



**DATE:** May 23, 2017

**CATEGORY:** New Business

**DEPT.:** Public Works

**TITLE:** **Mountain View Transit Center  
Master Plan – Recommended Master  
Plan**

### RECOMMENDATION

Approve the Transit Center Master Plan and authorize staff to pursue next steps for implementation.

### BACKGROUND

The City Council approved the development of a comprehensive Master Plan for the Mountain View Transit Center (Transit Center—Figure 1) in November 2014. The Transit Center now serves more than three times the original expected number of riders, and substantial further growth is expected with Caltrain electrification.



**Figure 1 – Mountain View Transit Center**

It is important to note that the Transit Center (except for Centennial Plaza) is owned and operated by the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (Caltrain) and is not controlled by the City. The Master Plan is being developed in coordination with Caltrain and, once approved by the City Council, will be the basis of further conversations with Caltrain about the scope of improvements, funding, responsibilities of the various stakeholders, and other matters. Caltrain has several system needs (e.g., longer boarding platforms, level boarding, and access improvements) that are being addressed in this project and would form the basis for their continued involvement.

### **Development of Transit Center Concept Plans**

Development of the Transit Center Master Plan was conducted in two phases. The first phase, the identification of a preferred grade-separation alternative for the Castro Street rail crossing, was completed on [June 22, 2016](#), with Council's approval of a preferred grade-separation plan that calls for rerouting Castro Street vehicle traffic at the rail tracks. The second phase, the development of a plan for improved Transit Center services and facilities, has been under way since fall 2016.

Four concepts were initially developed to illustrate options for improving and reconfiguring the Transit Center. These concepts were reviewed in Council Study Sessions on [October 18, 2016](#) and [November 22, 2016](#), and discussed in several meetings with key agency stakeholders, such as the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), Caltrain, and the County.

Based on these meetings and further analysis of the concepts, refinement and evaluation of the concepts focused on Concepts 2, 3, and 4. The results of this evaluation of the final Concept Plans was discussed at a Council Study Session held on [March 21, 2017](#).

The recommended Transit Center Master Plan, discussed below, incorporates elements from several of the remaining concepts. The plan reflects direction provided at the Council Study Sessions, input received at three community meetings, discussions with key transportation agencies, and other business and community outreach.

### **Community and Agency Outreach**

- **Project Website** – The website ([www.mountainviewtransitcenter.com](http://www.mountainviewtransitcenter.com)) continues to provide information and updates regarding the Master Plan project. More than 225 individuals have signed up as stakeholders to receive news and event notifications. The City, through various social media outlets, has also

disseminated additional information regarding the project and notifications regarding City Council discussions.

- **Project Community Meetings**—Two community meetings were held in 2016 to address the grade-separation alternatives considered in Phase 1 of the project. A third community meeting was held on February 2, 2017 to solicit input regarding the draft Master Plan concepts. There were about 50 to 60 community members in attendance at each meeting. At the February 2, 2017 meeting, participants were given the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Master Plan concepts, including the individual elements in each concept. They also provided preliminary preferences for the elements. In general, participants were in favor of the proposed improvements and tended to slightly favor Concept 4, particularly in regard to parking, the plaza, and joint development.
- **Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (B/PAC Meeting)**—Project staff provided several briefings to the B/PAC, the most recent on February 22, 2017.
- **Business Outreach**—Five briefings for the Downtown Committee were held from December 2015 to March 2017. The first three addressed the grade-separation alternatives. Stakeholder contact lists were developed for notifications throughout the project and included at least 65 downtown business contacts.

Project team members also met with representatives from both the Central Business Association (CBA) and Chamber of Commerce to discuss how businesses can most effectively participate in the master planning process. For Phase 1, two targeted outreach meetings focusing on Castro Street businesses closest to the Transit Center were held in February and May 2016. An additional briefing to the CBA membership was held on November 17, 2016. A briefing with the Chamber of Commerce Business Issues and Public Policy (BIPP) Committee was held on February 8, 2017.

