

07-13-21

ITEM # 2  
RTC# 21-972



*via email*

July 9, 2021

Ms. Ruth Shikada  
Assistant City Manager/Economic Development Officer  
City of Santa Clara  
1500 Warburton Avenue  
Santa Clara, CA 95050

Dear Ruth:

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is pleased to be working with City of Santa Clara (City) staff on a proposed new stand-alone Cooperative Agreement for VTA's Transit-Oriented Development Program to provide funding and technical assistance for the City's preparation of its Santa Clara BART Station Area Plan. This support would be funded from a new award from the Federal Transit Administration's Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development Planning. Creation of a Station Area Plan is recommended in VTA's BART Silicon Valley Extension Transit-Oriented Communities Strategy Study "Playbook" at: [www.vta.org/projects/bart-sv/phase-ii/transit-oriented-communities-study](http://www.vta.org/projects/bart-sv/phase-ii/transit-oriented-communities-study)

The City and VTA were previously engaged in an extraordinarily lengthy (more than 2.5 years) Exclusive Negotiations Agreement (ENA) with Republic Metropolitan LLC for development on the Santa Clara Caltrain Station Parking lot, with student or other group housing on the City-owned portion of the lot and affordable housing on the VTA-owned portion. The VTA Office of the General Counsel has confirmed that the ENA expired on August 5, 2020 since the conditions for an extension approved by the VTA Board of Directors at its October 1, 2020 meeting were not met. That ENA is no longer of any further force or effect.

Regarding VTA's property, staff's recommendation to the VTA Board of Directors would be that a new Station Area Plan should be completed by the City before VTA pursues new development on its site. Any future Requests for Proposals (RFP) for the VTA property should be based upon a Station Area Plan approved by the City and seek to advance Plan goals.

Should the subject of the future of VTA's property be presented at a Board meeting prior to the City's adoption of a Station Area Plan, staff expects its recommendation would be: (1) wait until City adoption of a Plan before undertaking further action; and (2) if the Board desires to act before then, a new competitive developer RFP should be issued for the VTA property that allows submittals for a student and affordable housing development, plus other developer proposals for uses that would create greater transit ridership benefits. The latter recommendation arises from discussion at prior VTA Board meetings that a student housing development, while potentially providing community benefits, would generate considerably less new transit ridership than other Transit-Oriented Development projects with a superior mix of residential and commercial uses.



VTA values its collaboration with the City and its residents on how to best create a dynamic, sustainable, and equitable Transit-Oriented Community around the Santa Clara BART Station. We welcome the opportunity for continued discussion and collaboration on a shared vision and plan for the station area's future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Ron Golem'.

Ron Golem  
Director of Real Estate & Transit-Oriented Development

cc: Jessie O'Malley Solis, VTA Transit-Oriented Development Program Manager