

APPENDIX A:
PUBLIC WORKSHOP #3

A.1 Introduction

The third community workshop for the Diridon Station Area Plan was held on 7 August 2010, at San José City Hall. Over 30 people attended the two hour event.

The purpose of this workshop was to provide community members with the opportunity to comment on the ideas to be included in the Preferred Plan for the Station Area. The workshop was held at the midpoint of the development of the Preferred Plan and provided the planning team with the opportunity to present evolving ideas to the community and receive focused input on key topics.

The workshop was structured to provide an interactive setting, where community members could participate in group discussions of key ideas. Participants were seated around six large tables, which served as the setting for the group discussions. Following the individual group discussions, workshop participants were invited to nominate a speaker to represent each group who then described their most important five or six topics or issues back to the larger audience.

Participants were also given an e-mail address as an option for sending any further thoughts and comments after the conclusion of the workshop. Four such comments were received and are summarized in section 4 of this report.

- Overview. The presentation began with an overview of the planning process, and initial feedback from the first two community workshops. The resulting 'emerging themes' were reiterated. This was followed by an introduction to the draft preferred plan ideas, including key land uses, urban design, place making and possible maximum development potential for the study area. This was supplemented with a more in-depth description of parking strategy, landscaping and public open space, access and connectivity, station program and concept and finally the proposed public art strategy.

- Small group discussion of draft preferred plan. This exercise included facilitated group discussions of the draft preferred plan ideas, using a list of four main topics for discussion as a guide as well as a printed land-use structure diagram and draft site plan showing buildings, spaces and places at each table. Participants were encouraged to mark up the drawings to help describe or supplement the written record of their group discussions.
- Report back. At the end of the individual group discussions, a representative from each group reported back to the larger audience on their concerns, issues and ideas for possible incorporation into the draft preferred plan as it continues to be developed by the planning team. These reports concentrated on the key areas of interest or concern to each group, but all comments made and recorded during the group discussions are included in section 3 of this summary report.
- Follow up. E-mailed comments which were received from some participants who wished to emphasize or reiterate their concerns after the workshop are included in section 4 of this summary report.

A.2 Key findings

While the workshop was organized into individual group discussions to solicit focused feedback on the draft preferred plan ideas, there were several common issues and themes that arose during the discussions. These issues provide an overview of the feedback received and will serve as a guide for further development and refinement in the final stages of the Station Area Plan process.

KEY FINDINGS

1. LAND USE MIX

There was a general concern for how and where the proposed land uses would be located, mixed, and activated. There was widespread support for establishing a high-intensity mixed-use core around the station with a mix of retail, entertainment and employment uses. Some felt that having residential uses in the core would help activate the area, supporting transit, retail uses and the area's long-term viability. Regardless of mix, all agreed that the core should be active day and night to ensure safety and to solidify the area as a destination. Participants wanted to see 24/7 activity to complement the bigger events at the HP Pavilion and ballpark and were looking for a better definition of how this is to be achieved.

Some participants wanted to see more residential development in general and especially north of the station, fearing that the focus on predominantly commercial uses between Stockton Avenue and Autumn Parkway would create a business-park like environment which would be lifeless outside of normal office hours. One group was strongly in favor of locating more residential units close to the elevated rail lines in the Royal/Auzerais district where the preferred plan currently shows a predominantly commercial mix.

Participants felt that the mix of uses should be planned carefully—both in finding the right balance between retail and office and employment uses, finding the right balance between retail use

and the amount of residential development needed to support it and also in differentiating the retail offer within the Diridon Station Area from downtown and Santana Row. Big-box retail was generally not welcome anywhere within the study area.

There was much support for the strategy to reduce the proposed amount of parking supply and the proposed diversity of parking locations, but repeated criticism of what was generally perceived to be a wasted opportunity by not developing the existing HP Pavilion surface parking lot.

2. URBAN DESIGN, PLACE MAKING AND PUBLIC ART

There was widespread support for establishing a strong character for the Diridon Station Area, particularly for the station itself and the surrounding core.

There was desire for maintaining an active public realm both within the station core area, as well as throughout the Station Area. This activity should be generated by ground floor uses like retail, entertainment, and public plazas. Participants reiterated the desire to ensure that there would be no “dead zones”, particularly in the northern zone generally and in the central zone on non-event days.

Several groups expressed a desire to see more ground floor retail and restaurant uses along Autumn Parkway overlooking the Los Gatos Creek to take advantage of this newly (to be) restored amenity, such as a river walk modeled on the one in San Antonio that balances nature and commercial vibrancy.

