

COYOTE VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN DRAFT EIR

EIR COMMENTS

To be consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), comments or questions relating to the Coyote Valley Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) should focus on the adequacy or accuracy of the information in the DEIR.

Comments regarding the merits of the CVSP "project" should be submitted separately as general comments (A place for general comments has been designated on the back of this form.). Please submit your written comments on this card at this DEIR meeting, or to Jared Hart via the methods listed at the bottom of the page by 5:00 P.M. on June 29, 2007. (Note: Please write legibly. We will not be able to respond if we cannot read your comments.)

PLEASE USE THIS SPACE IF YOU HAVE COMMENTS ON THE ADEQUACY OR ACCURACY OF THE DEIR:

There are considerations lacking in Section 4.2, Transportation and Traffic, as well as in Appendix C, Transportation Impact Analysis, of the Draft EIR:

MY COMMENTS:

Traffic studies are inadequate because they lack other, simultaneous influences.

1. The traffic study was made during the time of minimum active jobs in the Edenvale industrial area. Cisco, Intel, Western Digital, IBM, and others were in the process of downsizing.
2. Leland High School (and others schools, as well) had significant bussing in progress which has since tapered off, and more students are now being driven in from outside the valley. The summer morning rush hour traffic is half that of school year morning rush hour traffic.
3. The future planned expansion of the Edenvale industrial area will bring in additional traffic to the Highway 101, Route 85, Santa Teresa Blvd. choke point.
4. The South Almaden Valley Urban Reserve future expansion will require McKean Road/Bailey Avenue access to Highway 101. To choke this corridor will prohibit the reserve area expansion. Almaden Expressway cannot be expanded to accomplish this, and Camden Avenue cannot be expanded beyond two lanes. (It is on the books for four lanes, but there is insufficient room for this to happen.)
5. The continued buildout of residential property "East of 101 - South of Bernal" is continuing to add traffic that was not measured in the survey (for the DEIR).

6. The opening of the Evergreen industrial area and its associated traffic was not included in the survey (for the DEIR). Tully Road and Capitol Expy. will be the only access roads to this area north of The Villages.

7. The mitigation activities for Almaden/Coleman appear to be directing traffic from southbound Almaden Expy. to Santa Teresa Blvd. and thence southward to Coyote Valley via Santa Teresa Blvd. This seems highly implausible, since Almaden Expy. has controlled stoplight timing during rush hours and Santa Teresa Blvd. does not.

8. Access into Coyote Valley via Santa Teresa Blvd. in the evening would be restricted from collection intersections (traffic from Highway 101, Route 85, Santa Teresa Blvd., and Monterey Road) at Cottle & Bernal Roads to a single lane entering Coyote Valley. Neither intersection is listed as an impacted intersection, and the lane reduction of Santa Teresa Blvd. is not listed as critical. Yet Almaden Expy./Coleman Road is listed as an impacted intersection.

Contact Information

Name: Charles Spencer
Address: 6619 Bubblingwell Pl., San Jose, CA 95120-2020
E-mail: CSpencer40@earthlink.net

Please return DEIR comment card during meeting, or
by mail to: Jared Hart, 200 E. Santa Clara Street, San Jose, CA 95113
by fax to: (408) 292-6055
by e-mail to: jared.hart@sanjoseca.gov

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As stated in Section 4.2.2.7, Impacts on Transit Facilities:

The proposed project includes three major transit improvements. These include the construction of a Caltrain Station in the Coyote Valley, a shuttle to the existing LRT station at Santa Teresa, an internal fixed guideway BRT system, and potentially, the expansion of LRT into the valley. The future multi-modal Caltrain Station is proposed to be located south of the newly constructed Monterey Road and Bailey Avenue interchange. Although Caltrain currently runs trains only northbound in the AM and southbound in the PM, VTA is planning to begin operating some contraflow services, which should be fully operational by the time the full CVSP development is completed. It is reasonable to expect that the majority of the increased transit demand will be on the Caltrain system since between approximately 2,000 and 3,000 additional Caltrain riders are projected to be attributable to the proposed project.

Although some transit trips would take the shuttle to the Santa Teresa LRT station, it is not expected that this ridership would require additional trains on the LRT system. Local and express bus services are projected to carry the balance of the projected additional peak hour transit trips. These bus services are expected to carry an additional 500 to 600 riders upon project build-out.

As stated in Section 4.2.5.4, Mitigation for Significant Impacts on Freeway Segments:

MM TRAN-17: Measures that could reduce impacts to freeway segments, although not to a less than significant level primarily consist of transit improvements and enhancements and include: 1) the enhancement of Caltrain service; 2) the extension of LRT lines; and 3) enhanced bus service. These measures would provide options to commuters to Coyote Valley. An enhanced transit system, with a major improvement such as an LRT line extension, would reduce auto usage. The reduction in auto usage would be most noticeable on freeways since most transit trips would originate from outside the Coyote Valley area.

MY COMMENTS:

It is not adequate to plan an entire new section of San Jose without Light Rail.

It is inconceivable that LRT would not be extended to service Coyote Valley. This is probably the most ill-conceived part of the plan. If the LRT of San Jose does not fit in the future expansion of San Jose, then it should be abandoned.

The EIR states that LRT extension to Coyote Valley is not in the current plan. It would only be a “potential” possibility, and only that if other plans leave a “significant impact” on traffic. How bad would the freeway traffic have to be for an LRT extension to Coyote Valley to be considered? If it were to be constructed after traffic became badly congested, how long would the LRT construction take at that point?

If the “fully operational” Caltrain service to Coyote Valley is not expected until project build-out, how much of it could people count on prior to that time, and what mitigation would be needed while no Caltrain or LRT service is available?

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