

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Letter of Support for the Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 being included in FASTER Bay Area Measure

FROM: Michael Tree, Executive Director

DATE: September 9, 2019

Action Requested

Authorize the Board Chair to sign a letter of support for inclusion of the Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 in FASTER Bay Area measure.

Background/Discussion

The Valley Link rail project includes a 12.5 mile section in the Altamont Corridor that is the former Southern Pacific Railroad right of way, now owned by the County of Alameda. This section was constructed in the 1800s as part of the original Transcontinental Railroad and with its alignment will not allow Valley Link trains to reach high speeds.

The California State Rail Plan envisions a Northern California regional rail vision that features universal infrastructure that allows passenger rail corridors to be shared by services such as ACE and Valley Link. Additionally, the plan foresees faster passenger rail service that provides early connectivity to high speed rail, carrying riders from areas such as Stockton and Merced to Oakland, San Francisco and other Bay Area destinations in less than one hour.

In collaboration with the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission and the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority, the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority has engaged in visioning for an Altamont Corridor that would be consistent with the State Rail Plan and provide a Phase 1 to more long term improvements in both San Joaquin County and the Bay Area.

As envisioned, the Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 is a \$1.1 billion project and features universal passenger rail infrastructure separate from freight that could be used by Valley Link and ACE that includes a tunnel and other structure that straighten the rail alignment and allow for trains to reach speeds of over 100 mph.

Interest by groups assembling a potential 9-county Bay Area tax measure known as FASTER Bay Area has arisen in regard to the Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1. Included in their interest to include the Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 in FASTER Bay Area is an

additional interest to include in the measure the remaining \$600 million in funding needed to construct Valley Link within the I-580 in the Tri-Valley, which would complete funding needed for Valley Link in Alameda County.

Staff seeks to have LAVTA approve a letter of support to have Valley Link and the Altamont Vision be included in FASTER Bay Area.

Financial Impact

None

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board of Directors authorize the Board Chair to sign a letter of support for inclusion of the Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 in FASTER Bay Area measure.

Attachments:

1. Fact Sheet
2. Aerial showing concept of the universal passenger rail corridor in the Altamont Corridor
3. Draft Letter of Support

Submitted: _____



Altamont Corridor Vision: Universal Infrastructure, Universal Corridor

1 Hour Travel Time

Oakland,
Peninsula,
San Jose ↔ Stockton,
Modesto

1 Seat Ride

Express service,
modern rolling stock

1 Shared Corridor

Shared facilities,
integrated ticketing,
timed connections



What is the Altamont Corridor Vision?

The Altamont Corridor that connects the San Joaquin Valley to the Bay Area is one of the **most heavily travelled, most congested, and fastest growing** corridors in the Northern California megaregion. The Bay Area Council estimates that **congestion will increase an additional 75%** in coming decades. To achieve state and regional environmental and economic development goals, a robust alternative is needed to provide a sustainable / reliable travel choice and greater connectivity.

The **Altamont Corridor Vision** will provide safe, frequent, and reliable service by modernizing the corridor connecting the Central Valley and San Francisco Bay Area. Consistent with the 2018 State Rail Plan, 2007 MTC Regional Rail Plan, and the Altamont Corridor Rail Project, the **Vision** provides for shared services, dramatically reduced travel times, one-seat rides, express service, and megaregional connectivity. The proposed universal infrastructure would allow connectivity to and through the HSR initial operating segment at Merced.



Improvements in the Altamont Corridor Vision can be phased based upon the funding that is available. The Near Term/Phase 1 Priority Improvements are the highest priority for the Altamont Corridor Vision implementation. Incremental improvements can bring near-term benefits and help lead to the development of the Altamont Corridor Vision.

