

June 17, 2019

**Re: Item 4 – Update on San Jose Diridon Integrated Station Concept (DISC)**

Dear California High-Speed Rail Authority Board:

The Diridon Integrated Station Concept (DISC) plan is the first step towards joint-planning and delivery of the San Jose Central Station, a great urban train station and the gateway to the Bay Area.

SPUR believes that in order for people to embrace transit, the station and the district, the user experience must be a central focus in the planning process. If we don't get the user experience right:

- the multimodal hub's infrastructure will not move as many people as it could,
- overall ridership will continue to decline in San Jose and across the county transit network,
- traffic will overwhelm the streets in the station area, downtown San Jose and beyond, and
- San Jose will not realize its potential to significantly grow employment close to transit.

User experience is critical to whether people will embrace the station — be it to take a transit trip, meet with friends in the station area, or live or work in downtown San Jose.

Rail and commercial development are synergistic. In 2017, we released *Harnessing High-Speed Rail*, a report focused on the economic development and land-use opportunity of high-speed rail in station cities. The success of the station as a regional and statewide mobility hub will determine whether San Jose realizes its potential to significantly grow employment, housing and a commercial center in the transit district. At the same time, Diridon Station needs to function at its highest capacity to support the intensity of jobs that are bound for the district.

We want to applaud the partner agencies for their work this past year to co-create a vision for the station. With the spatial elements being considered, it is important to remember that the user's ability to get where they need to go in the most convenient and expedient way possible has big implications.

As such, outlined below are three central questions to help guide your inquiry about the spatial aspects under consideration.

**1) How will the station's design influence the way people move across the region?**

If transit services are going to compete with the automobile or the next big transportation technology, the spatial configuration of the station should:

- Be based on a unified vision set forth by both the public agencies and private developers that maximizes the long-term capacity of the transit network and facilitates ridership on that network.

- Ensure local transit services will seamlessly feed the rail network with riders and can increase their capacity over time.

## **2) How will people get from the surrounding neighborhoods to and through the station?**

New growth should be concentrated around the station to take advantage of unparalleled accessibility. In order to accommodate the volume of people expected, considering access to and through the station from all directions is paramount.

The following decisions could significantly influence these outcomes:

- Prioritize access to the station for people who walk or bike.
- Design connections between the streets that make it easier for people to walk and bike continuously.
- Allocate ample space to bike and shared micro-mobility services.
- Dedicate curb space to drop offs in a way that does not compromise the experience of people walking and biking in and around the station.
- Do not allocate space for park and ride lots at the multimodal hub; instead, develop a plan for a shared-parking facility in the district.

## **3) How will people use the multimodal hub?**

Creating a great experience for people who use the multimodal hub will be the result of multiple choices:

- Limit the distance and time needed for people to connect between rail and transit.
- Allocate and design space for public amenities— waiting areas, restrooms, engaging furniture—for people of all ages and travelling in/through the hub for different purposes
- Ensure clear and intuitive wayfinding to the transit services that will get people to their desired destination.

The ultimate goal for the station is to make it as easy as possible for people to choose public transit as their first option by ensuring easy intuitive access to, through and within the multimodal hub. By examining the proposed design elements through the lens of human needs and human behavior, we can produce transit services that are more effective, utilized and sustainable over the long-term.

Thank you for considering this perspective on station and station area planning.

Sincerely,



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