisms for implementation of these improvements.

- The California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) is in the process of planning and constructing a statewide high-speed rail system that will serve Diridon Station. The CHSRA is currently preparing project-level environmental documents for the San José to Merced Project Section. Environmental clearance is scheduled to be completed in 2020.
- The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is working to extend Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) service to San José and Santa Clara, including a stop at Diridon Station, as part of the BART Silicon Valley Extension project (Phase II – Berryessa to Santa Clara). It is anticipated that construction will begin in 2020, with passenger service beginning in 2026. VTA is responsible for designing and constructing this BART extension, but once completed, the BART agency will operate and maintain the system under an agreement with VTA.
- In addition to the planned transit improvements, the City of San José is updating and implementing the Diridon Station Area Plan (DSAP) through municipal infrastructure improvements and its review of private development proposals by Google and others. The City’s DSAP, General Plan, and Downtown Strategy all call for the development of thousands of new housing units and millions of square feet of new commercial development in the Diridon Station Area to support regional transit use.

4. What is the Purpose of the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan?

Planned transit improvements, along with future land use development, will result in greater numbers of people traveling to and through San José Diridon Station. To effectively accommodate all of this planned activity and ensure the station is user friendly, it must be expanded and reconfigured to function as an integrated multi-modal station. Instead of implementing individual transit projects in a piecemeal manner, the Partner Agencies (CHSRA, Caltrain, City of San José, and VTA) are preparing a single, coordinated Concept Plan.

Transforming Diridon Station is a once in a generation opportunity to increase the station’s capacity, ensure a seamless experience for station users, and improve mobility in the region. It is also a major opportunity to help revitalize the Diridon neighborhood, create a vibrant community hub, and improve transportation connections with downtown and surrounding areas. The Partner Agencies recognize this potential, as well as the need to coordinate among their individual projects.

5. Why is a redesigned train station so critical for the future of San José, the Bay Area, and California?

- **Challenges:** The City of San José, as well as the Bay Area and California, are facing numerous challenges related to housing, traffic congestion, and aging transportation infrastructure. To address these inter-related challenges, we need a more efficient, affordable, safe, and modern transportation network that meets existing and future demand. Accordingly, the Partner Agencies, along with Bay Area and State stakeholders, are investing in integrated, high-capacity transit.
- **Local Benefits:** Given the high level of planned public investment at Diridon, the station must be designed to maximize benefits to the residents of San José – socially, environmentally, and economically. An integrated station will benefit the City’s residents by greatly enhancing access to jobs and housing,

supporting public transit use, and attracting economic activity. At the neighborhood level, station improvements will enhance connectivity, public spaces, and the sense of place.

- **Regional and Statewide Benefits:** The Concept Plan is a project of regional and statewide significance, as San José Diridon Station will become one of the busiest intermodal hubs in California once BART, high-speed rail, and electrified Caltrain begin service at the station. The station will ultimately provide connections for people traveling to and from San Francisco, the East Bay, southern California, and the Central Valley— linking the major economic centers in the state. Providing for the efficient movement to and through the station will be increasingly important as the Bay Area economy continues to attract people to live and work in the region. An integrated Diridon Station will support efficient and reliable transportation, particularly into and out of downtown San José. Electrified rail and increased transit services overall will also help minimize environmental impacts related to travel and benefit local, regional, and global air quality.

6. What is the initial vision for the future San José Diridon Station?

The initial vision is to deliver a world-class transportation hub that provides a seamless customer experience for movement between transit modes within the station and into the surrounding neighborhoods and downtown San José.

The Partner Agencies are using this high-level vision statement to guide preparation of the Concept Plan. The Concept Plan will result in a complete vision that will form the foundation for subsequent work and ultimately project delivery.

7. What is the Scope of the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan?

The Concept Plan will include two components:

- 1) a spatial configuration that shows how the various track and station elements will fit together and relate to the surrounding neighborhood (technical work)
- 2) an organizational structure to effectively deliver the shared vision for the station (organizational work)

The technical work will primarily address the station and its interface with the urban fabric, focusing on the functionality of the station, rather than its architectural appearance. The main elements include the:

- Track alignments
- Platform configuration
- Station hall location and layout, including the concourse
- Access to the station by various transportation options (such as walking and bus)
- Public spaces
- Urban connections (i.e., street and pathways across the tracks)

Later phases of technical work will include detailed engineering, architectural plans, and environmental review. The Concept Plan is not planning for the specific land uses or buildings in the area surrounding the station. The City of San José has authority for regulating development in the surrounding area and will conduct separate engagement activities related to future land use projects.