The lack of a prominent civic plaza was noted by several groups. The proposed public plaza between the new and existing terminals was not considered to be either large enough or prominent enough to function as a major civic gathering space.

The few comments relating specifically to Art related to the preference for seeing the public art being integrated into the overall design, and becoming a key component of the Station Area's identity and character. The recently completed program of public art at the airport was cited as a good example of how to do this properly.

Several individual comments (and some follow-up comments received by e-mail) expressed concern for the state of Los Gatos Creek at the large traffic intersection at Park Avenue and the proposed realignment of Autumn Parkway. This was described as being one of the key recommendations of the Good Neighbor Committee and participants felt that the opportunity to restore the creek and connect the creek side trail in this area was not reflected in the draft preferred plan, with too much emphasis still being placed on accommodating traffic movements at the expense of cyclists and pedestrians.

3. STATION DESIGN – CONCEPTS AND CONNECTIVITY

There were surprisingly few comments which were specific to the station design or the proposed elevated high speed rail alignment. Comments were generally in favor of the 'iconic' approach to the location and design of the station. The importance of improving east-west connectivity across the tracks and minimizing the impact of the elevated structure at ground level was noted in the group presentations.

4. ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Ensuring that the preferred plan is focused on transit and connectivity was a key concern for everyone. Bicycle and pedestrian linkages were of greatest concern, particularly the provision of an extensive bicycle network with bike lanes, trails and commuter bicycle routes. The need to improve and supplement the existing east-west connections was mentioned in almost every break-out

group and the need to ensure the safety of cyclists and pedestrians on busy thoroughfares was emphasized by one group.

Pedestrian connections were an important issue, especially to the surrounding neighborhoods and Downtown, where existing underpasses, the new elevated rail corridor and streets like Santa Clara Avenue need improvement.

A.3 Group discussions

Each of the six groups was given a list of topics, arranged within the following four categories, for discussion, although it was not necessary for each group to address every topic. These were merely intended to serve as a set of 'prompts' to help the group focus on areas of particular interest.

1. LAND USES

- Kinds of land uses
- Mix of uses in each station area
- Density & character of uses
- Parking strategies
- Additional uses to consider
- Any other opportunities

2. URBAN DESIGN, PLACEMAKING & PUBLIC ART

- Primary urban design ideas
- Main places
- Parks & public open spaces
- Public art ideas
- Clarity, excitement & fun
- Any other thoughts

3. STATION DESIGN – CONCEPTS & CONNECTIVITY

- Iconic station design & spaces
- Existing & new stations
- Connections to surroundings
- Santa Clara Street and the station
- Buses, taxis, light rail & pedestrians
- Any other concepts

4. ACCESS & CIRCULATION

- Major & minor vehicular routes
- Heavy rail & access to it
- Light rail, buses, shuttles & taxis
- Bicycles & pedestrians
- Signage, lighting, & orientation
- Any other points

The following text is a list of items recorded during the discussions at each table. The bullet points which are highlighted represent the key issues presented back to the larger group at the conclusion of the workshop.

TABLE 1

LAND USES

- Need to weave all of the areas together
- More commercial and active uses facing onto Los Gatos Creek. Make it a 'hopping' place.
- No 'super-blocks' shown – good. Create smaller blocks with buildings focused outwards onto public spaces, not inwardly focused.
- Soccer fields in the large community park are preferable to the ball field as shown. Local office staff will play soccer at lunchtimes.
- The proposed baseball park is not an appropriate land use in this location. It is a wasted opportunity.
- Taking the focus away from parking is OK. Shared parking can work. Underground parking is much better than above ground. Use the ground floor of buildings and open space for people, not for parking.
- Proposed parking supply may not be enough – people are going to drive into the area anyway.

URBAN DESIGN, PLACEMAKING AND PUBLIC ART

- Tree-lined green connections – yes!
- Make Santa Clara Street a green connector.
- Create setbacks along Autumn Parkway for outdoor dining facing onto Los Gatos Creek.
- Some distances (e.g. in front of The Arena) are lacking interest. Need to create pedestrian interest along the route.
- Would like to see good set of strong design guidelines to ensure that future development is consistent with the plan, not a hodge-podge of individual schemes.

STATION DESIGN - CONCEPTS AND CONNECTIVITY

- Connectivity east-west across the tracks is important, not just for station patrons but also for citizens traveling east-west.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

- Good connections to downtown.
- Connections under SR-87 are critical to solve.
- The focus on transit is good.
- Bicycles should be accommodated on all streets, not just for recreational purposes but as an integral commuter transportation mode.

