

## **APPENDIX 5-B, ATTACHMENT D: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE OUTREACH, SEPTEMBER 2021**

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE OUTREACH, SEPTEMBER 2021

### Overview

In September 2021, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) conducted a total of 26 virtual meetings (Figure 1) with Implementing Partners, Community Organizations, and Interested Parties and Other Stakeholders in eight communities within the San Jose to Merced Project Section, including Santa Clara/North San Jose, San Jose Diridon, Gardner/North Willow Glen, Guadalupe/Washington/Tamien/Alma/Almaden, South San Jose, Morgan Hill, Gilroy, and San Joaquin Valley, where the San Jose to Merced Project Section Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) analysis had indicated that low-income populations and minority populations may be subject to disproportionately high and adverse effects (DHAE) from the project alternatives. A schedule of these meetings is provided in Attachment D1, Schedule of September 2021 Meetings. Generally, the objectives of these meetings were to:

- Explain the updated environmental justice analysis for the San Jose to Merced Project Section EIR/EIS, including updated and new mitigations, consideration of benefits, and potential community improvements
- Share preliminary conclusions related to the updated environmental justice analysis
- Gain feedback on the updated environmental justice analysis, preliminary conclusions, and potential community improvements.

### Stakeholders Engaged

The Authority classified stakeholders engaged into three general categories: (1) Implementing Partners, (2) Community Stakeholders, and (3) Interested Parties and Other Stakeholders, based on the level of anticipated feedback and role in implementing the potential community improvements, described by community as follows:

- *Implementing Partners:* The Authority met one-on-one and in small groups with eight entities (below) able to partner with the Authority on specific potential community improvement implementation. Feedback from Partners was anticipated to be focused on updated potential community improvements.
  1. City of Santa Clara
  2. City of San Jose
  3. San Jose Unified School District
  4. City of Morgan Hill
  5. Morgan Hill Unified School District
  6. City of Gilroy
  7. Gilroy Unified School District
  8. Los Banos Unified School District
- *Community Stakeholders:* The Authority scheduled eight virtual community forums to meet with community members, groups, and representatives (below) experiencing project DHAEs and who had interest in how mitigation, benefits, and improvements are applied based on updated environmental justice analysis and conclusions. Implementing Partners (above), organizations representing multiple communities, and Interested Parties and Other Stakeholders (below) were invited to their respective community meeting(s). All meetings were conducted with either Spanish and/or Vietnamese interpretation and closed captioning accommodations. Feedback from community stakeholders was focused on the list of potential community improvements. The following groups were invited to the community forums; only some of the invitees attended. As compared to Phase One, when all community groups listed below actively participated in meetings and provided feedback, only a few of those groups attended meetings in Phase Three.

*Santa Clara/North San Jose*

1. Santa Clara Unified School District
2. Charities Housing/HomeSafe
3. Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR)
4. Muslim Community Association (MCA)
5. Next Door Solutions
6. South Bay Islamic Association (SBIA)

*San Jose Diridon*

7. Delmas Park Neighborhood Association
8. Minority Business Consortium
9. PATH
10. Silicon Valley De-Bug
11. SIREN

*Gardner*

12. San Jose Word of Faith Christian Center
13. Gardner Elementary School
14. Gardner Neighborhood Association
15. GoKids
16. Danny Garza, Community Leader

*Guadalupe Washington*

17. Guadalupe Washington Neighborhood Association
18. Guadalupe Washington Neighborhood Safety Coalition
19. Washington Elementary School
20. Sacred Heart Nativity Middle School and Parish
21. Brett Bymaster, Community Leader
22. Madre a Madre
23. Biblioteca Latinoamericana

*South San Jose*

24. East Side Union High School District
25. Franklin McKinley School District
26. Better Tomorrow, San Jose
27. Edenvale Library
28. ECOPIC Neighborhood Action Coalition
29. Family & Children Services of Santa Clara County
30. PARS Equality Center
31. Roundtable Neighborhood Association
32. Vietnamese American Roundtable
33. Vietnamese Voluntary Organization