The organizational work will address how the Partner Agencies need to organize themselves in order to advance and deliver the station project. The various elements will include potential financing mechanisms, risk management, schedule, and responsibilities for project delivery. It will also consider the best structure for the long-term ownership, management, operations, and maintenance of the station.

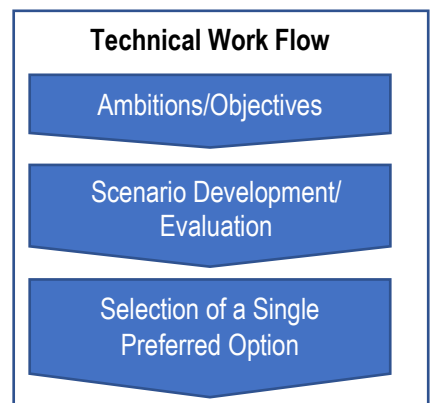
8. Who is preparing the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan?

Four agencies have joined together to prepare the Concept Plan: California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA), Caltrain, the City of San José, and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA). These Partner Agencies have signed a Cooperative Agreement that establishes a framework for the preparation and implementation of the Concept Plan. Each of the Partner Agencies is contributing resources and staff time.

The Partner Agencies have hired a consultant team of urban designers and engineers to prepare the Concept Plan, comprised of Arcadis and Benthem Crouwel Architects. They have previously teamed together to deliver many award-winning transit stations, including Amsterdam Main Station, Rotterdam Main Station, Utrecht Main Station, as well as Amsterdam’s Schipol Amsterdam International Airport, a project that includes a rail station hub.

9. What is the process for completing the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan?

The Concept Plan process is divided into two phases. Phase 1 of the Concept Plan includes multiple milestones for the technical work (i.e., developing a spatial configuration). Initially, each Partner Agency provided a list of ambitions and requirements, including the operational and long-term infrastructure needs of the transit operators to meet future demand and service goals. This initial work informed the Key Objectives driving the Concept Plan process (see the Preliminary Vision and Key Objectives handout).



Next is development of multiple Scenarios and evaluation of these Scenarios against the Key Objectives. The Scenarios will show potential combinations of all the station elements, described under question 7 above. The last step of Phase 1 technical work is development of a Single Preferred Option for the spatial configuration. The final product for Phase 1 will be an agreement between the Partner Agencies to move forward with the Single Preferred Option into the next phase of analysis.

During Phase 2 of the Concept Plan process, the Partner Agencies will refine the Single Preferred Option to determine the shape and scale of station and to prepare 10% engineering and design plans. This phase will also involve estimating the costs and timing of construction, including a potential phasing program.

The organizational work (i.e., establishing an organizational framework for delivering the station vision) will occur in parallel to the technical work. Phase 1 involves exploring options for the various governance elements, while Phase 2 will involve refining and advancing an organizational framework.

The final product of Phase 2 will be a Concept Plan that outlines a complete shared vision for the station and a recommended framework for delivering that vision.

10. What is the timeline for completing the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan?

Phase 1 of the Concept Plan process began in September 2018 and will extend through summer 2019. The Partner Agencies anticipate completing the second phase of the Concept Plan in 2020.

11. How much will the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan cost and who is paying for it?

The cost of Phase 1 of the Concept Plan is approximately \$3.7 million, with Phase 2 estimated to cost approximately \$3 million. Each of the four Partner Agencies will share in this cost. The Partner Agencies have also secured grants from Caltrans and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) totaling \$1.3 million. These funds are being used to help fund Phase I of the Concept Plan. The Partner Agencies are continuing to explore other grant and funding opportunities in Phase 2, including potentially utilizing Regional Measure 3 funds.

Beyond these initial planning efforts, the remaining costs required to deliver the new, expanded station through the construction phase is undetermined at this time. An objective of the Concept Plan effort is to help the Partner Agencies and other stakeholders better understand the scope, scale, and cost of a new transit station. The Concept Plan will also inform the organizational structure and potential funding mechanisms.

12. Who are the decision-makers for the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan?

The consultant team is leading a series of iterative workshops with the technical staff from each Partner Agency, with direction and oversight from the Partner Agency directors and Executives. The policy bodies of the Partner Agencies ultimately have decision-making authority over the Concept Plan and related actions, such as direction to move forward with the Single Preferred Option developed in Phase 1. These policy bodies include: the Board of Directors of the California High Speed Rail Authority, Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (Caltrain), San José City Council, and the VTA Board of Directors.

13. What is the public's role in the Concept Plan process?

The Partner Agencies agree that a coordinated station planning process must include robust public outreach. The overall purpose is to ensure the Partner Agencies understand and consider the hopes, concerns, and interests of all stakeholders. Accordingly, the Partner Agencies are engaging the community during multiple outreach phases that correspond to key Concept Plan milestones and will consider community input throughout development of the Concept Plan.

