

March 8th, 2013

VTA Environmental Programs and Resources Management
Attn: Christina Jaworski
3331 N. First Street, Building B-2
San Jose, CA 95134

Dear Ms. Jaworski,

As advocates for a vibrant, accessible, and sustainable Silicon Valley, we would like to express our continuing support for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along El Camino Real. In particular, we support the Long Dedicated Lane Option, with 10.3 miles of dedicated bus-only lanes from Lafayette Street in Santa Clara to Showers Drive in Mountain View. Improving transit along the 22 and 522 bus routes has been a long time coming; these critical routes carry one fifth of VTA's bus riders and transport more people per mile than VTA's light rail system. Unfortunately, the transit infrastructure along the El Camino corridor does not reflect existing demand, and it is certainly unfit for the tens of thousands of new residents and jobs projected along the corridor over the next two decades.

We enthusiastically support Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along El Camino Real because it will:

- **Stimulate the economy and create jobs:** BRT on El Camino Real will attract tens of millions of dollars in federal funding and create hundreds of local jobs. BRT will also provide a foundation for sustainable development, including supporting local plans for new jobs and homes near transit.
- **Provide economic benefits for households:** BRT will provide reliable access to jobs, shops, services, and other needs for all people. In addition, by offering a competitive alternative to private vehicles, household transportation costs can be reduced drastically, thereby freeing up resources for other needs such as housing and healthcare.
- **Improve public safety and create safer streets:** Bike lanes, upgraded crosswalks, and sidewalk extensions can be incorporated in areas with dedicated bus lanes to reduce traffic injuries and fatalities. Increased lighting, fare inspectors, and security cameras at stations will create a greater sense of safety of waiting for the bus, and emergency vehicles can access dedicated bus lanes, resulting in improved response times.
- **Foster healthy and sustainable communities:** High quality public transit and more complete streets encourage walking and biking, thereby lowering cardiovascular disease. As more people take advantage of BRT with its state-of-the-art hybrid vehicles, we'll reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, help tackle climate change and improve the air we breathe.
- **Make good use of taxpayer resources:** BRT costs five to ten times less per mile to build than light rail and 40% less to operate and maintain. BRT will improve VTA's farebox recovery ratio due to increased ridership and faster transit travel times. The Long Dedicated Lane Option will save nearly \$5 million per year in operating costs compared to the other project options, and nearly \$8 million per year compared to the "no project" option.

We are glad to see that VTA is studying both a mixed flow and various dedicated lane alternatives in the project's Environmental Impact Report (EIR) so that decision makers will have more information on which to base their conclusions. We strongly support creating the best possible BRT project along El Camino and we are eager to work with the community, VTA, and the local cities in making high quality

and cost-effective transit a reality in Silicon Valley in the coming years. We would also like to encourage VTA to include a BRT station at Escuela Ave, which would provide a second stop in Mountain View and provide greater transit access to the surrounding lower income neighborhoods.

Sincerely,



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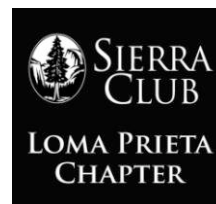
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