Near Term/Phase 1 Priority Improvements

- 2 additional round-trips between SJV and San Jose via Altamont Pass and weekend service (6 daily round trips weekdays)
- Valley Link initiated: Dublin/Pleasanton to North Lathrop (25 daily round trips)
- Altamont Pass Tunnel/Alignment Improvements

Mid Term

- 4 more round-trips between SJV and San Jose via Altamont Pass (10 daily round trips weekdays)
- Newark to Alviso improvements
- Valley Link extended to Stockton (30 daily round trips)

Longer Term/Vision

- 15 minute to ½ hour frequency during peak periods
- Dedicated Track – “Universal Corridor”
- One seat ride SJV – San Jose/Oakland/SF/ Peninsula



Altamont Corridor Vision

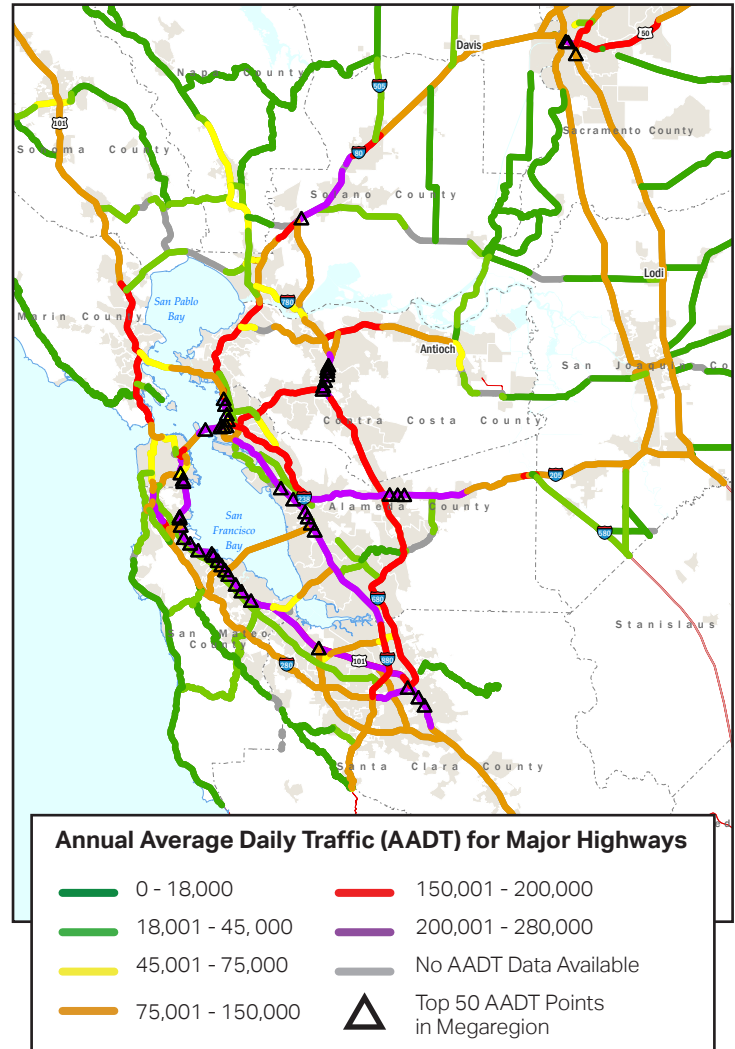
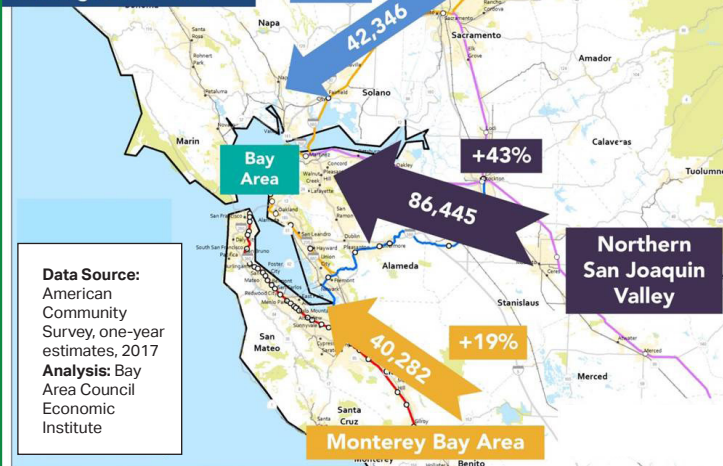
Major Benefits

More trains, more often, more quickly

- Phased as funding is available, near-term transformative improvements identified.
- Electrified service
- Reduced congestion
- Improved air quality
- Opportunities for disadvantaged communities
- Promotion of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)
- Economic development in the San Joaquin Valley
- Enhanced mobility and equitable access to jobs and education

