

# Comprehensive County Expressway Planning Study

## South County Working Paper



**Roads and Airports Department**

**March 12, 2003**

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## Expressway Study Policy Advisory Board South County Workshop Participants

**Donald F. Gage – Chair**  
Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Clara

**Tom Springer**  
Mayor  
City of Gilroy

**Dennis Kennedy**  
Mayor  
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**Larry Carr**  
Mayor Pro-Tem  
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Vice Mayor  
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**Forrest Williams**  
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Roads Commissioner  
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Roads Commissioner  
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### **County of Santa Clara**

Roads and Airports Department

101 Skyport Drive  
San Jose, CA 95110

**March 12, 2003**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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	PAGE
Introduction .....	1
Process .....	2
History & Current Status Of Expressway Planning In South County .....	2
Other Roadway Plans For South County .....	5
Recommendations .....	11
Outstanding City/County Issues To Resolve.....	16

### FIGURES

1	Existing Rural Commute Routes .....	7
2	VTA Southern Gateway Study Corridors.....	9
3	North/South Roadway Concepts in South County .....	13

### TABLES

1	History Of Expressway Planning In South County .....	3
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### APPENDICES

A	Summary of Findings From Meetings With South County Cities
B1	PAB South County Workshop; March 29, 2002; Summary
B2	PAB South County Workshop; June 19, 2002; Summary
C	Proposed South County Circulation Study Work Scope

# SOUTH COUNTY

## INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive County Expressway Planning Study will serve as a long-range strategic plan for the improvement and maintenance of Santa Clara County expressways. For the South County area, where no expressways have been fully developed, the Study's scope consisted of exploring opportunities for a potential expressway by:

- ❖ Documenting the status of planned South County roadway facilities
- ❖ Discussing city plans and policies with local officials
- ❖ Coordinating the Study's efforts with VTA's Southern Gateway Transportation and Land Use Study.

This paper provides the following information:

- ❖ A description of the process used for the South County work
- ❖ An abbreviated history of expressway planning in South County
- ❖ An overview of current status and plans for the roadways
- ❖ A list of recommendations and unresolved issues.

The draft paper was reviewed by the South County Policy Advisory Board in November 2002. City staff have also provided comments on the paper. The final recommendations will be incorporated into the Expressway Study's Implementation Plan in early 2003.

## **PROCESS**

To determine current city plans and policies as well as the status of roadway facilities in the South County area, project staff met with city staff from Gilroy, Morgan Hill, and San Jose. These meetings were held in December 2001 and January 2002. A summary report of findings from the meetings is provided in Appendix A.

Project staff also met with the San Martin Planning Advisory Committee in May 2002 to present information about the Study, answer questions, and receive comments.

Policy Advisory Board (PAB) South County workshops were held on March 29 and June 19, 2002. Both workshops were planned jointly with VTA staff with the purpose of discussing the Expressway Study, the Southern Gateway Study, and a plan of action for next steps. Participants included the following members of the Expressway Study PAB: County Supervisor Don Gage, Morgan Hill Mayor Dennis Kennedy (and his representative, Mayor Pro-Tem Larry Carr), Gilroy Mayor Tom Springer, County Roads Commissioner Dave Fadness, and County Roads Commissioner Ted Brown. San Jose Councilmember Forrest Williams also participated as a special invitee. Workshop Summaries are provided in Appendix B.

The third and final meeting of the Expressway Study South County PAB was held on November 7, 2002. This was actually the first meeting of the newly formed VTA South County Roadway PAB. This new PAB was established in direct response to recommendations from the Expressway Study's South County PAB and consists of the same membership as our South County PAB, with the addition of San Jose Vice Mayor Pat Dando. Project staff presented and took comments on a draft copy of this working paper. VTA's South County PAB will continue to meet on a quarterly basis starting in 2003.

## **HISTORY & CURRENT STATUS OF EXPRESSWAY PLANNING IN SOUTH COUNTY**

There have been various plans for a north-south expressway on the west side of US 101 since the 1960's. Based on these plans, the County of Santa Clara developed "Official Plan Lines" to determine right-of-way needs, constructed a continuous two-lane alignment north and south of Morgan Hill, and entered into agreements with the cities regarding maintenance of most of the areas built within city jurisdictions.

By the 1980's, County transportation planning documents began to recommend 4 and 6-lane north-south arterials both west and east of US 101 rather than formal expressways. The arterials could be express-like with limited access and would extend from Gilroy to Morgan Hill, with the west side arterial continuing to South San Jose. These new recommendations occurred due to a lack of funding for building and maintaining new expressways as well as local jurisdictions changing their plans and policies. Table 1 provides a more detailed history of expressway planning in South County.