Each Partner Agency is actively participating in public outreach and engagement activities for the Concept Plan, with the City San José taking the lead role in managing the outreach efforts. Each Partner Agency is also

continuing their own outreach efforts for their respective projects and planning processes (e.g., Caltrain's Business Plan and the City's development review). The Partner Agencies are committed to conducting those efforts in coordination with the Concept Plan process. For additional details on public outreach, refer to the complete Outreach Strategy for the Concept Plan.

14. How can I learn more and provide input?

Throughout the Concept Plan process, there will be multiple opportunities to learn about the project and share your thoughts. Those interested in joining our mailing list can do so using the following methods: www.diridonsj.org; call Lori Severino, Diridon Station Area Civic Engagement Program Manager, at 408-535-3537; or email diridonsj@gmail.com.

15. What happens after completion of the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan?

The Final Concept Plan will form the basis for preparing more advanced and detailed design and engineering documents. Other required work prior to full operation of the station will include environmental review, completion of construction documents, identification of funding, right-of-way acquisition, site preparation, and construction.

16. How does the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan relate to the planned transit improvement projects and land use planning?

The Partner Agencies are coordinating work on the Concept Plan with the following planning processes and transit improvement projects.

Land Use Plans and Future Development: The City adopted the Diridon Station Area Plan (DSAP) in 2014, which included concepts for an expanded station based on project information known at the time. The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) provided program-level review of these assumed station modifications. The City intends to update the DSAP, along with review of a master plan proposal by Google (anticipated to begin in 2019). *The updated DSAP will incorporate and reflect the Concept Plan.*

VTA's BART Phase II Extension: In 2018, VTA received state and federal environmental clearance for Phase II of the BART extension through downtown San José to Santa Clara, and is advancing engineering in order to apply for federal funding in Spring of 2020. VTA is the lead agency for planning, designing, and building the Silicon Valley BART extension, and BART will operate and maintain the extension once constructed. The opening year of BART Phase II service is currently estimated to be 2026. The approved project includes a BART station under Santa Clara Street near the existing Diridon Station. *The Concept Plan work and the BART Phase II project will work collaboratively to achieve an integrated intermodal facility.*

High-Speed Rail: In addition, the CHSRA has certified a program-level environmental document that analyzed impacts of potential high-speed rail alignments through San José at a high level. It is currently preparing the environmental document for the San José to Merced Project Section, to be finalized in 2020. *As both the Concept*

Plan and the CHSRA's environmental work move forward in 2019 and 2020, coordination will be essential to ensure that plans for the station are properly integrated.

Caltrain: Lastly, Caltrain is updating its Business Plan to develop a better understanding of the region's future transportation needs and identify opportunities and strategies for Caltrain to help meet those needs. The Business Plan will include a long-term service vision for the corridor, define the infrastructure needed to support that service vision, and identify potential funding mechanisms for implementation of these improvements. This includes informing terminal capacity and operational needs at Diridon Station and in the surrounding area. *The Business Plan will work jointly with the Diridon Integrated Station Concept process to develop inputs to the Concept Plan effort including the program of platform, track and supporting facility requirements and needs for Caltrain service. Details of infrastructure requirements at and around Diridon Station will be developed and refined iteratively in consultation with the Concept Plan process and the individual Partner Agencies.*

The Concept Plan process will consider the previously approved plans, but aims to create a new spatial configuration that integrates all existing and future modes in a manner that best meets the key objectives. Through the Cooperative Agreement, the Partner Agencies have committed to implementing the Final Concept Plan through the final construction stages upon completion of the plan. Additionally, the public outreach process for the Concept Plan will coordinate with these other planning efforts.

17. How big will the future station be? Where will it go?

Diridon Station currently occupies about 15 acres. It is likely the new station will be taller, wider, and longer than the existing station building. Preliminary estimates on the building size and station footprint will be available when the Scenarios are prepared in 2019.

The Partner Agencies anticipate that the footprint of the station facilities will be concentrated between Santa Clara Street and San Fernando Street in the vicinity of the existing station.

18. What will happen to the historic station building? (question added May 2021)

The existing depot is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is an important community asset. The Diridon Integrated Station Concept Layout proposes significantly expanded tracks and platforms at the station in order to accommodate much higher future train volumes. The Concept Layout also proposes elevating the tracks, and the specific height to which the tracks can be raised is limited by rail geometry constraints. Bearing these factors in mind, a comprehensive and coordinated review and approval process with the Diridon Station Historic Covenant Holder will be implemented, as required, for any impacts to the depot building. The DISC Partners are beginning to scope out an in-depth study to identify options for the future of the depot.