Daily Megaregional Commuters in 2017

% Change 2010 - 2017



Northern California Regional Rail Vision



Universal Infrastructure

Shared corridors, stations, and maintenance facilities allow for network integration, lower costs, higher ridership, and better efficiency

One-Seat-Ride

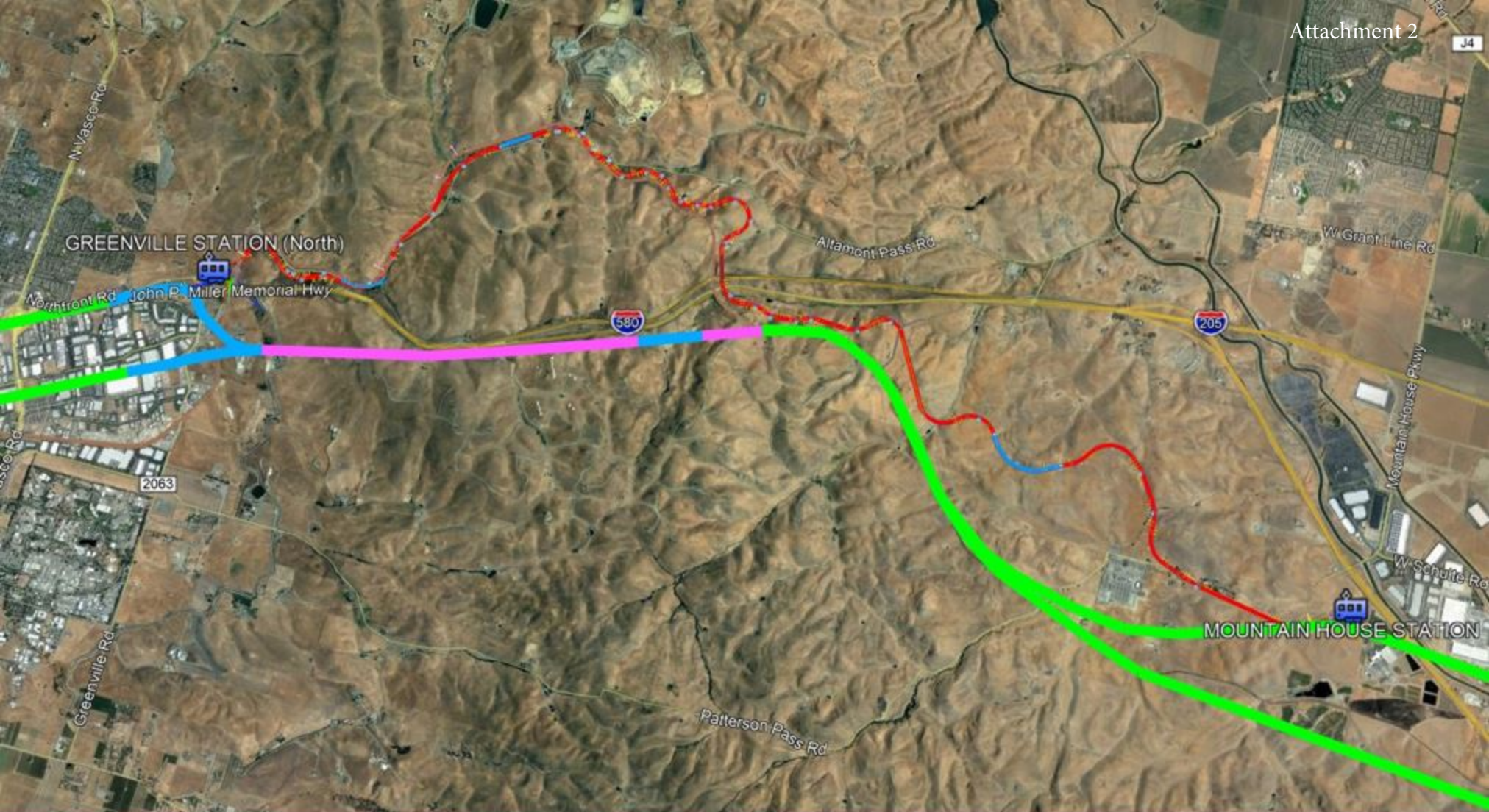
Improvements allow for new express service overlays, integrated local service, higher frequency, and one-seat-rides across the region