**Table 1**  
**History Of Expressway Planning In South County**

1950's	State freeway plans show South Valley Freeway on the Santa Teresa alignment.
1960	County Board adopts Expressway Policy Resolution, which includes in the Expressway System Phase 1, "Monterey Expressway," shown as the Santa Teresa alignment through Morgan Hill. To serve Coyote Valley, Almaden Expressway was planned to extend to and turn into Bailey Avenue.
1962 ~	County Board adopts Amendment 6 to the Expressway Policy Resolution. The state's shift of the South Valley Freeway alignment easterly "makes it desirable to plan an expressway along the westerly side of the valley." Monterey Expressway is modified to include the entire Santa Teresa alignment, and direction is given to prepare Official Plan Lines to "help protect the right of way." No Phase 1 money is provided for construction, and only \$170,000 is provided for right-of-way.
1964 ~	Official Plan Lines are adopted.
Late 60's to today	County improves segments of Santa Teresa to varying standards. Early projects buy right-of-way for 4 lanes, grade for ultimate plan, and control access rights. Later projects buy right-of-way for 2 lanes, adjust alignment to avoid obstacles such as houses, wells, etc., and do not control access.
1970's ~	County enters into agreements with Morgan Hill and Gilroy to maintain portions of Santa Teresa.
1984	Scotty Bruce, Deputy Director of County Transportation Agency, authors letter to Gilroy stating County will continue to honor agreements, but "those portions of Santa Teresa Boulevard within the City boundary are city roads with the maintenance and improvement a City responsibility," and "if the City believes that there will be a need for the [ultimate] four lanes, it should develop a funding source." Gilroy begins collecting development impact fees to expand Santa Teresa to 4 lanes.
1986	County Transportation Agency publishes "Transportation 2000 Countywide Expressway Study Final Report." Section 6, "Santa Teresa Boulevard," recommends all affected agencies "work together in establishing a plan line" for a six-lane "express roadway" to an "expressway standard." However, the report also notes "the County has tried to downgrade the status of Santa Teresa Boulevard from an expressway to a boulevard and turn jurisdiction over to the cities."
1990 ~	All affected jurisdictions meet at several South County "North-South Arterial" meetings. San Jose expresses desire to accept and operate Santa Teresa in city jurisdiction; Morgan Hill expresses desire to downgrade Santa Teresa and utilize new Sutter Boulevard alignment; San Martin objects to "expressway" on Monterey alignment; Gilroy proposes six lanes on Santa Teresa.
1991	"Santa Clara County Transportation Plan T2010 South County Element" is published. It indicates a potential north-south arterial alignment west of US 101 using (from north to south) Monterey Highway to Cochrane Road to Sutter Boulevard (through Morgan Hill) to California Avenue to Santa Teresa Boulevard through San Martin and Gilroy. It also identified a need for a north-south arterial corridor east of US 101 without specific roadway alignments. The T2010 report also states, "Santa Teresa is not an expressway and is subject to annexation and widening by the local municipalities as fits their plans."
1992	County Board of Supervisors approves "Santa Clara County Transportation Plan T2010 Final Plan," which recommends "development of a major north-south arterial on the west side of Hwy 101 . . . the arterial will be a four-agency facility."
1992	County relinquishes Santa Teresa to San Jose.
1995 +	Morgan Hill prepares plan lines for Santa Teresa between Tilton Avenue and Watsonville Road as a downgraded lower speed facility. Morgan Hill changes the name of Sutter Boulevard to Butterfield Boulevard and designates Butterfield as the major north-south arterial to serve local traffic. Butterfield is built to 4 lanes with right-of-way reserved for expansion to 6 lanes.
2001	County begins development of the Comprehensive County Expressway Planning Study.

After years of meetings and planning, the current consensus is that there will not be an expressway along the entire length of South County. Opportunities do exist, however, for north-south arterials designed to facilitate travel within the South County area (e.g., between Gilroy and Morgan Hill) and for an expressway loop on the west side of US 101 through Gilroy. Specific roadway status and plans for each city in South County are as follows:

## **SAN JOSE**

- ❖ The extension of Almaden Expressway to Bailey will be built as Coyote Valley is developed using city-generated funds. County's plans and City's General Plan show a 4-lane facility.
- ❖ San Jose does not support operation of Santa Teresa Boulevard as an expressway because it conflicts with community plans in the area. Santa Teresa was relinquished to the City in 1992.
- ❖ Monterey Highway south of Blossom Hill operates like an expressway; however, it will remain a city facility. It may become a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor.

## **MORGAN HILL**

- ❖ Morgan Hill's plans do not support having expressways in Morgan Hill. The City is reserving right-of-way to expand key north/south arterials as needed to handle traffic demand; however, these arterials are designed to serve local traffic not regional through traffic.
- ❖ On the west side of US 101, Butterfield Boulevard (formerly Sutter Boulevard) is the designated major north-south arterial. It is being built to 4 lanes with right-of-way being reserved for 6 lanes. The City is maintaining limited access. Construction has started to extend Butterfield to Tennant Avenue and plan lines for the area south of Tennant over to Monterey Highway are under development. A key need is to complete Butterfield's north and south end connections to Monterey Highway.
- ❖ The preferred east side north-south arterial concept is the Marcella-Center-Hill Road Corridor. Much of this corridor is County unincorporated and County assistance is needed for closing corridor gaps. Morgan Hill is collecting impact fees for Hill Road improvements including the sections in unincorporated areas within the City's sphere of influence. Hill Road is being built as a 2-lane arterial with right-of-way reserved for 4 lanes.

