

September 25, 2014

Board of Directors
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
3331 N. 1st Street
San Jose, CA 95134

Dear Chair Kalra and VTA Directors:

SPUR strongly supports the next phase of the BART Silicon Valley extension (Board Workshop Item 3.1). Building this kind of sophisticated, high capacity transit is a once in a century opportunity for the South Bay. BART enables us to accommodate new housing and jobs without more gridlock, create livable neighborhoods and achieve many sustainability goals. We appreciate that there is an urgency to fund BART Silicon Valley Extension Phase II. Now is also a good time to design Phase II to be as effective as possible.

We believe that now is the time for VTA to conduct a planning process focused on the big decisions within Phase II. Such a process would include City of San Jose and County leaders and staff, the relevant transportation agencies, and key community stakeholders. There would also be an element of public participation. A collaborative planning process gives VTA a chance to develop the best solutions to design challenges and learn about significant concerns in time to address them carefully. This planning process should take place before the required CEQA/NEPA public processes.

Some of the key questions that need to be addressed include:

- What is the optimal alignment through downtown San Jose?
- How does VTA design in a seamless transfer between BART Silicon Valley and Caltrain at Diridon Station?
- How does the Phase II design at Diridon facilitate the arrival of High Speed Rail through its alignment choices and station design?

You can find more detail on these BART SV Phase II topics and others in SPUR's reports, *The Future of Downtown San Jose* and *Freedom to Move*. We look forward to working together to make BART Silicon Valley Phase II a long-term success. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ratna Amin', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ratna Amin
SPUR Transportation Policy Director

cc:

Nuria Fernandez
Carolyn Gonot
Leyla Hedayat
John Ristow
Chris Augenstein