

# BART subway decisions due in April

Some key design decisions regarding BART's subway path beneath downtown San Jose will be made in the next few months for the massive five-mile tunneling project, which is expected to take at least five years to complete once construction starts.

If design, environmental and funding decisions stay on track, BART construction could commence in 2019.

San Jose Downtown Association has been busy in recent months advocating on behalf of downtown businesses on two primary BART issues:

- Support VTA and City staff recommendations for a single-bore tunnel under Santa Clara Street that would minimize disruption at street level, cost less and take less time to build;
- Advocate for a Business Interruption Fund (BIF) for impacted businesses and properties along the construction area and construction staging zones.

SJDA will host a public meeting, where BART will be the primary topic, on Feb. 9 at The Improv Comedy club at 62 S. Second St., starting at 8 a.m.

At the meeting, VTA staff will provide a BART Silicon Valley Phase II Extension project summary; Councilmember (and VTA Board Member) **Raul Perez** will provide an overview of BART impacts on downtown; and SJDA will share its preliminary research on a BIF program and collect feedback from businesses and residents.

"All impacted business in the construction area are strongly encouraged to attend," said **Nate LeBlanc**, SJDA Business Development Manager. "Just the modernization of utilities along Santa Clara Street will be a significant project alone."

Utilities will need to be moved or upgraded and air vents dug whether VTA and BART opt for the first-of-its-kind-in-the-U.S. single-bore method, with trains coming through downtown one above the other, or the more-familiar twin-bore (side-by-side) method common to the rest of the BART system. Since the twin-bore requires a "cut and cover" approach where the stations are excavated



VTA and city officials are trying to avoid a massive hole in Santa Clara Street between Market and Third streets during BART subway construction.

from street level, disruption of infrastructure would be significantly lessened by the deeper single-bore method.

The twin bore cut-and-cover method requires metal plates temporarily

covering the excavation hole for the station and cross-over track from Market to Third streets. The single bore requires some digging at the station entrances and exits, but the street itself is not dug up.

"It's the difference between an arthroscopic procedure and open-heart surgery," said **Scott Knies**, SJDA executive director.

BART staff has opposed the single-bore recommendation, citing safety concerns about the deeper tunnel and operational issues with their existing twin-bore system.

On Jan. 21, *The Mercury News* published an editorial recommending BART join VTA in committing to a single tunnel. "The main plus for San Jose is that the deeper single tunnel would avoid massive disruption of downtown during five years of construction – no small advantage for a blighted urban core just now catching a wave of market demand," the newspaper opined.

The Federal Transit Administration agreed on Jan. 24 that the single- vs. twin-bore decision needs further study, granting a three-month extension to VTA to refine designs for the different tunneling methods and pushing the decision to April. VTA is paying for the 16-mile extension from the Berryessa Station to Santa Clara, but the application for federal New Starts funding is much stronger with BART's support.

"SJDA believes a Business Interruption Fund is an essential component of any VTA decision to commence the tunneling project," said **Derrick Seaver**, SJDA director of policy and operations. The size of the fund would need to be increased if the twin-bore method is used, and less for the single-bore method, Seaver added.

BIFs have existed in similar transportation projects in Los Angeles and Houston, and VTA established a fund for businesses along Alum Rock Avenue as the delayed Bus Rapid Transit project disrupted access and operations.

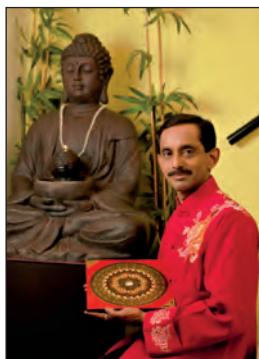
## Do you know the way to feng shui in San Jose?