## **GILROY**

- ❖ The City of Gilroy's Circulation Element identifies Santa Teresa as an expressway meeting all expressway standards including limited access and no parking. It would be a loop expressway beginning and ending at US 101 – from US 101/SR 25 in the south, north on Santa Teresa Boulevard, and east at Fitzgerald Road/Masten Drive to terminate at US 101/Masten. In the long term, Gilroy would like to use a new US 101/Buena

- Vista Avenue interchange for the loop return. This would provide enhanced access to the hospital for both Gilroy and communities to the north.
- ❖ Gilroy is funding and constructing the widening of Santa Teresa Boulevard from a 2-lane arterial to a 4-lane expressway. The project includes an 8-foot shoulder for bike use from First Street to Longmeadow Drive that the City would like designated as a Class II bike lane. Gilroy is also installing its own signal controller equipment, rather than County equipment, to facilitate city maintenance.
  - ❖ Using Marcella Avenue as an east side north-south arterial is consistent with City plans. It is anticipated that Marcella Avenue will attract more local traffic heading to the industrial development on the east side of US 101 in Gilroy.

## **OTHER ROADWAY PLANS FOR SOUTH COUNTY**

### **RURAL COMMUTE ROUTES**

A majority of road miles in the South County area are in County unincorporated areas and are, therefore, maintained by the County as rural roads. While local jurisdictions were discussing options for new north-south arterials, the County Roads Commission began an effort to identify and plan for "Rural Commute Routes." These are roads where there are high traffic counts now and further development will increase loads. There is concern about the structural and geometric adequacy of these roads, especially as traffic demand increases. Figure 1 is a map of the existing Rural Commute Routes. It shows how these routes supplement and feed into state routes and major local arterials.

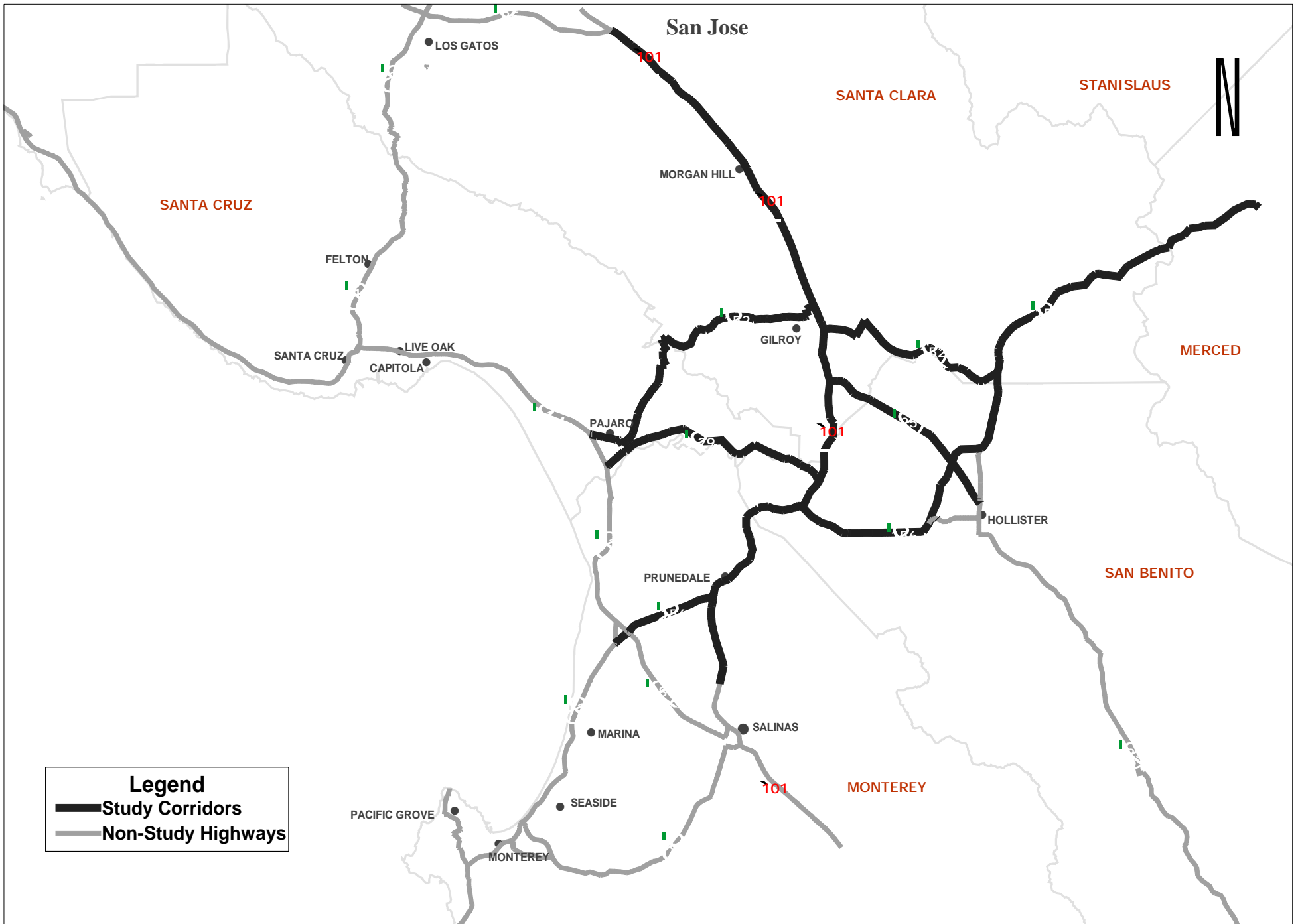
A major Rural Commute Route is a north-south route west of US 101 known as G8. County Route G8 is an existing continuous connection from the current southern terminus of Almaden Expressway to Hecker Pass Highway near Bonfante Gardens using McKean Road, Uvas Road, and Watsonville Road. G8 is already heavily utilized and there are safety concerns because of higher speeds and more traffic. It is currently a 2-lane facility, and the County's Official Plan Lines are for a 4-lane facility. However, expansion to 4 lanes would be costly given the narrow bridges and other obstacles along the route. Interim safety improvements needed include adding shoulders.