*Morgan Hill*

34. Coordinated Advocacy & Resources for Education (CARE)
35. Morgan Hill Unified School District Community
36. Voices Charter School

*Gilroy*

37. CARAS South County
38. Gilroy Prep School (elementary)
39. South Valley Middle School
40. Gilroy High School
41. Alexander Station

*San Joaquin Valley*

42. Los Banos Community Center
43. Volta Elementary School

*Cross Community*

44. HomeFirst
45. Silicon Valley Rising
46. Refugee and Immigrant Forum

- *Interested Parties and Other Stakeholders:* The Authority met one-on-one and in small groups with entities (below) who have direct or representative interest in potential community improvements or other improvements considered but not necessarily a partnership role. Similar to Partners, feedback from these entities was anticipated to be focused on updated potential community improvements, also considering their feedback in Phase Two on the list of other improvements considered.

*San Jose Diridon*

1. African American Community Services Agency (AACSA)

*Guadalupe Washington*

2. Rocketship Elementary School – Mateo Sheedy

*South San Jose*

3. Oak Grove School District

*Gilroy*

4. Rebekah Children's Services

*Cross Community*

5. Center for Employment Training (CET)
6. Gavilan College
7. Mission College
8. San Jose City College
9. Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing
10. Santa Clara County, Parks and Recreation
11. Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)
12. Congressmember Zoe Lofgren, 19th District
13. Councilmember Raul Peralez, District 6

## Communication, Outreach Materials, and Presentation

In mid-summer 2021, the Authority initiated Phase Three with several rounds of email communications to environmental justice stakeholders (described above) regarding the September 2021 outreach effort. These communications included save-the-date flyers, accommodations surveys, and proposed content to be presented. On September 3, 2021, all environmental justice stakeholders received a comprehensive packet of materials related to the updated environmental justice analysis specific to their community via a unique website link, including information illustrated in [Figure 1](#) (see Attachment D2, Copy of Outreach Materials Distributed, for a copy of the materials). The Authority requested stakeholders review the materials and provide feedback via electronic survey, letter, or other written form by October 1, 2021. All materials were translated into Spanish and/or Vietnamese and were ADA compliant.

- *Community Survey.* This survey contains a series of questions about stakeholder views on project effects, direct mitigation, project benefits, the offsetting value of project benefits and community improvement impacts, and preliminary conclusions of the updated environmental justice analysis.
- *Environmental Justice Analysis Process Summary.* This summary included a glossary of key terms and an environmental justice process graphic and description.
- *Summary of Updates to the EIR/EIS Environmental Justice Analysis.* This summary included information about the environmental justice analysis, mitigation, project benefits, and potential community improvements. The list of community improvements included potential improvements identified by the Authority to advance and other improvements the Authority had considered prior to the updated analysis.
- *Environmental Justice Community Summary.* This summary included a summary of project effects on environmental justice populations, evaluation of project benefits and potential community improvements, preliminary conclusions, and a community study area visual.
- *Meeting Agenda and Presentation.* The Authority presented on the following topics at each meeting, with the goal of providing detailed explanation and clarification on the outreach materials provided:
  - Environmental Justice Requirements
  - Environmental Justice Analysis Process
  - Updated Environmental Justice Analysis
  - Community Effects Review
  - Community Survey
  - Next Steps

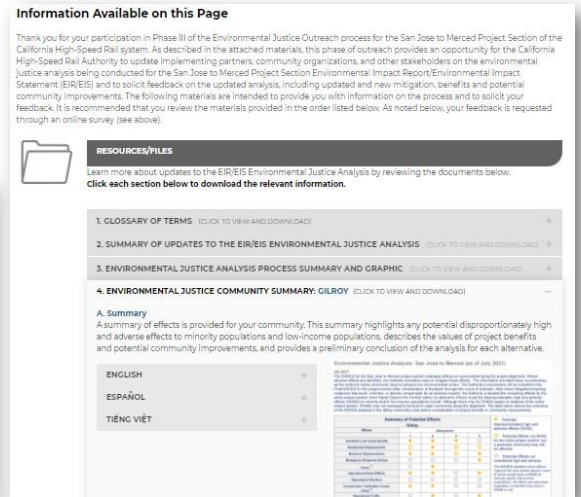
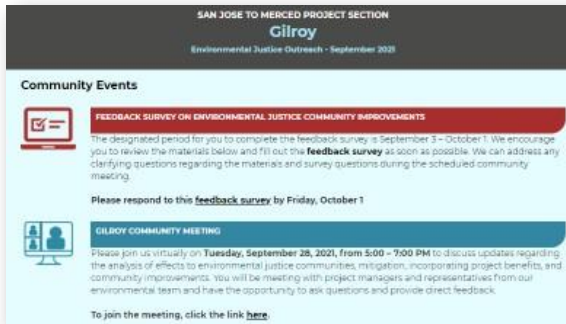
A PowerPoint presentation for each meeting was uploaded to the respective community website after each meeting.