**S. BS. Surendran** lives in India and is a master at creating harmonious spaces. He is serving as an accredited feng shui consultant on Alterra International's 24-story residential tower proposed at 27 S. First St. SJDA caught up with Surendran by email in between his numerous international speaking engagements:

**This project is in the middle of downtown San Jose's Historic District. Does your consulting include the positioning of the tower itself?**

The science is quite comprehensive and in some aspects holistic, too. The art and science of feng shui takes into account the implication of the surroundings, afflictions if any, road traffic flow which relates to flow of energy (chi). Hence the positioning of the super-structure on the piece of land, orientation of main entry (to tap into the energy/chi), and the shape and set back levels are all addressed.

From the exterior design element point of view, a comprehensive approach takes into consideration the facade, color, corrections if any for afflictions due to adjacent structures, landscaping and appropriate colors for plants and flowers, parking space and entry/exit design, all keeping in mind proper flow of energy.



S. BS. Surendran consults

In ancient times, the prosperity of any township was based on the flora, fauna, land elevation, slopes and flow of water. It was said the flow of water was ushering in prosperity as the direction of flow of water helped the township to prosper with good irrigation, health and business. Akin to this, the flow of traffic in the modern times is similar to flow of water – hence the direction of the road traffic and how it approaches the property play a major role in aiding the prosperity of the specific building.

Hence this property will cover most of the aspects of the metaphysical sciences.

**Is it possible for all of the project's 324 units to be equal positive energy flow, or are some units more energy positive than others?**

The approach to the adaptation of vastu, feng shui and bio energetics is to ensure a complete balanced flow of energy (chi) in and around the property. The energy balancing starts from the land levels, land slopes, bio energetic correction, pyramid science, etc. The approach would be to primarily harmonize the land and the ground level and consequently the entire building. The impact

of the corrections would be such that the entire building and the immediate environment would benefit with positivity. The intention is to balance the flow for it to be beneficial to all the occupants, too.

**Have you worked on any other buildings in the Bay Area?**

In California, I had the privilege to do a few residential homes earlier and a condo, but it was not a comprehensive project and more of a correction of existing land. One interesting work was adapting the metaphysics in an existing renowned Classical India Dance studio space called PAMPA. The dance studio owned by internationally renowned Indian dancer **Mrs. Nirmala Madhava** is one of the oldest training centers in the San Jose area.

**Did you have any general impressions of the positivity of downtown San Jose?**

The street is wide and suits the feng shui for a large building, however the space (Surendran saw it before Local Color occupied it) lacks energy and this will change soon as the project progresses. The downtown street is not negative but lacks energy and vibrancy, however, with new developments looking up, it's going to be game-changing.

**Editor:** Full interview at [sjdowntown.com/sjda-news](http://sjdowntown.com/sjda-news). Surendran's website is [fengshuiserver.com](http://fengshuiserver.com).

## Groundwerx / PBID News



### Groundwerx report

In honor of its 10th anniversary, the Downtown San Jose Property-based Improvement District (PBID) has issued a 16-page report that takes a deep and personal look at Groundwerx, beautification projects and business development activities. The report can be downloaded from [sjdowntown.com/groundwerxpbid](http://sjdowntown.com/groundwerxpbid)

**Ped crossing:** Results from the PBID's 2017 pedestrian count shows a 4.7 percent increase of people on downtown streets compared to 2016.

Conducted in April, the highest pedestrian volumes are Paseo de San Antonio between Market and First streets;

First Street between Santa Clara and San Fernando Street; and Paseo de San Antonio between Third and Fourth streets. SoFA also experienced a significant increase in pedestrian volumes.

The pedestrian count compares April 2017 with counts in August 2016 and December 2016. The increase may be in part due to the popularity of ComicCon and the Spring Style Show last April at the Convention Center.

Data indicates pedestrian volumes downtown are consistent throughout the year, especially on the paseo between Third and Fourth and along First Street from Santa Clara to San Fernando.

The paseo between Market and First shows the greatest change throughout the year, a testament to the busy holiday scene in that location.

One more finding of the latest count is a 10 percent increase in pedestrians aged 31-60.