### **VTA'S SOUTHERN GATEWAY TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE STUDY**

VTA's Southern Gateway Transportation and Land Use Study was started in early 2002 and is due to be completed by Spring 2003. The Study will develop a set of transportation improvements to improve travel between Santa Clara County and the counties of San Benito, Monterey, and Santa Cruz in the near and long term. The Southern Gateway Study focuses on travel patterns in the SR 25, SR 152, SR 156, US 101, and SR 129 corridors over a 20-year study period (see Figure 2).

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**Figure 2**  
**VTA Southern Gateway Study Corridors**

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following agreements from the South County PAB workshops formed the basis for the recommendations in this Working Paper:

- ❖ Regional travel demand from south of Gilroy heading into South San Jose should be accommodated on US 101.
- ❖ A South County “local corridor” is needed to facilitate travel between Gilroy and Morgan Hill. It does not necessarily need to be called an “Expressway” or fall under single-jurisdiction ownership, but it does need consistent standards and an identifiable alignment.
- ❖ Some kind of regional transportation plan is needed for the South County area – a “South County Circulation Study.”
- ❖ All 5 government agencies need to be involved in the development of a Circulation Study – VTA, County of Santa Clara, and the Cities of Morgan Hill, Gilroy, and San Jose.

## SOUTH COUNTY CIRCULATION STUDY

There are several critical issues that revolve around travel needs for residents and workers in the South County area that are not addressed in either the County Expressway Study or VTA Southern Gateway Study. It is recommended that a South County Circulation Study be developed to address the following issues:

- ❖ US 101 improvements
- ❖ East-west access to US 101
- ❖ Arterial improvements and extensions
- ❖ Use of rural roads as commuter routes
- ❖ North-south travel patterns and routes
- ❖ Potential identification of a north-south local corridor with consistent roadway standards
- ❖ Access to Coyote Valley, Morgan Hill, and Gilroy industrial areas
- ❖ Balance of local circulation needs and regional travel demand
- ❖ Santa Teresa Boulevard connections to US 101
- ❖ Caltrain and other transit improvements

The Circulation Study will be managed by VTA staff and jointly funded by all involved agencies. There will be a collaborative planning process involving staff and policymakers from the 5 government agencies. The Study will also include coordination with San Jose’s Coyote Valley Specific Plan.

The proposed scope of work for the Study is attached in Appendix C. The Southern Gateway Study will complete some parts of the work tasks and the remaining work will be started at the conclusion of the Gateway Study early in 2003. The Circulation Study will be completed by

the end of 2003. This timing will allow the Study's recommendations to be incorporated into the next VTP 2020 update at the same time as the County Expressway Study's recommendations.

## **NORTH-SOUTH ARTERIALS**

Based on discussions with city staff and the PAB workshops, three north-south arterial roadways traveling the length of the South County area have been identified. These roadways will be further studied in the South County Circulation Study. They are illustrated in Figure 3 and described below along with PAB recommendations:

1. County Route G8 – This route to the west of developed areas of Gilroy and Morgan Hill provides a continuous connection from Gilroy to Almaden Expressway. It is already well used as an alternate to US 101 for traffic heading into San Jose. Various improvements are needed to improve safety and accommodate the increasing demand. However, the PAB stated this facility should be maintained as a rural roadway, noting the popularity of McKean and Uvas Roads for bicycling. It was recommended that traffic using the future Almaden Expressway extension be directed onto Bailey Avenue to connect with US 101. Improvements for County Route G8 should focus on safety improvements (e.g., adding shoulders) rather than adding capacity.
2. Santa Teresa/Butterfield corridor west of US 101 – This “local corridor” should be developed using consistent standards and an identifiable alignment to serve South County area traffic between Gilroy, San Martin, and Morgan Hill. Specific alignments and improvements for this corridor could include:
  - ❖ In Gilroy, use Santa Teresa Boulevard. A new connection to US 101 could be provided by constructing the Santa Teresa extension to the US 101/SR 25 interchange. Santa Teresa will be widened to 4 lanes and developed to expressway standards. Currently, Masten Avenue can be used to loop back to US 101 north of Gilroy. In the long term, it may be desirable to extend Buena Vista Avenue to Santa Teresa (including a grade separation at Monterey Highway/railroad tracks) and build a new US 101/Buena Vista Avenue interchange to serve as the north end of the loop. The South County Circulation Study will help determine the preferred connections to US 101.
  - ❖ Continuing local northbound traffic would transition to the slower-speed, 2-lane Santa Teresa Boulevard through San Martin to Morgan Hill.
  - ❖ The corridor then transitions to Butterfield Boulevard in Morgan Hill. The south end connection of Butterfield to Monterey Highway needs to be identified and constructed, with Watsonville Road used from Monterey Highway to Santa Teresa Boulevard. The north end connection to Monterey Highway into San Jose also requires study and improvement.
  - ❖ The corridor continues into San Jose using Monterey Highway. Coordination with plans for the Monterey Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project will be needed.