- **Partner Agency Discussions**—Several meetings have been held with stakeholder agencies with current or planned future operations at/nearby the Mountain View Transit Center, including: Caltrain, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA), the VTA, the Mountain View Transportation Management Agency (TMA), and the Santa Clara County Roads and Airports Department (which is responsible for Central Expressway). Two workshops were conducted with public transit and private employer shuttle stakeholders to review the conceptual design alternatives. Comment letters from the Mountain View TMA, Caltrain, and Santa Clara County are provided in Attachment 2 and discussed further below.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Recommended Final Transit Center Master Plan**

The recommended Final Master Plan is described in the attached Executive Summary (Attachment 1), summarized below, and depicted graphically in Figure 2.

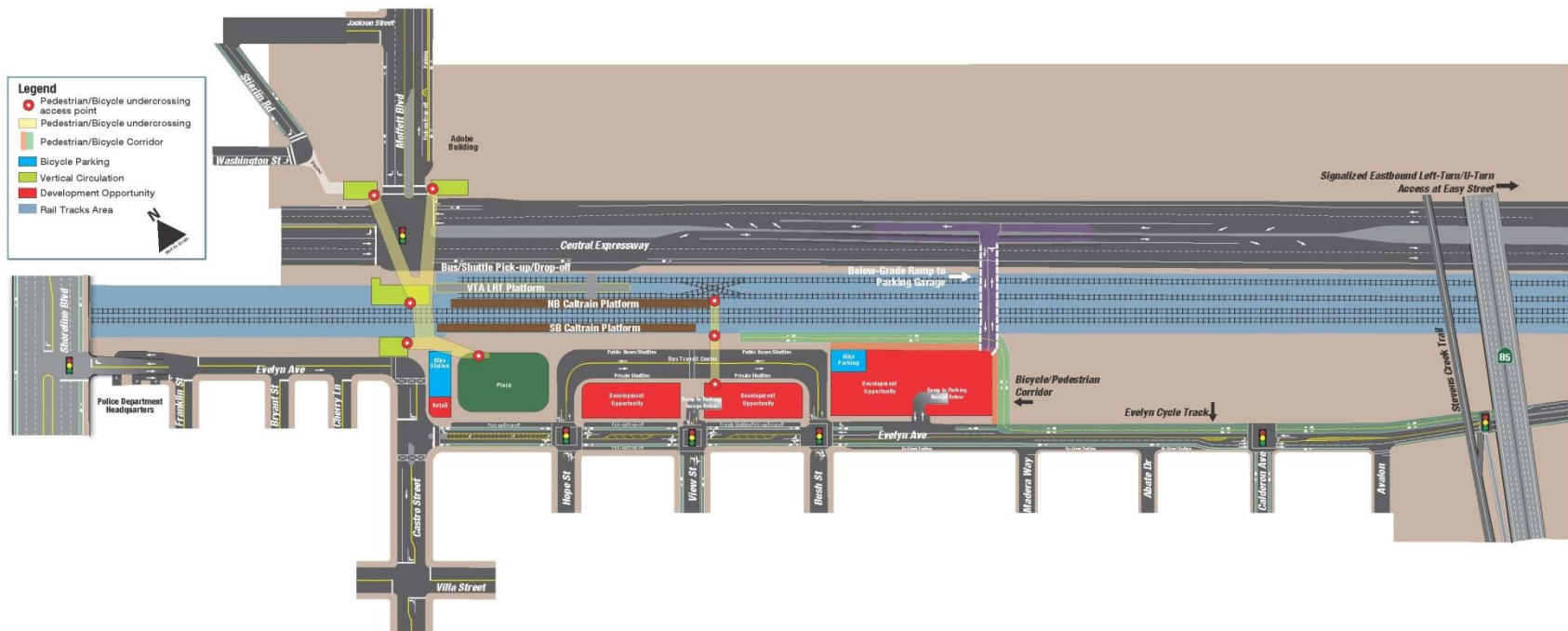
- Grade Separation Elements—to eliminate current at-grade vehicle and pedestrian track crossings for improved safety and multimodal access.
  - Castro Street traffic is redirected to Shoreline Boulevard via a new ramp from Evelyn Avenue.
  - Castro Street/Evelyn Avenue intersection modified to allow through movement on Evelyn Avenue.
  - Pedestrian/bicycle undercrossings below rail tracks and Central Expressway connect downtown and the Transit Center to the Moffett Boulevard and Stierlin Road/Shoreline Boulevard corridors.
- Caltrain Station Improvements—to increase capacity and better connect to downtown; improve supply of bicycle parking.
  - Platforms extended, widened, and shifted towards Castro Street.
  - Pedestrian undercrossing provided at east end of platform.
  - Two new bicycle stations to accommodate up to 800 bicycles.
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity—to provide more direct and convenient access to the Transit Center and connections to key bicycle and pedestrian corridors.
  - Pedestrian/bicycle pathway provided adjacent to the rail tracks.
  - Two-way cycle track on the north side of Evelyn Avenue connects to the Stevens Creek Trail.
  - Improved connections to planned bicycle corridors, including Moffett Boulevard and the Stierlin Road/Shoreline Boulevard corridor to North Bayshore.