By using consistent methodology to count in the same eight places, the PBID now has information that covers different seasons, which can help SJDA's advocacy, business development, street life and downtown activation goals.

**San Pedro Squared:** Construction began inside the Market-San Pedro Garage along San Pedro Street to convert parking spaces into four micro-retail spaces.

When the project is completed in the next few months, the shops will showcase the work of local vendors and artisans. The project, known as San Pedro Squared, was proposed in 2015 when it was awarded a Knight Cities Challenge grant. Permits and use agreements for the city-owned garage – and additional fundraising, -- preceded the project construction start.

Follow the project at [sanpedrosquaredsj.com](http://sanpedrosquaredsj.com).

## SJDA News

**Rink record:** Toyota / Kristi Yamaguchi Downtown Ice skating rink enjoyed its best year ever in 2017-18, with 57,594 skaters over the 60-day season.

The strong showing of the past year was due to:

- ◆ A dry December and nearly rain-free season that interrupted only two January dates.
- ◆ U.S. Figure Skating hosted its national event in San Jose Dec. 29-Jan. 7, shining a national spotlight on San Jose, and the impetus for Christmas in the Park to extend an extra week.
- ◆ New title sponsor Toyota teamed with U.S. Figure Skating to offer free Learn to Skate Skatefests on three weekends.
- ◆ A record for the School on Skates program, a sponsored event that provides school groups access to the rink. Thirteen Schools on Skates sessions occurred from eight sponsors, attracting 1,265 skaters mostly in fifth and sixth grades.
- ◆ A staggering of school vacation schedules that fell over a three-week period rather than the normal two weeks of winter break.
- ◆ Two top attendance days ever on Dec. 23 and Dec. 24, attracting more than 2,000 skaters each day.

Downtown Ice skating returns Nov. 16 for its 15th holiday season in the Circle of Palms and 25th season overall.



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## From the Archives

**10 years ago – February 2008** – A ruptured gas line led to a structure fire and ultimate demolition of the 1867 Porter Stock building at 89 S. First St. The two-story, 19,000-square-foot building had recently undergone renovation and seismic retrofitting, but was vacant at the time.

**15 years ago – February 2003** – Ray O'Flaherty opened his namesake Irish pub in San Pedro Square, which features a 20-foot-wide folding door opening onto San Pedro Street.

**20 years ago – February 1998** – The newly renamed San Jose Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce moved out of their building at Market and Paseo de San Antonio into the Valley Title building at South First and San Carlos streets. The chamber's paseo building was razed to make way for the Fairmont Annex.

**25 years ago – February 1993** – In preparation for the arena opening, the city gave Santa Clara Street a makeover, ensuring a pleasant walk for arena-goers who parked in the downtown core.

### Next SJDA meeting

**BART discussion:** The next public meeting of the San Downtown Association will be Feb. 9 at 8 a.m. at the Improv Comedy Club. RSVP at [sjdarsvp@sjdowntown.com](mailto:sjdarsvp@sjdowntown.com).

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## Business News

**Change of scenery:** Heroes Martial Arts is settling into a new location at 450 S. First St., across the street from its previous location. Improvements include two rooms of mats, showers, separate changing rooms, a kitchen, air conditioning and owner Alan "Gumby" Marques gets his own office. The waiting area is smaller, but Marques encourages students waiting for their class to visit neighboring SoFA businesses.

"While our world-famous competition team gears up for another season, Heroes also welcomes students new to the art with our fundamentals program and our growing kids program," Marques said. Class information is at [heroesma.com](http://heroesma.com).

### Cookies on the ground:

Nox Cookie Bar owner Nathan Pendleton has put a stake in the ground downtown at 151 S. Second St. Previously, seven flavors of Nox cookies were ordered online and then delivered within a 5-mile radius of downtown. Go to the store or order through [noxcookiebar.com](http://noxcookiebar.com).



Nox owner Nathan Pendleton.

