



**DATE:** June 9, 2020

**CATEGORY:** Consent

**DEPT.:** Public Works

**TITLE:** **Mountain View Transit Center  
Master Plan Grade Separation and  
Access Project – Agreement for Final  
Design**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Authorize the City Manager to execute a Cooperative Agreement with the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority for final design of the Mountain View Transit Center Grade Separation and Access Project.

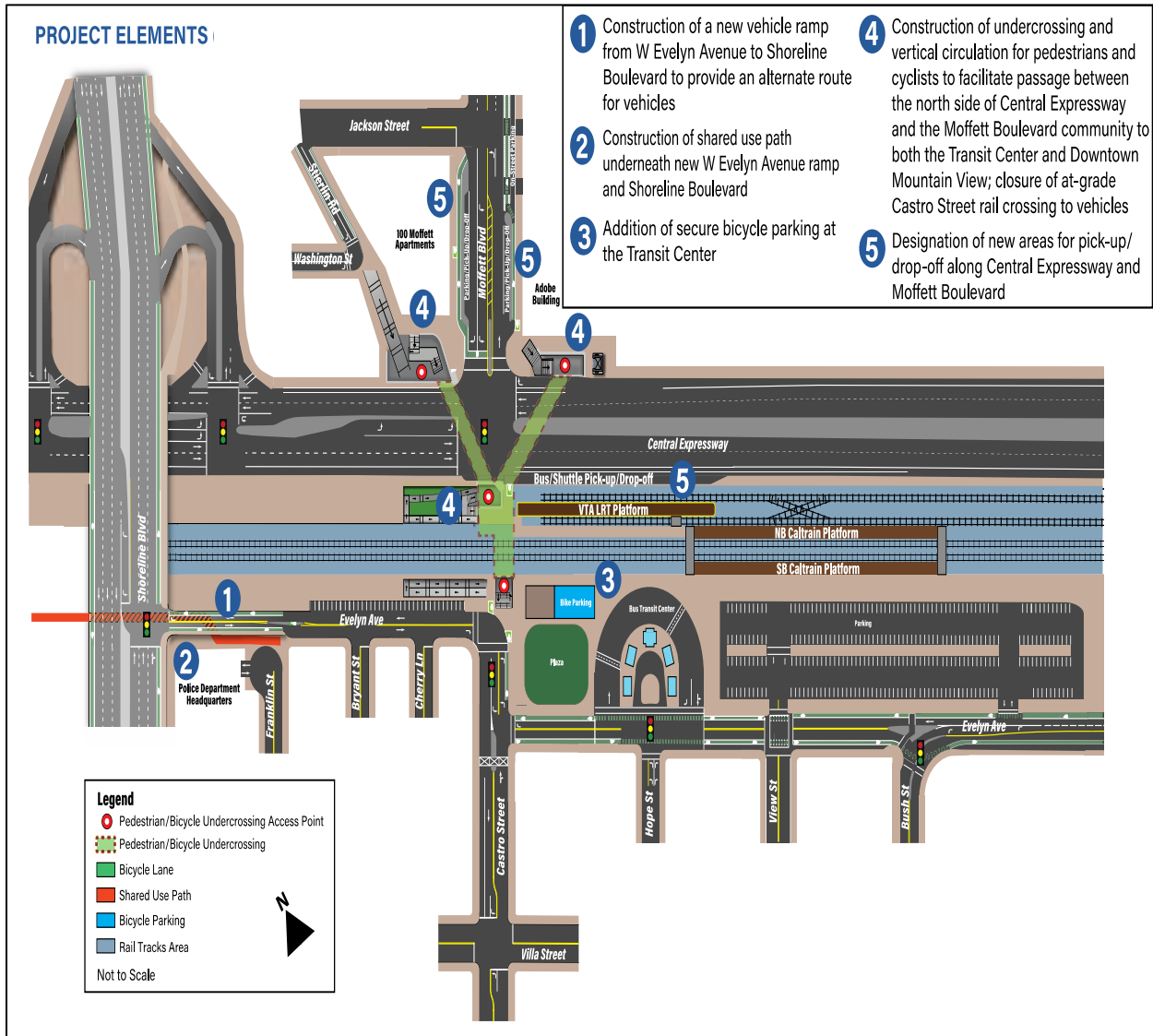
### **BACKGROUND**

On [November 10, 2015](#), the City Council authorized the development of a Transit Center Master Plan. Following analysis of alternative concepts and several community and stakeholder meetings, the Council approved the Master Plan on [May 23, 2017](#). The Master Plan included elements related to the current at-grade railroad crossing and better access to downtown and the Transit Center.