TABLE 2

LAND USES

- What happens if there is not a ballpark?
- Lack of park to parallel increase in residential.
- Where is the reference to the Good Neighbor Committee recommendations in the plan? There is a disconnect between the new and existing commercial with the proposed new residential.
- Why are you converting residential to commercial uses on

San Carlos?

- Auzerais is not appropriate for regional commercial uses. Currently there is lots of children and pedestrian activity. Why not concentrate more small retail?
- Regional commercial seems more appropriate than light industrial.
- How can this area become more 'engaging' at the times when there are no scheduled events at the HP Pavilion or the ballpark?
- Would like to see more live/work uses with a campus feel north of the station. Should include ground floor retail along Julian Street.
- Would like to see access to a possible train museum at Cinnabar Street.
- The opportunity to generate real sales tax will be in niche marketing which competes with internet purchases, e.g. Japan town, lifestyle retail.
- Don't want any big box retail in this area.
- How about nightclub uses on the second floor of buildings within the central zone?

URBAN DESIGN, PLACEMAKING AND PUBLIC ART

- Park connectivity.
- Art, architecture and landscape should reflect the history of the area, especially the agricultural history.
- Need to see visualizations of how this plan harmonizes with the recommendations of the Good Neighbor Committee.
- Central zone should have 24/7 activity, not just before and after events.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

- Bicycle and trail connectivity
- Can Auzerais St really become a bicycle route with existing typology and width?
- Ensure green east-west connections in the northern zone.

- Would like to see 'complete streets'.
- Ensure full bicycle access on all main transportation corridors such as Autumn Parkway.
- Respect all modes of travel. The bicycle and pedestrian proposals feel incomplete.
- Ensure that groups such as the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC) are involved in the decision making process for street typologies and connectivity.
- Plan should show the new light rail station at Sunol Street.
- Reinforce the connections along Los Gatos Creek to the south of the study area.

TABLE 3

LAND USES

- The plan includes too few residential units and not enough mixed use. We need more mixed use with higher density residential included, especially in the northern zone and along Autumn Parkway. Medium density residential should only be shown in the Delmas district.
- The 'regional commercial' category should be better defined and should not allow for big box retail. We don't want 'freeway oriented' commercial.
- Provide less parking than shown. Allow for more satellite parking, e.g. at Alum Rock.
- The parking strategy refers to the 20%VMT reduction targets within the 2040 General Plan update, but this figure should be the higher 40% VMT reduction also being discussed.
- Build over the non-toxic portions of the HP Pavilion surface parking lot.

URBAN DESIGN, PLACEMAKING AND PUBLIC ART

- Do not waste space on medians – use the available space to accommodate all travel modes safely.
- Walls - e.g. around ballpark stadium and at Autumn Parkway. Balls from homeruns at ballpark!

- Bring the World Cup to San Jose. Is there enough room for baseball and soccer facilities? Can soccer fields be accommodated at the Airport? At the ballpark?
- Some existing parks are not very good and the art within them is questionable.

STATION DESIGN - CONCEPTS AND CONNECTIVITY

- The high speed rail tracks north of the station should swing to the east of the Caltrain tracks and avoid conflict with the Bellarmine High School property.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

- Address safety issues for bicycles and pedestrians with respect to vehicles and buses, especially when BRT routes are introduced in the area. The plan needs more bike lanes, especially east-west routes. More grand boulevards for bicycles.
- Accommodate people who want to walk to work.

TABLE 4

LAND USES

- Concerned about the scale of development (noise and traffic impacts on neighborhoods, construction impacts and traffic pollution), although it seems about right for the future growth projections for San Jose.
- Concerned about the predominantly single use in the northern zone. This area will be 'dead' at night.
- Concerned about trade competition between the new station area and downtown.

URBAN DESIGN, PLACEMAKING AND PUBLIC ART

- Make the parking areas more attractive, especially to the west of HP Pavilion.

STATION DESIGN - CONCEPTS AND CONNECTIVITY

- Immediate neighbors would like to see lower scale new station design with compatibility of old and new.
- Transparency of new station is important.
- The positive aspect of the elevated high speed rail tracks is that they will provide views of the City.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

- Open up Los Gatos Creek at the Park Avenue/Autumn Parkway intersection to allow the continuation of the creek side trail.
- Strengthen east-west connections for pedestrians and bicycles, especially to and from the station.
- Provide real-time electronic wayfinding and transit signage.
- Extend Basset Street to the West to make one more 'green finger'.
- Provide better linkages from the northern zone to the central station district.
- Integrate the station parking strategy with the downtown parking management plan and improve the east-west connections for access to parking.
- Make the intersections at Bird Avenue, Park Avenue and San Carlos Streets more bicycle and pedestrian friendly.