- Other Transit Center Elements
  - Bus and shuttle facility will significantly expand capacity and improve circulation and access.
  - New Central Expressway shuttle stop will better serve destinations north of Central Expressway. The County of Santa Clara is supportive of a shuttle stop east of Castro Street/Moffett Boulevard as shown on the Recommended Master Plan, but is not supportive of a stop west of Castro Street/Moffett Boulevard as was shown on Alternative 3 (see County comment letter, Attachment 2).
  - Expanded parking (from 340 spaces to 650 to 700 spaces) will relieve on-street commuter parking and possibly provide for shared parking with downtown users. Parking is planned to be primarily below grade.
  - An optional access ramp from Central Expressway to below-grade Transit Center garage will allow vehicles direct access without traversing downtown streets.
  - New pick-up and drop-off zones provided along Evelyn Avenue (including taxis, Transportation Network Companies).
- Centennial Plaza—Master Plan envisions enhancement or reconfiguration of the plaza to create a more active space integrated with new Transit Center elements. Public restrooms and transit operator facilities will also likely be included.
- Off-site improvements (e.g., new traffic signals, pedestrian crossing upgrades) to accommodate all modes of travel.
- Joint Development—incorporate space for joint Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) on the site (see further discussion below). The footprint of the developable area is approximately 70,000 to 75,000 square feet, and total development square footage would depend on the number of stories allowed, setbacks of upper floors, and other factors.

Figure 2 shows the recommended Master Plan with additional details and exhibits provided in Attachment 1. Figure 3 shows a close-up of the Transit Center area.