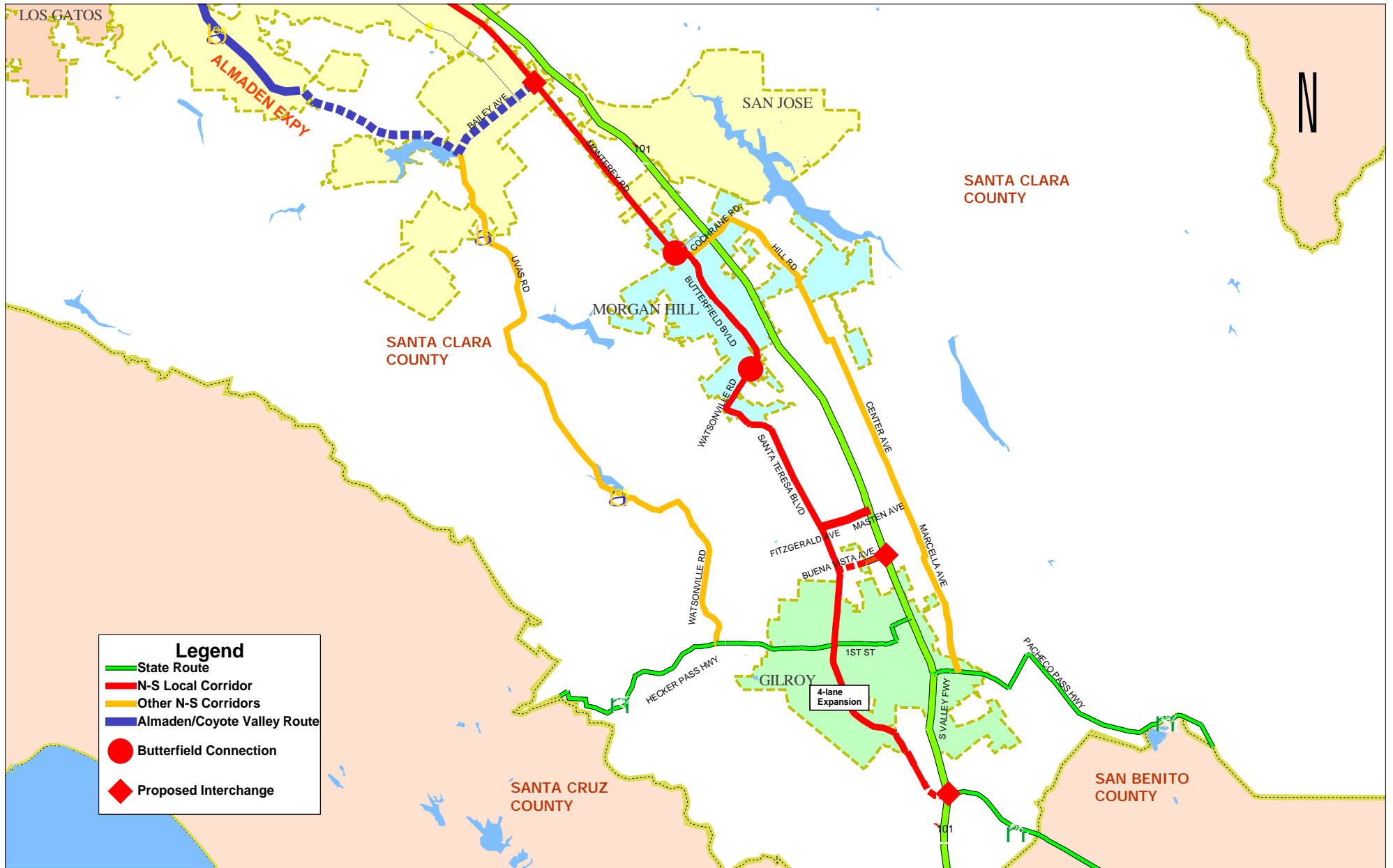


Figure 3

3. East of US 101 – The current plans call for a continuous 4-lane facility using Peet Road, Hill Road, Center Road, and Marcella Avenue. This roadway will serve local travel between Morgan Hill and Gilroy and provide a key connection into Gilroy's east side industrial development.

## **VTA SOUTH COUNTY ROADWAY PAB**

Based on a recommendation from the Expressway Study's South County PAB workshops, the VTA Board approved the formation of the South County Roadway PAB on August 1, 2002. This new PAB will discuss roadway projects and issues for the South County area (defined as south of the southern SR 85/US 101 freeway interchange) and provide policy input into the proposed South County Circulation Study.

PAB membership consists of one member appointed from each of the Cities of Gilroy, Morgan Hill, and San Jose; the County Supervisor representing the southern part of Santa Clara County; and, one VTA Board member appointed by the VTA Board of Directors. In their role as advisors to the County Board of Supervisors, the County Roads Commission has appointed two members to serve as liaisons to the new PAB. The Commissioners serving as liaisons will keep the Roads Commission informed of PAB discussions and address the PAB on behalf of the Commission as needed.