TABLE 5

LAND USES

- The ULI is currently studying sustainable high density development in the area.
- What is intensive business use? Maximize office development, but not campus style. Prefer to see more urban scale of development.
- Regional commercial classification is flexible – needs better definition.
- What about entertainment uses and destination retail?

- The plan is confusing with respect to retail uses.
- The mixed use in the core is too undefined. Need to show ground floor retail and clearer definition. Maximize the development in the core area.
- Unsure of land uses. Possible new station in southwest corner?
- The plan misses the opportunity to create a 24/7/365 active destination. The area is currently too event-dependent.
- There is lots of new retail compared to the amount of housing shown. There is not enough residential use to support the amount of retail shown.
- Tax revenue creating uses are needed.
- Question- Is there enough housing or not? Is there too much office? Can we have a better live/work balance?
- Maximize the development potential.

URBAN DESIGN, PLACEMAKING AND PUBLIC ART

- Include the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition and the Newhall neighborhood association.
- The plan lacks the feeling of having a core. We don't get the feeling of retail in small buildings and do not see an appropriately fine-grained core.
- The Los Gatos Creek presents a 'river walk' opportunity.
- We need to face development toward the reclaimed water features and provide entertainment-based activity and a river walk. Preserve the environment.
- We need more eyes on the river and creek – currently feels unsafe.
- San Jose is a big city – start acting like one.
- The plan shows a good amount of open space. We like the large community park surrounded by mixed use.
- Tennis courts within the community park – do not make sense located across from the ballpark stadium. What would be a better fit?
- We need eyes on the parks.
- Public art proposals good, although it is not clear what kind of art would be located in the northern zone.

- The plan is lacking a good public plaza. Make more of the plaza opportunity at the new station terminal.

STATION DESIGN - CONCEPTS AND CONNECTIVITY

- Station design is good so far. Old versus new, links to the past and bold and iconic all good.
- We need good design to prevent the elevated rail tracks becoming a barrier. Minimize the impact of the structure at ground level.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

- The connections shown are primarily north-south. Need to address the barriers and work out better east-west connections.
- Require better connections within the new development, especially connections to downtown and bicycle connections. Show connections from the new development to the station.

TABLE 6

LAND USES

- Concerned about the commercial/light industrial uses shown east of Stockton Avenue directly across the street from single family residential uses. More concerned about massing and bulk of development than actual uses. Need sensitive height and mass transition.
- Balance the land uses with the opportunity to minimize noise in the neighborhoods.
- Could City provide structured parking on HP Pavilion surface parking lot? Maintain existing lease arrangements by providing equivalent spaces in parking structure. This is a 20 – 30 year plan which should look beyond the current situation and convert this property to structured parking and new development.
- Utilize the existing parking supply to the east of SR87 and improve connectivity for access to parking.

- Need to provide some parking for high speed rail to be successful.

URBAN DESIGN, PLACEMAKING AND PUBLIC ART

- Concerned about the treatment of Los Gatos Creek at Autumn Parkway. Be consistent with the Good Neighbor Committee recommendations to keep it in its natural state.
- Restore Los Gatos Creek to its natural state at the Park Avenue/Autumn Parkway intersection.
- Ensure a scale transition from Stockton Avenue to the railroad tracks.
- Would like to see retail fronting the river walks, but riparian setbacks limit this opportunity.
- Would like to see a large urban square near the HP Pavilion and the ballpark. Good location for sports simulcasts and public art.
- Would like to see bigger plaza in front of the new station. Good location for gathering space. Refer to European examples of urban plazas. Want to see San Jose's 'Times Square' and cultural opportunities.
- The recent art program at the San Jose airport is a good example of well integrated artworks.

STATION DESIGN - CONCEPTS AND CONNECTIVITY

- New station design should integrate with the existing historic station and should recognize the importance of well integrated public art.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

- Better connectivity for all modes, especially below SR 87. Plan looks as if improved connections just stop at SR 87.
- Connect the new station to downtown and Santana Row.
- Is it possible to add light rail to San Carlos and mix transit with traffic? Cozy. Effective. Avoids transit transfer. (e.g. San Francisco Muni LRT distributes people well).