Mountain View Transit Center Master Plan



MAY 2017

Figure 2 – Draft Final Master Plan

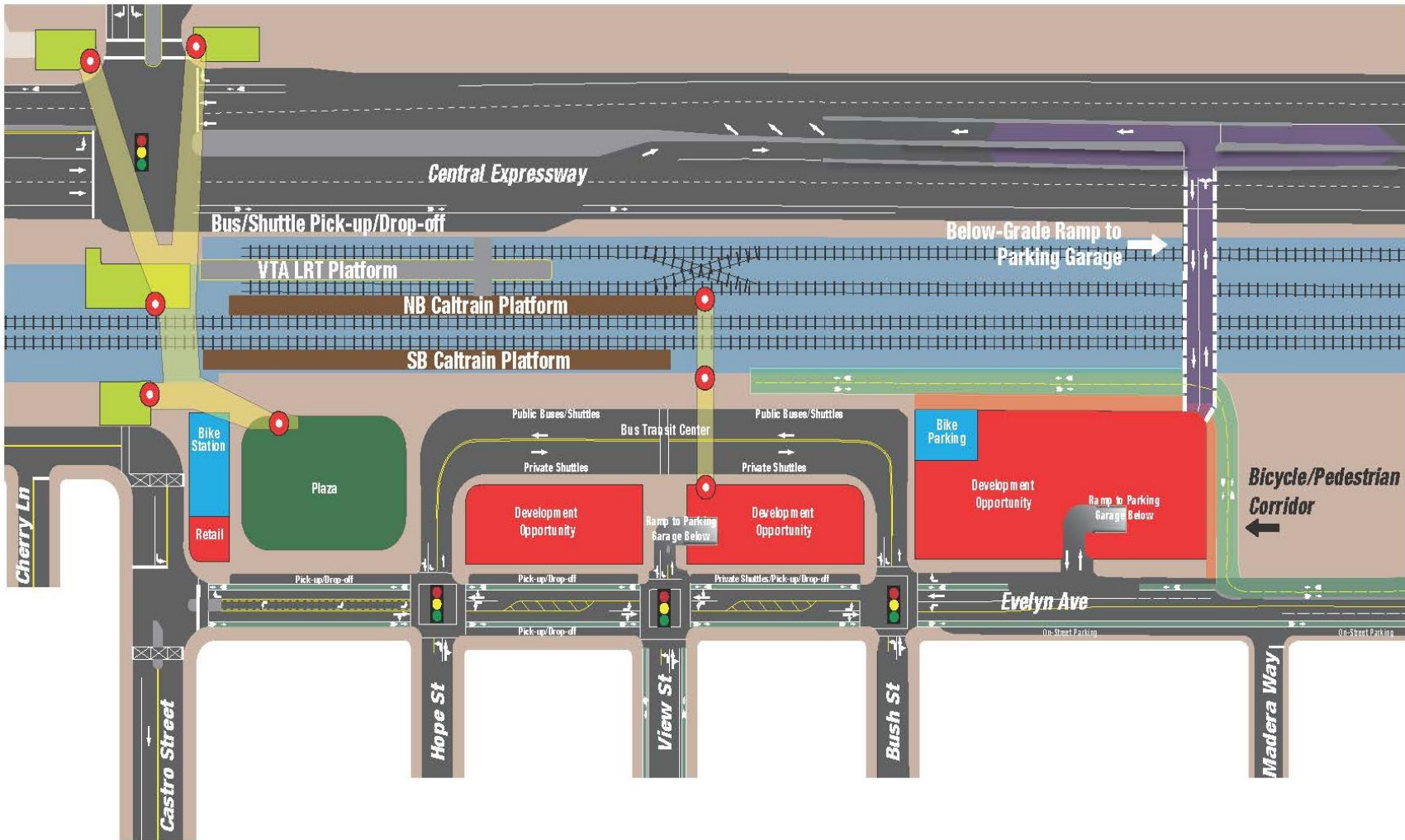


Figure 3—Draft Final Master Plan

While the Master Plan establishes a clear vision for the future Transit Center, there are several issues that will need to be further explored and refined in a future design phase. Some of these issues include:

- Future platform height for Caltrain—reconstruction of the platforms should be designed to be consistent with the planned platform height, which is under evaluation by the CHSRA.
- Possible high-speed rail consideration of platform screens.
- Possible automated guideway transportation (AGT) facilities, which can be further evaluated with/after completion of the AGT study currently under way.
- Vertical circulation and access to pedestrian/bicycle undercrossings that appropriately integrates with adjacent plazas, bus/shuttle loading and transit platforms.
- Integration of bus/shuttle area, parking facility, and parking access ramp with potential joint development, including refinement of those plans to better support future development concepts.
- Future location of the Farmers' Market.

These and other issues will be further explored during design of the Transit Center improvements.

### **Potential Joint Development**

The Transit Center Master Plan defines potential locations for joint development, mostly on the current Caltrain parking lot. Inclusion of TOD in the Master Plan would benefit the plan by providing potential funds for project implementation and by making the plan more attractive for grant funding.

Joint development on the site can potentially be integrated, all or partially, with other Transit Center elements such as vehicle parking and bus/shuttle boarding areas. However, developer proposals could also call for joint development to be more independent.

The Master Plan recommendation for the joint development area is based on Concept 4, which places parking underground and provides the largest development opportunity.



This plan also provides the most flexible circulation in and out of the drop-off areas, with potential two-way ingress and egress at Hope and Bush Streets. A potential issue is the higher cost of underground parking which would need to be offset by greater development potential.

Key aspects of a joint development area, such as land use mix, parking requirements, and density will have a major impact on the viability of the Transit Center as a development opportunity. Because a detailed evaluation of the financial viability of joint development of the site is not included in the scope of the current Master Plan project, staff recommends deferring detailed decisions about the joint development area until analysis is performed and further discussions are held with the property owner, Caltrain. The project team coordinated with Caltrain staff during development of the Master Plan, and Caltrain's comment letter (Attachment 2) indicates support for the joint development concept.

A multi-step process (described further in Next Steps below) is proposed to prepare a development agreement with Caltrain and solicit development proposals.