Figure 1

# HOW TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK

MEET HSR NORCAL WEBSITE

- Using the link: <https://www.meethsrnorcal.com/jm/environmental-justice-gilroy-2021-85823529172.html>
- Entering this password: HSR\_EJ2021



## Community Feedback Results and Documentation

The Authority catalogued all feedback that environmental justice stakeholders provided during the meetings, through the community survey, and by other written means. A synthesis of Phase Three feedback follows.

**Feedback Results.** Phase Three outreach activities concluded in late September 2021, and on October 1, 2021, the Authority received feedback responses as follows:

- Three comment letters from the City of San Jose, the City of Morgan Hill, and Gilroy Unified School District (see Attachment D3, Comments Submitted During September 2021 Outreach Period).
- 24 feedback responses via the electronic survey (raw data and synthesized details are provided in Attachment D4, Survey Results and Survey Forms Submitted):
  - 19 from representatives/agencies
  - 5 from individuals

The following is a high-level summary of key themes from the community feedback.

- *Impacts of concern.*
  - Impacts of concern were rated on a 5-point scale (not concerned, slightly concerned, somewhat concerned, moderately concerned, very concerned).
  - Project impacts were on average identified in the survey as being moderately concerning (construction and operational traffic, bus transit delay, residential displacements, emergency vehicle response delays, operational noise), and a few project impacts were on average identified as being somewhat concerning (visual aesthetics, commercial displacements, and partial acquisition of park/play areas).
    - The highest rated impact of concern was traffic delay during construction.

- The lowest rated impact of concern was visual aesthetics (which was still 3.1 on a 5-point scale).
- *Value of project benefits.*
  - Benefits were rated on a 5-point scale (not beneficial, slightly beneficial, somewhat beneficial, moderately beneficial, very beneficial).
  - On average, project benefits were seen as moderately beneficial for most highlighted benefits in the survey (train travel; access to jobs, goods, and services; integration with transit; reduction of highway traffic; upgrades to railroad safety and signaling systems; reduced air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions; construction and operational spending and employment; and support for transit-oriented development near stations), with one benefit (reduced need for airport and highway expansion) rated as somewhat beneficial.
    - The highest rated benefits were reduced air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
    - The lowest rated benefit was the reduced need for airport and highway expansion (which was still 3.2 on a 5-point scale).
- *Concurrence with environmental justice conclusions regarding DHAEs that were presented.*
  - After application of mitigation only, slightly more respondents agreed than disagreed, but half neither agreed nor disagreed, with the preliminary conclusions concerning DHAEs presented in the updated EIR/EIS analysis. One respondent elaborated on their position:
    - The Gilroy Unified School District stated that the safety risks at crossings due to the high speed of the train remain disproportionately high and adverse for students and elderly community members even after application of the quad gates, other project safety measures, and site-specific traffic mitigation measures. The district supported the site-specific traffic mitigation measures in and of themselves, though they did not fully address the safety issues for the schools without the potential pedestrian/bike overcrossing at IOOF Avenue.
  - After application of mitigation, benefits, and community improvements, more respondents agreed than disagreed with the preliminary conclusions concerning DHAEs presented in the updated EIR/EIS analysis, but many neither agreed nor disagreed or skipped the question. Several respondents elaborated on their positions:
    - The City of Morgan Hill stated that Alternative 4 will have safety impacts on emergency vehicle response times caused by traffic delay or road closures, that the noise treatments for residences along U.S. Highway (US) 101 would not help offset noise effects along the downtown alignment of Alternative 4, and that the proposed community benefits are not addressing the main concerns the community has.
    - The City of San Jose concurred with the community noise improvements for the four communities in San Jose and requested the Authority work with existing community organizations to do outreach to the most disadvantaged residents to assist them in applying for and receiving noise insulation improvements.
    - The City of San Jose stated that they think the DHAEs related to noise, traffic, and emergency vehicle response delays did not fully address cumulative effects, which they opined could only be adequately addressed through grade separations at the five at-grade crossings in San Jose.
- *Concurrence on traffic impacts addressed by traffic mitigation.*