## **OUTSTANDING CITY/COUNTY ISSUES TO RESOLVE**

The proposed South County Circulation Study will address general transportation issues for South County including project priorities and funding strategies. There are a couple issues involving old Expressway Agreements that require resolution outside of the Circulation Study. These issues are as follows:

- ❖ Outdated Expressway Agreements need to be revised and/or rescinded. For example, in Morgan Hill, Santa Teresa Boulevard/Hale Avenue falls under an old Expressway Agreement.
- ❖ Relinquishment of Santa Teresa to Gilroy needs to be resolved. In the 1980's, County and City staff arrived at an informal agreement that Gilroy will accept relinquishment of Santa Teresa after it was improved to four lanes. This was important from the County's perspective because the County's operating revenues are not sufficient to support expansion of expressway lane miles. Gilroy does not necessarily object to maintaining Santa Teresa. However, if the roadway is relinquished to the city, Gilroy does not want full development of Santa Teresa to be perceived as a lower priority regionally.
- ❖ Gilroy staff has recently stated that changing funding conditions may affect Gilroy's willingness to accept relinquishment. The question raised is if Santa Teresa will miss out on regional and county funding opportunities if it is not a County Expressway. At this time, there are no special funds reserved for operating County Expressways. VTP 2020 has \$80 million designated for capital improvement of "Expressways", with the entire amount already earmarked. VTP 2020 has a larger \$410 million fund category to be shared among "Local Streets and County Roads" and expressways are proposed to be ineligible for that category. A city-operated arterial facility may have an advantage competing for these funds over a County-operated expressway. Any new funding proposals that will support the Expressway Study recommendations would likely also support the South County Circulation Study recommendations. Both sets of recommendations will be folded into future updates of VTP 2020.
- ❖ Recent concerns have been raised about the desirability of completing the Santa Teresa connection to the US 101/SR 25 interchange and creating an expressway loop that may encourage regional through traffic to bypass US 101 through Gilroy. The South County Circulation Study will determine the need and support for the SR 25 connection. These decisions could affect the Santa Teresa relinquishment issue.

It is recommended that the County and cities continue discussions to resolve these issues after the South County Circulation Study is completed and more is known about future roadway plans in South County. Future status reports on the City/County discussions will be provided to the VTA South County PAB.

## **Appendices**

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**Appendix A** - Summary Of Findings From Meetings With South County Cities

**Appendix B1** - PAB South County Workshop; March 29, 2002; Summary

**Appendix B2** - PAB South County Workshop; June 19, 2002; Summary

**Appendix C** – Proposed South County Circulation Study Work Scope

# **Appendix A**

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Summary of Findings

From Meetings with South County Cities



## ***COMPREHENSIVE COUNTY EXPRESSWAY PLANNING STUDY***

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM MEETINGS WITH SOUTH COUNTY CITIES**

In December 2001 and January 2002, Project Staff met with staff from the cities of Gilroy, Morgan Hill, and San Jose to discuss the Expressway Study. Summarized below is the input from each city as it relates to expressways and major roadways in the South County area.

#### **CITY OF GILROY**

##### **Summary**

- Santa Teresa is planned to be an expressway meeting all expressway standards including limited access and no parking. Would prefer the expressway continue north to Morgan Hill, but given Morgan Hill's position on expressways, they are planning an expressway loop. It would begin at 101/25 in the south, head north on Santa Teresa, and turn east at Fitzgerald/Masten to terminate at 101. In the long term, would like to use the new Buena Vista/101 interchange for the loop return.

##### **Key Issues**

- City's top 3 "wishes"/priorities are:
  - Widen Santa Teresa to 4 lanes.
  - Connect 25 to Santa Teresa.
  - Construct 101/Buena Vista interchange and connect Buena Vista to Santa Teresa, including grade separation at Monterey Hwy/RR tracks.
- For Gilroy, there has always been a firm commitment that Santa Teresa will be an expressway. Although there was a prior informal agreement between staff that Gilroy will accept relinquishment of Santa Teresa after it is improved to four lanes, funding conditions have changed and may affect Gilroy's willingness to accept relinquishment.
- City is okay with concepts for improving Route G8 and Hill/Center/Marcella as commuter routes serving north/south travel needs.
- Both City and County are open to being partners and joint applicants for grants to help fund improvements for Santa Teresa. There is agreement that Gilroy will construct the roadway improvements. The county position is that operating revenues available to the county do not allow for expansion of expressway lane miles unless new maintenance fund sources are found. Gilroy feels entitled to some of the county funding for the system. Gilroy would also like to maintain expressway status for Santa Teresa to keep it eligible for regional funding sources that may become available for expressways.

## **CITY OF MORGAN HILL**

### **Summary**

- City plans do not support having expressways in Morgan Hill. There is strong resident opposition to expressways. City is reserving right-of-way to expand key north/south arterials as needed to handle the traffic demand; however, these arterials are still envisioned to serve local traffic not regional through traffic.

### **Greatest Issues and Priorities**

- City's top 3 "wishes"/priorities are:
  - Connect Murphy (north of Cochrane) to Burnett.
  - Complete north and south ends of Butterfield's connections to Monterey Hwy.
  - Facilitate transition from Gilroy's 4-lane Santa Teresa Expressway to Morgan Hill's 2-lane arterial.
- East of 101 arterials:
  - General Plan calls for Murphy Road corridor to be continuous from Burnett to Middle Avenue. Willing to consider a smart corridor concept in terms of Hwy 101 incident management using Murphy, but City staff do not consider Murphy a viable arterial for South County traffic.
  - The preferred east side north-south arterial concept is the Hill Road Corridor. Much of this corridor is County unincorporated and County assistance is requested for closing corridor gaps in unincorporated areas. City is building Hill as a 2-lane arterial but reserving ROW for 4 lanes.
- The minimum preferred role for the County is to preserve right-of-way consistent with the City's plan lines and standards for arterial sections within County unincorporated areas. The City would also like assistance with funding the roadway improvements and a grant partner for major projects (e.g., new interchange at 101/Middle Avenue).