### **Implementation Strategy**

Implementation strategy of the final Master Plan includes two basic elements:

- A largely publically funded phase that would include the grade-separation elements and improve the Caltrain platforms. Included would be new pedestrian/bicycle undercrossings, some street modifications (e.g., new Evelyn Avenue ramp to Shoreline Boulevard) and bicycle and pedestrian improvements (including Evelyn Avenue cycle track). Some reconfiguration of Centennial Plaza could also be included in this phase. Additional drop-off and shuttle space could also be provided along Evelyn Avenue and Central Expressway.

It is anticipated that preliminary design and environmental clearance for this work could begin in Fiscal Year 2017-18, though timing may be impacted by disbursement of Measure B funds for grade-separation projects. A placeholder project is included in the 2017-18 Capital Improvement Program with \$1 million of City funding.

- A public/private effort that could implement the remainder of the concept elements (including bus/shuttle boarding areas and vehicle parking) in conjunction with a joint development plan for the site could proceed separately from the grade-separation project. As noted above, next steps for this phase

include an agreement with Caltrain and determination of the appropriate land use plan.

### **Cost and Funding**

The project team has developed preliminary cost estimates for the various elements associated with the recommended Master Plan. In recognition of the early stage of development, a 30 percent contingency is included in the cost estimates. These estimates are summarized in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 – Estimated Master Plan Cost (2017 Dollars)**

<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Estimated Cost Range (millions)</b>
Grade Separation Project – Evelyn Avenue Ramp to Shoreline Boulevard and Street Modifications	\$ 4.8
Bicycle/Pedestrian Undercrossings and Platform Modifications – Lengthening and Widening; Undercrossings and Vertical Circulation; Concourse	40.8
Bus and Shuttle Boarding Areas; Pick-Up and Drop-Off Areas; Other Surface Improvements	27.7
Parking Garage (underground parking)	69.6
Ramp from Central Expressway to Parking Garage	28.7
Plaza Modifications/Expansion	6.4
Bike Station; Secure Bike Parking; Restrooms	<u>4.2</u>
<b>Total – Entire Plan (rounded)</b>	<b><u>\$182</u></b>

Notes:

Does not include cost of TOD or supporting retail.

Does not include cost of off-site temporary facilities that may be needed during construction.

All costs in current year dollars; does not include escalation to year of expenditure.

### **Potential Funding Options**

Funding for the Transit Center Master Plan will likely involve a variety of funding sources and would probably be defined through a cooperative funding and implementation agreement involving Caltrain, VTA, and the City. Several Federal and State grant programs could be utilized, with funds accessed through the VTA, the

Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), or the State of California. The Federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program may be a good funding source, particularly if the project includes TOD elements. Other sources that could be used for specific elements or to match grant funds include:

- Measure B Caltrain Improvements – Platform expansion, provisions for level boarding areas, and passenger undercrossings.
- Measure B Grade Separation Program – Pedestrian and bicycle tunnels, Shoreline Boulevard ramps, and other street improvements.
- Joint Development Funding – Parking structure/underground parking, plaza improvements, and potentially other transit improvements if they help allow the development to reduce parking requirements.

Table 2 provides a potential strategy for allocating possible fund sources to the project elements.

**Table 2 – Draft Funding Strategy**

<b>Project Element</b>	<b>City Funds</b>	<b>Measure B</b>	<b>Other Grants*</b>	<b>Joint Development</b>
Phase 1 – PE/Environmental	X	X		
Phase 1 – Construction				
Grade-Separation Elements	X	X		
Platform Modifications		X	X	
Bicycle Connections	X	X	X	
Plaza	X		X	
Parking	X			X
Bus and Shuttle Facility	X	X	X	X
Joint Development				X

\* Other grants include One Bay Area Grants (OBAG), TIGER, and California Active Transportation Program

## NEXT STEPS

With Council approval of the Master Plan, the City could proceed with several next steps leading to implementation of the plan. These steps would be undertaken in coordination with other agencies, particularly Caltrain, VTA, and the County of Santa Clara. An agreement with Caltrain for platform design and construction, including the undercrossings, would be developed at this stage. The next steps include:

1. Preliminary Engineering/Environmental Clearance for the grade separation and platform improvement project, including:
  - New Evelyn Avenue ramp to Shoreline Boulevard; modifications to the Evelyn Avenue/Castro Street intersection.
  - Pedestrian/bicycle undercrossing below the tracks and Central Expressway, providing an entrance to Castro Street and the west end of the Caltrain platforms and the VTA platform.
  - Caltrain platform extension and widening, with pedestrian/bicycle undercrossing at east end of platform; platform shifted to Castro Street to provide a gateway entrance.