- After application of site-specific traffic mitigation only, approximately half of the respondents disagreed, a few agreed, and the rest neither agreed nor disagreed with the impact conclusions presented in the updated EIR/EIS analysis.
  - The City of Morgan Hill specifically questioned why no community improvements were proposed for traffic and disagreed that traffic effects would be offset by project transportation benefits.
  - Morgan Hill Unified School District said that the addition of high-speed rail (HSR) trains will increase school bus travel times.
  - The City of Gilroy noted that additional trains will create a significant amount of gate-down time.
- *Agreement with the potential list of community improvements or other improvements proposed.*
  - Twelve respondents proposed different community improvements than the ones on the potential lists. One respondent elaborated on the reason they disagreed with the potential improvement and why their proposed improvement would best serve their community's interest:
    - Oak Grove School District in San Jose asserted that an improvement to their recreational facilities, an important community hub, would be of greater and longer-term benefit to the school community and the public in that area than the proposed noise treatments at individual residences.
  - A summary of the alternative community improvements proposed by community members or agencies and why they were suggested is provided in Table 1.
- *Consistent comments in specific geographic areas.*
  - In San Jose, Morgan Hill, and Gilroy, noise, traffic, and emergency response effects were most commonly the focus of concern for comments expressing opinions that more should be done than is currently being proposed.
  - In Washington/Guadalupe, there was a consistent concern about the project's effect on homeless encampments (Tamien/State Route 87). More specifically, concerns were expressed by Sacred Heart, the Office of Supportive Housing, and in the community meeting, and support was expressed for the Authority partnering with service agencies in regard to potential displacement.
- *Other general comments on implementation of community improvements.*
  - One community organization urged the Authority to think about who is getting hurt the most when projects like this take place. This same organization urged the Authority to consider actionable/sustainable improvements that can be made to show that the Authority understands and listens to what the community actually wants.
  - The City of Gilroy stated they would like to see some of these improvements implemented sooner, prior to construction of the HSR facilities.
- *Feedback on the Authority's outreach/engagement process.*
  - Most respondents thought the survey was a helpful tool in providing feedback for the September 2021 outreach.
  - Some respondents expressed appreciation for the Authority's efforts in reaching out concerning the environmental analysis and community improvements.
  - The City of Santa Clara expressed concern that the methodology for considering community improvements appeared to have changed since mid-2020 and that many of the City's suggestions appeared to not be proposed now due to cost concerns, which may mean the City's prior efforts in developing information about potential community improvements was disregarded.



**Documentation.** The Authority produced an After-Action Report for the 26 meetings conducted in Phase Three, documenting the date and time of each meeting, participants, key points of concern, any preliminary feedback to directed questions, a description of questions and responses, and any next steps and follow-up actions. Copies of the After-Action Reports are included in Attachment D5, After-Action Reports for September 2021 Meetings.