A.4 Follow up

E-MAIL COMMENTS RECEIVED

Four e-mail comments were received from participants subsequent to the workshop. These were primarily intended to reiterate and emphasize the following issues which were raised during the report back section of the workshop activity;

- Restore Los Gatos Creek to its natural state at the Park Avenue/Autumn Parkway intersection in accordance with Good Neighbor Committee Implementation Priority.
- Would like to see more live/work uses with a campus feel north of the station. Should include ground floor retail along Julian Street.
- How can this area become more ‘engaging’ at the times when there are no scheduled events at the HP Pavilion or the ballpark?
- The parking strategy refers to the 20%VMT reduction targets within the 2040 General Plan update, but this figure should be the higher 40% VMT reduction also being discussed.

The full text of each of the four e-mails is included below;

COMMENT #1

In attending the Community Workshop at City Hall today, August 7, I was pleased to see that, in general, the designs presented by staff and consultants align closely with the Goals and Implementation Priorities chosen by the Diridon Area Good Neighbor Committee. However, in one important respect, the Diridon Area Preferred Plan failed to respond to a clearly stated priority of the Good Neighbor Committee.

In the Committee’s “Framework for Implementation” for Parks and Trails, Implementation Priority #1 reads as follows:

1. Restore the natural setting of the waterways in the urban areas, including specifically that of the Los Gatos Creek as it passes under

Montgomery Street and Park Avenue, and, to the extent possible, implement a river walk modeled on the one in San Antonio that balances nature and commercial vibrancy.

Currently, the Los Gatos Creek disappears into a culvert as it passes under Montgomery Street and Park Avenue. The maps shown at the Community Workshop give the impression that no changes were made to this situation. It appeared to me that the natural bed of the Los Gatos Creek will still be interrupted and the creek will still be directed through a culvert under Montgomery Street and Park Avenue.

This design (or, better said, this lack of design) is in direct contradiction to the priorities voted on by the Good Neighborhood Committee.

I urge staff and consultants to pay closer attention to the "Framework for Implementation" of the Good Neighbor Committee, and specifically for the design of Montgomery Street and Park Avenue to be modified to return the Los Gatos Creek to its natural setting under these streets. Such a design will also allow the Los Gatos Creek Trail to remain at creek level, and not have to be brought up to the sidewalk where users of the trail will be in direct conflict with potentially very heavy automobile and bus traffic.

COMMENT #2

North Mixed Use Intensive Commercial / High Tech (north of HP Arena)

Suggestions if I may as you move forward:

- 1) include in this area loft and live-work space
- 2) include a mix of small-to-mid-size corporate campuses, NOT large
- 3) include small-to-mid-size office condo with shared lobby, conference

and support for start up, consulting and business incubation

4) include secure sheltered bike parking with shower and changing area

5) include / integrate fitness and exercise businesses

6) dedicate at least 1 east-west street to wide, walkable, outdoor dining, coffee shop, small grocery and retail commercial with:

- broadband wireless throughout
- easy safe bike passage
- ample bike safe parking along entire commercial avenue
- designed it for use from dawn to midnight for those who live/work/visit in the area.

Why?

a) it will make this a more vibrant, attractive, inviting place (eliminate/reduce dead zones)

b) more eyes 24-7 add to the security and sense of community and ultimately its value to the City

c) makes it a world class place to work

d) it reduces the need for autos and parking making it easier to achieve 40% VMT reduction

d) and most importantly it enhances economic sustainability reducing the impact from exogenous financial event and forces

COMMENT #3

Core area east of Station

Suggestions if I may as you move forward. Imagine days with no ball

game or Arena event. How would you design this area to draw people

from the North Bay, East Bay, Sacramento, Central Valley, South Valley, Peninsula and maybe southern California to come to San Jose /Diridon and

spend a day? to enjoy themselves and maybe spend the night?

.... and get on the train with their shopping bags full, their

tummies

happy, and good stories to share with their friends back home?

And as

they do this, they are always among people who live and work in this special place called Diridon.

COMMENT #4

Transportation and Parking Strategy (Up to 20% VMT Reduction)

- "Up to..." = weak, no commitment, evasive
- "... 20% Reduction" misses the target,
- > invites congestion,
- > is not eco friendly (green)
 - Designing for 20% reduction makes achieving 40% near impossible
 - Designing for 40% reduction makes 40% possible

A.5 Next steps

The feedback gathered in this community workshop will help inform further development of the draft preferred Diridon Station Area plan. The information shown to the community at this workshop was described as being about 50% complete and that the planning team intend to bring this up to about 75% complete for the next key event, which will be a presentation of the draft preferred plan to San Jose City Council in late September or (more likely) early October 2010. Community members will be encouraged once again to attend and provide additional comments for further refinement.