**New to SoFA Market:** Vietnoms brings modern versions of classic and flavorful Vietnamese dishes Bun Thit Nuong (vermicelli bowls) and Com Tam (rice plates) to SoFA Market, 387 S. First St. Add fried egg, tamarind shrimp, shredded pork skins ("Tastiest thing you'll ever eat that looks like rubber bands," says [vietnoms.com](http://vietnoms.com)) and sugarcane shrimp patty to protein bases of lemongrass pork and chicken, red hot beef and stir-fried tofu.



## At the Convention Center

- Feb. 3 – Luz AI Promotions Public Dance (18,000)
- Feb. 10 – Home Show (4,500) [homeshowsanjose.com](http://homeshowsanjose.com)
- Feb. 19 – President's Day (volleyball) Tournament (3,200) [ncva.com](http://ncva.com)
- Feb. 23 – Watermark (5,500) [watermarkconferenceforwomen.org](http://watermarkconferenceforwomen.org)
- March 1 – SPIE Advanced Lithography (3,385) [spie.org](http://spie.org) (estimated attendance)

## Downtown News

**Plaza to permanent housing:** The 47-room Plaza Hotel opened in January to homeless awaiting more permanent housing.

Built in 1961, the Plaza has been closed the past eight years. The City of San Jose used \$1.8 million in grant funds to get the hotel back into shape for interim housing. The Plaza will serve as a stop-gap housing solution for the homeless for five years while other transitional housing projects are built.

In its first month, the Plaza took in about 10 people per week. As word of the opening got out on the streets, several homeless walked up, inquired and were directed to local agencies that could help assist with the application process. The rooms can accommodate one person, so the Plaza should be full in another month.

The average stay should be between three and six months, according to Abode Services, which manages the facility. Abode, which also manages the Donner Lofts at Fourth and St. John streets, has taken learnings from that location and applied them to the Plaza, including 24-hour security and staffing.

Health Trust is managing the application process. All residents are San Jose-based.

**TEC designation for future tech center:** Gaining San Jose City Council approval to rezone their property, TMG Partners and Valley Oak Partners unveiled plans for their 1 million-square-foot office complex on the west side of downtown.

The 5.49-acre site at 440 W. Julian St., bounded between Autumn Parkway and North Autumn Street and railroad tracks to the north, would include three buildings of 157,000 square feet, 367,000 square feet and 499,000 square feet. Each building would be six stories tall, with floor plates ranging from 27,000 to 90,000 square feet.

The buildings would each have four floors of underground parking, 15-foot ceiling heights and private terraces on every floor. The entire project could host up to 5,000 employees, who would have easy access to Diridon Station.

The project is adjacent to Google's proposed mega-complex of 6 to 8 million square feet (15,000 to 20,000 workers). Trammell Crow also has approval for another 1 million square foot mixed-use complex of office, residential and retail, which would be located on the former San Jose Water Co. site off Santa Clara Street at Highway 87.

In January, the City Council changed the zoning designation for the property from Light and Heavy Industrial to

Transit Employment Center (TEC), which conforms to the city's General Plan designation for the property. The developers' next move is to seek approval of a permit to develop the site.



Six-story offices proposed for westside.

The announced total 10 million square feet of new office and 25,000-30,000 workers has prompted other development proposals on the west side of downtown:

- ◆ Two residential buildings of 10 and 11 stories high, including up to 124 units, have been designed by Anderson Architects for a group of Bay Area investors, to be built on Lorraine Street near South Montgomery Street. One of the buildings, known as Montgomery 7, appears to be ahead of the other in planning.
- ◆ Dallas-based Kade Development acquired a property at 292 Stockton St. for \$4 million that previously belonged to the Successor Agency to the Redevelopment Agency. Kade reportedly intends to build a nine- or 10-story hotel of 220 rooms. The Redevelopment Agency paid \$1.5 million for the property in 2009.

## DOWNTOWN DIMENSION

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