**Table 1 Community Improvements Suggested During September 2021 Outreach**

Respondent Name	Community	Improvement Description	Reasons Proposed	Reasons Cited As Better Addressing Concerns in the Community
Center for Employment Training (CET)	Multiple	The Authority should partner with local nonprofits and community-serving agencies in filling the construction and operations jobs that this project will create.	This would support the economic development of the local community and increase support for the project.	N/A
Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing Sacred Heart Washington/Guadalupe Community Meeting (previous input from other community service organizations)	Multiple (but especially San Jose in Washington, Guadalupe, Tamien, and South San Jose)	Provide flexible financial assistance for people experiencing homelessness to assist with their relocation.	People experiencing homelessness will be displaced by the proposed project, especially at areas with high concentration of homeless encampments along SR 87 (adjacent to Gardner/North Willow Glen, Washington, Guadalupe) and in South San Jose but also likely elsewhere.	Santa Clara County has a housing crisis, which is a priority issue for the County to address.
City of Santa Clara	Santa Clara	Multimodal improvements such as suggested by the City of Santa Clara DPW and listed as "Other Improvements Considered": El Camino and Benton Street Safety Improvements; El Camino Real Class IV Bikeway; Pedestrian safety improvements (included sidewalk gap closure and pothole repair), Streetscape Improvements, Newhall Street Bicycle/Pedestrian Crossing.	These improvements will improve quality of life for residents and stakeholders in the affected area.	The local improvements would help community residents more readily and safely access Caltrain and HSR in the future, and current congestion levels prevent them doing this more readily.

Respondent Name	Community	Improvement Description	Reasons Proposed	Reasons Cited As Better Addressing Concerns in the Community
African American Community Services Association (AACSA)	San Jose Diridon	Reestablish the Inez Jackson Library at the AACSA community center in San Jose.	When significant changes are made to communities, underserved populations are hit the hardest and are the slowest to recover. Many will be affected throughout the high-speed rail development process, so improving the Inez Jackson Library at the very least will show we care and understand the needs of our community. The library could provide a "quiet space" for community members to help offset noise effects from existing noise and from the train.	Reestablishment of the Inez Jackson Library is necessary because it serves our at-risk populations. I just want to stress again the importance of reestablishing the Inez Jackson Library. Many youth programs have operated out of that location, and it plays a significant role in their development and gives parents a hub to bring their children.
City San Jose	San Jose Diridon, Washington/Guadalupe, South San Jose	The Authority should negotiate an agreement with Caltrain to not sound horns at the Diridon, Tamien, Capitol, and Blossom Hill Caltrain Stations.	Reducing noise effects	N/A
City San Jose	San Jose Diridon	Grade separation at Auzerais separately or through DISC. The Authority should commit to participate in and proportionally fund DISC.	Reduce noise, traffic, and safety (including emergency vehicle response) effects on community.	Grade separation would remove noise effects associated with increased at-grade horn sounding at Auzerais.
City San Jose	Gardner/North Willow Glen	Grade separation at West Virginia separately or through DISC. The Authority should commit to participate in and proportionally fund DISC.	Reduce noise, traffic, and safety (including emergency vehicle response) effects on community.	Grade separation would remove noise effects associated with increased at-grade horn sounding at West Virginia.
City San Jose	Gardner/North Willow Glen	Fuller Park/Fuller Avenue recreational amenities	Would offset community concerns, build trust, and alignment with commitments from the City to ensure that visual conditions are no worse, and ideally are better than today, even with train volume increase. Community highly concerned with Fuller Park and does not agree to EIR/EIS analysis of effects on Fuller Park.	N/A

Respondent Name	Community	Improvement Description	Reasons Proposed	Reasons Cited As Better Addressing Concerns in the Community
City San Jose	Gardner/North Willow Glen	The Authority should coordinate Gardner Elementary School noise improvements with VTA's sound wall project nearby.	Help offset noise effects on community.	N/A
Rocketship	Washington, Guadalupe, Tamien, Alma, Almaden	Improvements at/adjacent to Rocketship Matteo Sheedy School: 1. New playground or playground enhancements. 2. Building repairs such as new roof or repairs in order to provide a proper space for the students and community. 3. New PA system. 4. Building and community aesthetics (e.g., trees, new grass, or turf). 5. Pedestrian and traffic safety remedies, such as "STOP AHEAD" painted on Virginia before the stop sign, more School Zone signs, speed bump, etc.	1. Provide community with better experience during and after school hours. 2. Mitigate some of the noise problems that will arise during construction and after with the increase of traffic. 3. Improve community aesthetics.	N/A
Individual	Washington, Guadalupe, Tamien, Alma, Almaden	Fund murals by local artists for any project noise walls or structures with paintable surfaces.	To reduce vandalism and potential violence due to gang graffiti. Guadalupe Washington is a gang hot spot in San Jose, classified as such by the City government. Any blank walls (without murals) will get vandalized. Please consider paying for wall art by LOCAL muralists. I emphasize local because the mural also needs to be respected by the residents and gangs, so it doesn't get vandalized.	N/A
City of San Jose	South San Jose	Grade separations at Skyway, Branham, Chynoweth.	Reduce noise, traffic, safety (including emergency vehicle response), and quality of life effects on community.	Pedestrian/bike overcrossings help to address pedestrian/bike safety but do not address traffic delays, horn sounding, or emergency vehicle delays due to increased gate-down times.

