

The Honorable Sam Liccardo, Mayor of San José  
Members of the Council, City of San José  
200 East Santa Clara Street  
San José, CA 95113

via email, sent 6/19/17

re: June 20, 2017 Council Agenda, Item 4.1: Google at Diridon Station.

Dear Mayor Liccardo and Councilmembers,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed Google campus at Diridon Station. This can be amazing! It sounds like it will be an ideal project for the area – one that will benefit from, and will benefit, all the existing and planned transportation infrastructure serving the area!

As noted in the June 16th memo by Mayor Liccardo and Councilmembers Carrasco, Davis, Peralez, and Arenas, in 2014 the City worked with “surrounding neighborhoods and a diverse set of community stakeholders” to help integrate the neighborhood with the “major transportation investments on the horizon—including BART, High Speed Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and an electrified CalTrain”.

I am writing to remind you that the Diridon Station Area transportation infrastructure also includes the Los Gatos Creek Trail. This trail runs for a dozen miles and comes within a few blocks of the Diridon Station before the creek is lost in a culvert. In 2014, when the City Council accepted the Diridon Station Area Plan, it agreed that, when the area was to be redeveloped, it would consider the “day-lighting” of the creek (the restoration of a more natural creek channel) and the extension of the off-road Los Gatos Creek Trail. (The City Council “affirm[ed] that the language in the Plan 2-103 relating to day-lighting of Los Gatos Creek remains in place for any funding opportunities that may arise.” – see June 17, 2014, Synopsis: <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/32924> )

As I wrote back in June 10, 2014,

“The Los Gatos Creek flows from the Santa Cruz Mountains, through the project area, and on to its confluence with the Guadalupe and thence to the Bay, lined much of the way with a very popular off-road trail system. Roughly half a century ago, when city planners thought that cars were king and the environment was to be ignored, the City of San José did an injustice to the Los Gatos Creek here by burying it in a culvert. We now have an opportunity to right that past wrong. But if we do not seize this opportunity, the Los Gatos Creek will likely remain entombed in its culvert for another half century. ... Besides all the environmental advantages of freeing the creek from the culvert, this can also help with the region’s transportation issues. By moving pedestrians and cyclists to the off-road trail, there is reduced congestion at the signalized intersections and so vehicles can move more freely. Additionally, by providing a safer way for folks to reach the Diridon Station Area, more would be willing to walk or cycle which further reduces the traffic impacts.”

The Google campus will be an exciting addition to the Diridon Station Area and to all of San José! It also provides an ideal opportunity for us to restore the nearby Los Gatos Creek habitat to a far more natural condition (by any of several possible alternatives), and also to provide for safe off-road pedestrian and non-motorized transportation to the campus and to the transportation hub.

I would welcome an opportunity to discuss the technical details with the appropriate planners.

Thank you,

~Larry Ames

(appointed by Zoe Lofgren to the Los Gatos Creek Streamside Park Committee, 1984)

cc: SJ Parks, Recreation & N'hood Services (PRNS): Dir. Angel Rios, Matt Cano, Yves Zsutty  
Diridon Good Neighbors Committee  
District 6 Neighborhood Leaders Group (D6NLG)  
Adina Levin at Friends of CalTrain  
SJ Riparian Advocates  
Alice Kaufman, Committee for Green Foothills  
Save Our Trails