On [February 13, 2018](#), the Council supported the concept of dividing the implementation of the Master Plan into two elements. The first element (Grade Separation and Access Project or GSAP), which is the focus of this item, is the Castro Street grade separation, including a ramp to Shoreline Boulevard at Evelyn Avenue and pedestrian/bicycle undercrossings of the tracks and Central Expressway. The second element is the redevelopment of the Transit Center itself and is currently on hold pending other downtown planning activities and further discussions with Caltrain.

The GSAP will make circulation infrastructure, safety, and other improvements to relieve impacts of the planned increase in Caltrain service and to improve multi-modal access to downtown and the Transit Center. Figure 1 illustrates the major components of the project.

Figure 1 – Grade Separation and Access Project Elements



Also on February 13, 2018, the Council awarded a contract to Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., for GSAP preliminary engineering (35 percent design) and environmental clearance in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Jim Lightbody, through a contract with James Lightbody Consulting, has provided project management services for this study.

In 2018 and 2019, staff and the consultant team developed project design elements and coordinated with key stakeholders and agency partners, including Caltrain, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), and the County of Santa Clara. On [March 19, 2019](#), key design elements were considered at a Council Study Session. Direction was

provided allowing for preparation of the environmental document and additional progress on project design. On [December 10, 2019](#), the Council approved a CEQA Mitigated Negative Declaration for the GSAP.

On [April 21, 2020](#), the Council approved a contract amendment with Kimley-Horn to complete additional preliminary engineering (35 percent Augmentation) requested by Caltrain to comply with their engineering standards. It is expected that this work will be completed this fall, allowing final design to start in late 2020.

## **ANALYSIS**

The Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB) is the owner and operator of Caltrain. Until recent service reductions, Caltrain operated 92 trains per weekday and anticipates significant increases after 2022 when the electrification of the corridor is completed through the Caltrain Modernization Program. As the owner and operator of the rail corridor, the JPB has requested to lead GSAP final design and construction, due in part to the complexities and liability involved in constructing improvements within an operating rail right-of-way.

In 2016, voters approved VTA's Measure B sales tax, which set aside \$700 million for the construction of Caltrain Grade Separation projects in Mountain View, Palo Alto, and Sunnyvale. Measure B will be the primary funding source for design and construction of the GSAP. The VTA Board's June 4, 2020 agenda includes approving a \$10 million allocation of Measure B funds for the GSAP final design phase.

Staff from Caltrain, VTA, and the City have been discussing agency roles, responsibilities, and funding for advancing the project into final design and eventual construction through a Cooperative Agreement. Following are each agency's key roles, responsibilities, and elements to be included in the proposed Cooperative Agreement.

### **Caltrain**

Caltrain will be the lead agency for designing and constructing the project. Initial funding will provide for final design, right-of-way, and utility agreements, and environmental permitting. As a lead agency for implementation, the JPB will also approve the CEQA environmental clearance utilizing the City's environmental studies. The project budget of \$10 million covers consultant costs and direct Caltrain expenses.

The final design by Caltrain will be based on the project definition previously approved by the City Council and defined in the City's preliminary engineering plans and the

environmental documents. The design will include architectural and urban design elements that have been presented and reviewed at community and Council meetings.

Caltrain will closely coordinate with the City and other agencies as part of the design effort. Regular design meetings will be held and documents will be submitted to the City for formal review at key intervals.

### VTA

VTA will fund the cost of final design from the Measure B Grade Separation Program and provide project oversight. The \$10 million Caltrain cost will be fully funded through Measure B, and all Caltrain invoices will be submitted to and paid by VTA.

### City of Mountain View

The City's role, per the agreement, will include coordination with Caltrain and design review, as well as several specific responsibilities. The City will separately fund its responsibilities and support, which will count towards the City's required minimum 10 percent local match for Measure B funds used on project design and construction. Any City funds allocated to the GSAP not expended for final design will be utilized as matching funds for the construction phase.

City responsibilities under the agreement include the following:

- Direct and implement all project community outreach activities, keeping the Council and community informed and able to provide input as the project proceeds through final design. Caltrain and its design consultant will participate in these activities.
- Conduct plan reviews ensuring the project is designed consistently with the City's approved concept and preliminary engineering work. The Cooperative Agreement will include a provision that the City Council must approve any changes to the project's design layout, major features, and urban design elements.
- Participate in coordination meetings with Caltrain, VTA, and the County of Santa Clara throughout the design process.
- Assist with utility relocation coordination, planning, and design, particularly as it relates to the City's water and sewer lines.



- Coordinate the selection and integration of public art elements. The art component, per City's usual process, will be developed through the Visual Art Committee with final approval by Council. The public art design and construction costs will be independently funded by the City.