Respondent Name	Community	Improvement Description	Reasons Proposed	Reasons Cited As Better Addressing Concerns in the Community
City of San Jose	South San Jose	Allow for funding of pedestrian/bike overcrossings at Skyway, Branham, Chynoweth to be used for grade separation projects.	Reduce noise, traffic, safety (including emergency vehicle response), and quality of life effects on community.	Pedestrian/bike overcrossings help to address pedestrian/bike safety but do not address traffic delays, horn sounding, or emergency vehicle delays due to increased gate-down times.
Oak Grove School District	South San Jose	Caroline Davis Intermediate School all weather turf and track.	Caroline Davis Intermediate School provides green open space for the community in the area and not just students. School serves the entire South San Jose environmental justice community area assessed by the Authority. Extensive gathering space before and during COVID-19 emergency shows importance of space to community.	The new track would allow free public access to a community exercise venue and gathering space, which increases community cohesion and connection. Nearly all residences with intermediate age children have them attend Caroline Davis, so the improvement touches most residents through students as well as through community use of the space. Creates sense of community. While Authority method of doing "like for like" is logical, the Authority should consider improvements more broadly from the perspective of value to the community overall.
City of Morgan Hill	Morgan Hill	The Authority should fund a 30% design for grade separations at Tilton Avenue, East Dunne Avenue, and Tennant Avenue.	Impacts on public safety, emergency vehicle response times, circulation impacts, and quality of life.	Circulation and safety are the primary concerns in the community. Grade separations would alleviate this concern.
City of Morgan Hill	Morgan Hill	The Authority should fund a 30% design for a master plan of the pedestrian underpass and train station.	Impacts on public safety, circulation impacts, and access.	N/A
City of Morgan Hill	Morgan Hill	Install "purple pipe" for recycled water along Tennant Ave.	To support water conservation.	N/A

Respondent Name	Community	Improvement Description	Reasons Proposed	Reasons Cited As Better Addressing Concerns in the Community
City of Morgan Hill	Morgan Hill	Install telecommunication conduits to provide internet access to those within the environmental justice community along Tennant Ave.	To provide internet access to environmental justice community.	N/A
Morgan Hill Unified School District	Morgan Hill	School bus route study in Morgan Hill.	Identify the impacts and suggest routing alternatives/bus crossings to minimize the impact on student transit times.	Mitigate the potential negative impact to school bus transit as a result of Alternatives 1-4.
Gilroy Unified School District	Gilroy	The Authority should select Alternative 4 but should fund ALL potential community improvements for Gilroy.	To mitigate impacts of Alternative 4 on the disadvantaged communities.	N/A
Rebekah Children's Services	Gilroy	New secure gate and fence at the RCS facility in Gilroy.	Would improve facility safety since safety is one of the residual effects of Alternative 4 in Gilroy.	N/A

AACSA = African American Community Services Agency  
 Authority = California High-Speed Rail Authority  
 DISC = Diridon Station Integrated Concept  
 DPW = Department of Public Works  
 HSR = high-speed rail  
 N/A = not applicable  
 PA = public address  
 RCS = Rebekah Children's Services  
 SR = State Route  
 VTA = (Santa Clara) Valley Transportation Authority