Placeholder funding is included in the 2017-18 Capital Improvement Program for this step, but Measure B or other funding will be required to fully begin the preliminary engineering and environmental clearance effort. The guidelines and timing for disbursement of Measure B funds are still being developed, and more information will be available by the end of 2017.

2. Plaza Concept Plan and Design—The redesign of Centennial Plaza would involve a separate conceptual design effort. After selection of a preferred design, final design and construction could potentially be combined with the grade-separation improvements discussed above. This design phase should address:
  - Plaza design (with community involvement).
  - Possible concourse under tracks, connected to the plaza; assessment of financial feasibility of retail services.
  - Future of replica station building (possible removal or relocation).

- Location and size of Bike Station, retail space(s), public restrooms, and bus and shuttle operator facilities.
  - Future location for the Farmers' Market.
3. Joint Development—Concurrent with the above design efforts, the Master Plan envisions the City pursuing a multi-step process for joint TOD. This process would be developed in close cooperation with Caltrain, the property owner, and could include the following steps:
- Further coordination with Caltrain and development of a joint agreement that would define terms for roles and responsibilities, final plan development, financial participation (including funding for transit elements), and revenue sharing.
  - Additional evaluation to determine appropriate site uses (e.g., residential, commercial, retail, mixed), characteristics (density and/or height limits, parking requirements) and urban design guidelines; potential consideration of development across tracks. May include more detailed financial evaluation.
  - Solicit development proposals from private developers for the site with requirements to incorporate transit facilities through a public/private funding arrangement.
  - Select a preferred development proposal, finalize the site design, and enter into a development agreement. This agreement would include a plan for construction phasing and interim provisions for transit and parking during construction.

Funding to begin the joint development process is included in the 2017-18 Capital Improvement Program, though the timing of the joint development phase will be dependent on a number of factors, including developer interest and progress of the preliminary engineering and environmental clearance of the grade separation and platform improvements.

### **CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)**

CEQA recognizes the need for agencies to engage in long-range planning for large projects and provides a specific statutory exemption for planning and feasibility studies. CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, statutorily exempts from CEQA review

actions consisting of “feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions which the agency has not approved, adopted or funded.” The Transit Center Master Plan is a planning study that does not approve, adopt, or fund the actual construction of any improvements. Approval of the Transit Center Master Plan does not commit the City to a course of action. Any specific projects or individual elements of the Transit Center Master Plan still require approval and funding. Additionally, none of the identified elements have been approved or funded in the City’s Capital Improvement Program. At such time as they are, comprehensive CEQA review will be performed. Thus, the City finds the proposed action to be statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Guidelines section 15262.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with approving the Master Plan. Placeholder funding is included in the Capital Improvement Program to begin preliminary engineering and environmental work, and additional funding for subsequent steps will be requested as appropriate and sought from other sources.

### **CONCLUSION**

The recommended Mountain View Transit Center Master Plan provides a foundation for improvements that will allow the Transit Center to meet current and future ridership demands and improve circulation for all modes of transportation in the vicinity. Refinement, environmental clearance, design, and construction will follow in subsequent steps in cooperation with Caltrain, the VTA, and other stakeholders.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Direct staff to revise the Master Plan.
2. Provide other direction.

## **PUBLIC NOTICING**

In addition to the City's standard agenda posting requirements, notices regarding this Study Session discussion were distributed to the more than 200 persons who have signed up on the project website for updates and information, previous business and/or community meeting participants, the Old Mountain View and other nearby City neighborhood associations, and representatives of the VTA, Caltrain, Mountain View TMA, Santa Clara County Roads and Airports Department, CBA, Mountain View Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Committee, B/PAC, and other interested parties.

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- Attachments:
1. Executive Summary – Recommended Final Master Plan
  2. Agency Comment Letters
    - a. Mountain View Transportation Management Association
    - b. Santa Clara County Roads and Airports
    - c. Caltrain