## **CITY OF SAN JOSE**

- City supports extension of Almaden Expressway to Bailey. County's plans and City's General Plan show a 4-lane facility.
- City does not support making Santa Teresa an expressway – it goes through the heart of Coyote Valley.
- Monterey Highway south of Blossom Hill operates similar to an expressway. It may become a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor.

## **Appendix B1**

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PAB South County Workshop

March 29, 2002

Summary



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## ***COMPREHENSIVE COUNTY EXPRESSWAY PLANNING STUDY***

### **PAB SOUTH COUNTY WORKSHOP MARCH 29, 2002 SUMMARY**

- Workshop participants included Supervisor Gage, Morgan Hill Mayor Kennedy, Gilroy Mayor Springer, San Jose Councilmember Williams, and County Roads Commissioners Brown and Fadness.
- Expressway Study staff provided a history of expressway planning for South County, VTA staff gave an overview of the Southern Gateway Study, and staff from Morgan Hill and Gilroy presented their cities' roadway plans and priorities.
- Key agreements included:
  - Regional travel demand from south of Gilroy heading into South San Jose should be accommodated on 101.
  - A South County "local corridor" is needed to facilitate travel between Gilroy and Morgan Hill. Does not necessarily need to be called an "Expressway" or fall under single-jurisdiction ownership, but it does need consistent standards and an identifiable alignment.
  - Some kind of regional transportation plan is needed for the South County area – a "South County Circulation Study."
  - All 5 government agencies need to be involved in a Circulation Study – VTA, County, Morgan Hill, Gilroy, and San Jose.
- Discussion continues about implementation options:
  - The Circulation Study could tie together the County's Expressway Planning Study, VTA's Southern Gateway Study, and General Plans for the South County area.
  - Oversight and collaborative planning options include merging various South County project-specific Policy Advisory Boards (PABs) into a single PAB or establishing a Joint Powers Authority (JPA).
  - The Study needs to be funded and staffed. One option is to see if VTA will fund and manage the Study.
- Next Expressway Study PAB South County Workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, June 19, at 3:30 p.m., at Morgan Hill City Hall.

## **Appendix B2**

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PAB South County Workshop

June 19, 2002

Summary

# ***COMPREHENSIVE COUNTY EXPRESSWAY PLANNING STUDY***

## **PAB SOUTH COUNTY WORKSHOP**

**JUNE 19, 2002**

### **SUMMARY**

The PAB South County Small Group held its second workshop on June 19 in Morgan Hill. This was a joint County Roads and VTA workshop regarding South County transportation issues/needs and a proposal for a South County Circulation Study.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

Donald F. Gage, County of Santa Clara  
Tom Springer, Gilroy  
Larry Carr, Morgan Hill

Forrest Williams, San Jose  
Ted Brown, Roads Commission  
Dave Fadness, Roads Commission

### **AGENDA SUMMARY**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Public Comments
3. Accept March 29, 2002, Workshop Summary
4. Accept Presentation on VTA's Southern Gateway Study Status
5. Discuss Proposed South County Circulation Study Scope of Work (see attached document)
6. Discuss Policy Advisory Board Concepts
7. Summarize Next Steps

### **KEY DISCUSSION POINTS AND AGREEMENTS**

#### **VTA Southern Gateway Study Status**

The presentation was accepted with the following comments:

- A single, common plan with the other counties is needed for the southern gateway improvements to be identified in the Study. The study will include improvements for SR 25, US 101, SR 152, and SR 156. This plan needs to be realistic in terms of available funding and position the counties to compete for State and Federal funding.
- It was also noted that the other counties are going to face some significant environmental issues with the "3 in 1" proposal (i.e., to build one new freeway in lieu of capacity improvements to 25, 152, and 156).
- Study should consider concepts for shifting truck traffic off 152 to 25 in traveling to and from 101.
- The Study should also analyze the impacts of connecting the south end of Santa Teresa to 101. This would change travel patterns in the area including demand on 101 heading north.

- Include funding issues to the next workshop with agencies and stakeholders.

### **Proposed South County Circulation Study Scope of Work**

There was general agreement on the proposed scope of work, with the following comments:

- Add to the list of issues to address in the Study: “US 101 improvements”” Discussion points and questions related to this issue included:
  - An analysis is needed of the impact of expanding to 8 lanes only to Morgan Hill and shifting the bottleneck south vs. expanding to Gilroy and/or the County line.
  - Future strategies/improvements needed to address the overflow problems when the 8-lane Hwy 101 freeway reaches capacity in the next 10 years.
  - Will the additional jobs being added to South County help delay some of the capacity improvement needs because they will encourage reverse commute travel patterns?
  - What type of median barrier is being added to 101 south of Gilroy and will it affect adding lanes using the median?
- There is interest in having a model that will allow immediate “what if” modeling during meetings to determine the cost-effectiveness of changes in types of transportation projects.
- Estimated cost for the Circulation Study is \$150,000. VTA staff will return with a cost-sharing proposal for the key local agencies that will be involved in the Study.
- Some parts of the work tasks will be completed by the Southern Gateway Study. The remaining work will be started at the conclusion of the Gateway Study early in 2003. The Study will be completed by the end of 2003. This timing will allow the Study’s project phasing strategy to be incorporated into the next VTP 2020 update and to be included in any new local funding source concepts alongside the Expressway Study’s project list.