### Potential Caltrain Need for Four Tracks

The Caltrain Business Plan service vision, approved by the JPB last year, identifies the potential need for a four-track segment in Palo Alto and/or Mountain View. The exact location of this four-track segment has not yet been determined. These additional tracks may be needed as passing tracks when High-Speed Rail is operating on the corridor, making the timing of when the four-track location would be selected and constructed uncertain.

On [April 9, 2019](#), the Council approved certain principles related to the City's position for the Caltrain Business Plan service vision. These principles included a statement of strong support of Caltrain service and the electrification project, while also opposing having the four-track segment at the downtown Mountain View station. Another principle stated that Caltrain should conduct a feasibility study of four-track locations before adopting the service vision. Caltrain adopted the service vision without specifying the four-track location and leaving all options on the table, including at the downtown Mountain View station, stating appropriate studies will be conducted before determining the location.

The GSAP design concept and the full implementation of the Transit Center Master Plan do not support four tracks at the downtown Mountain View station. As part of the GSAP final design effort, Caltrain will need to drop this location from consideration for four tracks. Caltrain staff understands the City preference and has also indicated that four tracks at Mountain View station is not preferred in terms of operational needs. Caltrain is willing to agree that four tracks will not be pursued at the Mountain View station but would like City support to further consider four tracks in the northern part of the City, including a potential reconfiguration of the San Antonio station. The Rengstorff grade separation project is already being designed to accommodate a potential future expansion to four tracks.

As part of approving execution of the Cooperative Agreement by the City Manager, the Council will be agreeing to support Caltrain studying a potential four-track segment in the northern segment of the City. This is consistent with the previously approved principles, which did not oppose a four-track segment north of the Mountain View station but stated feasibility studies must be conducted before any locations are selected.

## **Next Steps**

The Kimley-Horn consulting team will complete the 35 percent Augmentation work this fall with support from Caltrain and the City. Staff is planning to hold a community meeting in the fall as part of the hand-off of the project to Caltrain for final design. At this community meeting, staff will share the concept design elements supported by Council in March 2019, as refined during preliminary engineering, and provide an opportunity for initial community input into the final design.

Once the Cooperative Agreement has been executed, Caltrain will issue a Request for Proposals for the final design consultant. City staff will review and provide input in the scope of work prior to Caltrain issuing a notice to proceed. Final design is expected to begin in late 2020 and will take about two years. Community meetings will be held at various points during the final design process in addition to providing opportunities for input from the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee and working with the Visual Arts Committee for the public art selection process.

During final design, the City and Caltrain will work with VTA to obtain Measure B funds for project construction.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The VTA Measure B Grade Separation program will fund the estimated \$10 million cost for Caltrain to carry out final design.

The proposed Fiscal Year 2020-21 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to be approved by Council on June 9, 2020, includes Project 21-35, Transit Center Grade Separation and Access Project, Final Design for \$1.2 million. This project will fund City staff time and related expenses for community outreach, plan review, utility coordination, public art process, and other tasks. Any funds not expended toward the final design phase will be available for reallocation as matching funds for the construction phase.

The City has previously expended or committed approximately \$2.3 million for preliminary engineering and environmental clearance. Those funds will also be applied to the required minimum 10 percent local match for the Measure B funds to be expended on design and construction.

## **CONCLUSION**

Staff is recommending that the Council authorize the City Manager to execute a Cooperative Agreement with the JPB and VTA for the final design of the Transit Center Master Plan Grade Separation and Access Project, which is the first element of the Master Plan. Under the terms of the agreement, Caltrain will be responsible for the final design of the project, VTA will provide \$10 million toward final design, and the City will be responsible for community engagement and coordination with Caltrain to ensure the project is designed consistently with the Council's approved design concept. The second element of the Transit Center Master Plan involving redevelopment of the Transit Center itself and redesign of Centennial Plaza is currently on hold pending other downtown planning activities and further discussions with Caltrain.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Specify additional or modified terms for the Cooperative Agreement.
2. Do not proceed with the Cooperative Agreement with the JPB and VTA for final design of the project.
3. Provide other direction.

## **PUBLIC NOTICING**

In addition to the City's standard agenda posting requirements, notices were distributed to the persons who have signed up on the project website for updates and information. Copies of the Council report were provided to Caltrain, VTA, and the County of Santa Clara.

Prepared by:

Dawn S. Cameron  
Public Works Director

Approved by:

Audrey Seymour Ramberg  
Assistant City Manager/  
Chief Operating Officer

DSC/5/CAM  
939-06-09-20CR  
200195