Utilization of New Bay Crossings

Investments in new crossings between San Francisco-Oakland and at Dumbarton can be utilized by all markets and services, including high speed rail, express, and local service

Connectivity to High Speed Rail

Early connectivity to high speed rail at Merced provides early access to the Bay Area



Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1



Livermore Amador Valley
TRANSIT AUTHORITY



August 15, 2019

Carl Guardino, President and CEO
Silicon Valley Leadership Group
2001 Gateway Place, Suite 101E
San Jose, CA 95110

Alicia John-Baptiste, President and CEO
SPUR
654 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-4015

Jim Wunderman, President and CEO
Bay Area Council
353 Sacramento Street, 10th Floor
San Francisco CA 94111

RE: Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 Improvement Program Inclusion in FASTER Bay Area

Dear Carl, Jim, and Alicia,

The Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority is pleased to provide this letter to strongly support the inclusion of \$1.9 billion for the Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 Improvements Program as part of FASTER Bay Area. It is our understanding the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, Bay Area Council, and SPUR are working in partnership to have FASTER Bay Area on the November 2020 ballot for Bay Area voters.

The Altamont Corridor that connects the San Joaquin Valley to the Bay Area is one of the most heavily traveled, most congested, and fastest growing corridors in the Northern California megaregion. The Bay Area Council estimates that congestion will increase an additional 75% between 2016 and 2040. To achieve state and regional environmental and economic development goals, a robust passenger rail alternative is needed in the Altamont Corridor to increase mobility by providing a sustainable transportation option, provide greater connectivity, and a better quality of life and access to jobs, educational opportunities and health care facilities.

The Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 Improvement Program is the result of a partnership between the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority (Valley Link), San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (Altamont Corridor Express [ACE]), and San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (San Joaquins). The Bay Area improvements of this Phase 1 Program include \$1.1 billion for the implementation of 8.6-miles of new alignment through the Altamont Pass (between Greenville Road and the San Joaquin County Line) to be used by both ACE and Valley Link services. This new alignment through the Altamont Pass would include a 3.5 mile tunnel and enable speeds up to 125 mph that would decrease train travel times through the Altamont Pass by 11 – 15 minutes. Bay Area Phase 1 improvements also includes \$600 million to fund equipment and the additional infrastructure needed to complete the Valley Link service between Dublin/Pleasanton BART and Livermore. In the near-term, the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority anticipates running 25 Valley Link daily round-trips between Dublin/Pleasanton BART and North Lathrop Transfer Station in San Joaquin County. In addition, Phase 1 also includes \$200 million is included for new ACE equipment and Bay

Area station/alignment improvements for two additional ACE round-trips between the San Joaquin Valley and San Jose.

The Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 Improvement Program will provide safe, frequent, and reliable regional rail service by modernizing passenger rail in the Altamont Corridor. The vastly improved infrastructure through the Altamont Pass would be separated from freight, double tracked, grade separated, and enable fast (up to 125 mph maximum speeds), and frequent service. The Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 Improvement Program is the first step towards the completion of the Altamont Corridor Vision which is consistent with the 2018 State Rail Plan, 2007 MTC Regional Rail Plan, MTC Resolution 3829 from 2007, and the CHSRA's Altamont Corridor Rail Project.

The Altamont Corridor Phase 1 Improvement Program would:

- Substantially increase regional rail ridership in the Altamont (I-580/I-680) Corridor.
- Reduce the amount of greenhouse gases and air pollution emissions by diverting trips that would have previously been taken by an automobile.
- Reduce congestion on some of the Bay Area's most congested freeways (I-580/I-680 Corridor).
- Promote transit-oriented development throughout the Altamont Corridor.

The transformative Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 Improvement Program would have a very positive effect on the Northern California Megaregion's underserved priority and rural communities by providing a convenient and inexpensive alternative to the rising costs of automobile. Connecting these San Joaquin Valley communities to the Bay Area's large economic centers would increase safe and affordable transportation options between these communities. The Vision would also foster more compact and sustainable growth, providing access to affordable housing and a chance to rebalance the job centers equitably.

We are pleased to provide this letter of strong support of the Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 Improvement Program to be included as part of FASTER Bay Area to help move the Bay Area and the Northern California Megaregion forward.

Sincerely,

David Haubert
Chairman of the Board