### **PAB Concepts**

- There was agreement that the VTA should establish a formal South County Policy Advisory Board to cover all South County transportation issues. This concept will be introduced to the VTA Board of Directors on June 20, with a request for formal VTA Board action in August.
- A “transition” meeting will be held in September to wrap up the work of the Expressway Study South County Small Group PAB and launch the VTA South County PAB.
- At the September meeting, the Expressway Study project staff will present a draft working paper summarizing the results of the South County meetings held as part of the Expressway Study. It will also document the history of expressway planning in South County and the proposed north-south local corridor for local travel between Gilroy, San Martin, and Morgan Hill.

## **Appendix C**

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Proposed South County Circulation Study Work Scope



## **Proposed South County Circulation Study Work Scope**

### **Background**

Two ongoing transportation studies include the southern portion of Santa Clara County:

1. Southern Gateway Transportation and Land Use Study, being conducted by VTA; and
2. Comprehensive County Expressway Planning Study, being conducted by Santa Clara County Roads and Airports Department.

The Southern Gateway Study will develop a set of transportation improvements to improve travel between Santa Clara County and the counties of San Benito, Monterey, and Santa Cruz in the near and long term. The Southern Gateway study focuses on travel patterns in the SR 25, SR 152, SR 156, US 101, and SR 129 corridors over a 20-year study period.

The County Expressway Study will develop a long-range Implementation Plan for the improvement and maintenance of Santa Clara County expressways. The Study includes exploring opportunities for a potential expressway in the south county area.

Both studies will provide critical analysis in the south county area. However, the studies do not address remaining issues that revolve around travel needs for residents and workers in the south county area. These issues include:

- East-west access to US 101
- US 101 improvements
- Arterial improvements and extensions
- Use of rural roads as commuter routes
- North-south travel patterns and routes
- Potential identification of a north-south local corridor with consistent roadway standards
- Access to Coyote Valley, Morgan Hill, and Gilroy industrial areas
- Balance of local circulation needs and regional travel demand
- Santa Teresa Boulevard connections to US 101
- Caltrain and other transit improvements

At the County Expressway Study South County Policy Advisory Board (PAB) Small Group Workshop held on March 29, 2002, the participants discussed a follow-on study that would address the above-mentioned issues. The study would focus on circulation issues in the South County area.

### **Collaborative Planning Process**

A fully developed work scope for the South County Circulation Study will include a process for working with the key local agencies affected by the Study at both the staff and policy level. The key local agencies are Gilroy, Morgan Hill, San Jose, County of Santa Clara, and VTA. Caltrans and MTC staff will be involved as appropriate. The scope will also include stakeholder involvement.

### **Proposed Work Scope**

The work scope below briefly describes tasks that could be included in a South County Circulation Study. Much of the Southern Gateway Study effort would feed into the Circulation Study.

#### ***Task 1: Define Objectives***

This task would define objectives of transportation improvements that address the issues listed above. The objectives should reflect land use issues, such as access and street design, as well as transportation operations. The objectives should also be compatible with local agency and community needs and priorities.

#### ***Task 2: Evaluate Traffic Forecasts***

This task would build off of the work effort of the Southern Gateway Study. VTA has developed a 12-county model, including the nine-county Bay Area and Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito Counties. As part of the development of the model, VTA will be validating travel patterns in the south county area based on the existing travel patterns and future land use. As part of the Gateway Study, VTA will conduct travel forecasts, focusing on transportation improvements in this area.

The evaluation of the travel forecasts will include: analysis of existing and future operations, assessment of future transportation needs, and identification of critical locations.

#### ***Task 3: Identify Potential Improvement Strategies***

This task would identify and qualitatively assess a range of alternatives to address the needs identified in Task 2. The assessment will screen out infeasible or inferior alternatives considering factors such as the effects on traffic operations, potential right-of-way conflicts, and relative costs. A key element of this task is working with the staff of the affected jurisdictions to reflect their General Plans and other documented proposed projects.



***Task 4: Concept Plan Development***

This task will develop conceptual plans for projects remaining after the screening in Task 3. The objectives of these plans are to help understand potential right-of-way requirements, cost implications, and possible phasing of improvements. Cost estimates will be prepared for proposed projects.

***Task 5: Phasing Strategy***

VTA will coordinate with the other agencies in developing a funding plan based on projected revenue sources. Projects will be designated for which funding sources and programs they are eligible. The funding programs will include, but not be limited to, the VTP 2020 programs for Highways, Local Streets and County Roads, Expressways, and Transit.

The phasing strategy will include a schedule for project implementation, which will include all phases of project delivery. These phases include conceptual engineering, environmental documentation, preliminary engineering, final design and construction.

The funding plan and Phasing Strategy will be incorporated into the next update of the VTP 2020 Plan.

# Acknowledgements

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