

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Valley Link Project Feasibility Report

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Discussion

DISCUSSION:

SUMMARY:

The Tri-Valley-San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority (Authority) was created under AB 758 (2017) and is tasked with the mission:

“to plan and help deliver a cost-effective connection from the San Joaquin Valley to the Bay Area Rapid Transit District’s rapid transit system and the Altamont Corridor Express in the Tri-Valley, to address regional economic and transportation changes.” (Section 2 of AB 758)

AB 758 requires that a Project Feasibility Report be completed by July 1, 2019. On June 7, 2019, the Authority posted the Draft Feasibility Report to their website. On June 12, the Authority took action to accept the Draft Report and open a public comment period until July 31. Following the public comment period, the Board anticipates taking further action to approve the Final Project Feasibility Report addressing the comments.

The Project Feasibility Report includes the following elements as required by AB 758:

- 1** Recommendations for expediting the development of cost-effective and responsive connectivity between BART and ACE rail systems in the Tri-Valley.
- 2** The identification of a preferred entity or entities to deliver transit connectivity, including the role each entity will play in planning, designing, financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, and the leasing, developing of land, facilities or equipment necessary to delivery transit connectivity.
- 3** A funding plan describing any grants, loans, allocations, fund transfers, or awards of local, regional, state, federal, or private funds that are proposed to be made available for achieving transit connectivity.
- 4** A description of any plan to finance the development of transit connectivity, including a description of any revenue source or sources to be pledged for financing, the duration of time to complete the financing, and the estimated total cost of financing.
- 5** A proposed schedule for completion of transit connectivity.
- 6** Preliminary design for the project or projects to complete transit connectivity, including the identification of right-f-way, routes, stations, equipment, and any other facilities necessary to achieve transit connectivity.

Attachment A provides the Executive Summary of the Project Feasibility Report. The full report is available at <https://www.valleylinkrail.com>.

BACKGROUND:

In July 2018, the Authority approved the project concept “Valley Link,” a seamless rail transit connection to the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station in the Tri-Valley area. Phase I would include stops in Mountain House, Tracy, River Islands, and North Lathrop, with a future Phase II stop in downtown Stockton. The service would operate from San Joaquin County every 24 minutes during peak period (meeting every other BART train) and every 60 minutes off-peak (meeting every 4th BART train). Travel time is expected to be 47 minutes from Mountain House to Dublin/Pleasanton BART, which is competitive with the automobile during peak congestion.



Source: Valley Link Project Feasibility Report

The Authority is governed by a Board of Directors composed of 15 members, 7 of whom represent San Joaquin County jurisdictions:

- Vice Chair Veronica Vargas (Mayor Pro Tem, City of Tracy)
- Boardmember Paul Akinjo (Councilmember, City of Lathrop)
- Boardmember Bob Elliott (Supervisor, County of San Joaquin)*
- Boardmember Sol Jobrack (Councilmember, City of Stockton)*
- Boardmember Debby Moorhead (Vice Mayor, City of Manteca)
- Boardmember Bernice Tingle (Director, Mountain House)
- Boardmember Leo Zuber (Commissioner, ACE)*

* Denotes members of the SJCOG Board of Directors

SJCOG staff served on the Technical Advisory Committee and Executive Steering Committee for the project. Prior to the June 12 Authority meeting, SJCOG expressed concern that the process for public comment had not been clearly articulated. Now that it is clarified that public comments will be accepted until July 31, SJCOG will thoroughly review the Feasibility Report and provide comments.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an information item; no action is requested.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None at this time.

NEXT STEPS:

- SJCOG will provide comments, continue to coordinate with the Authority and bring any future funding requests before the Board for consideration.

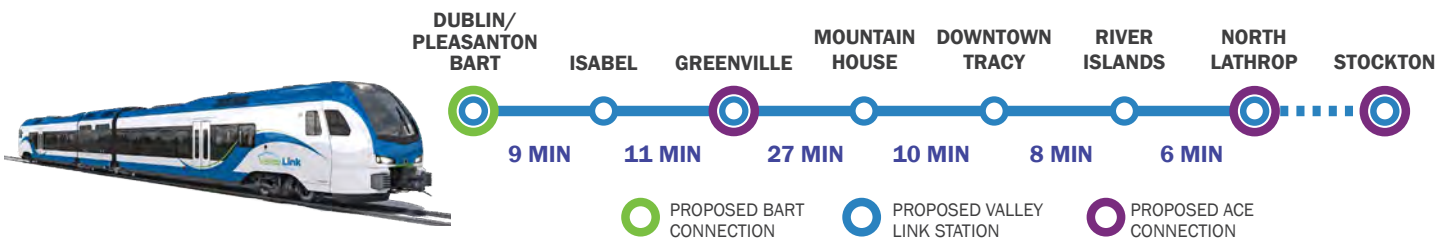
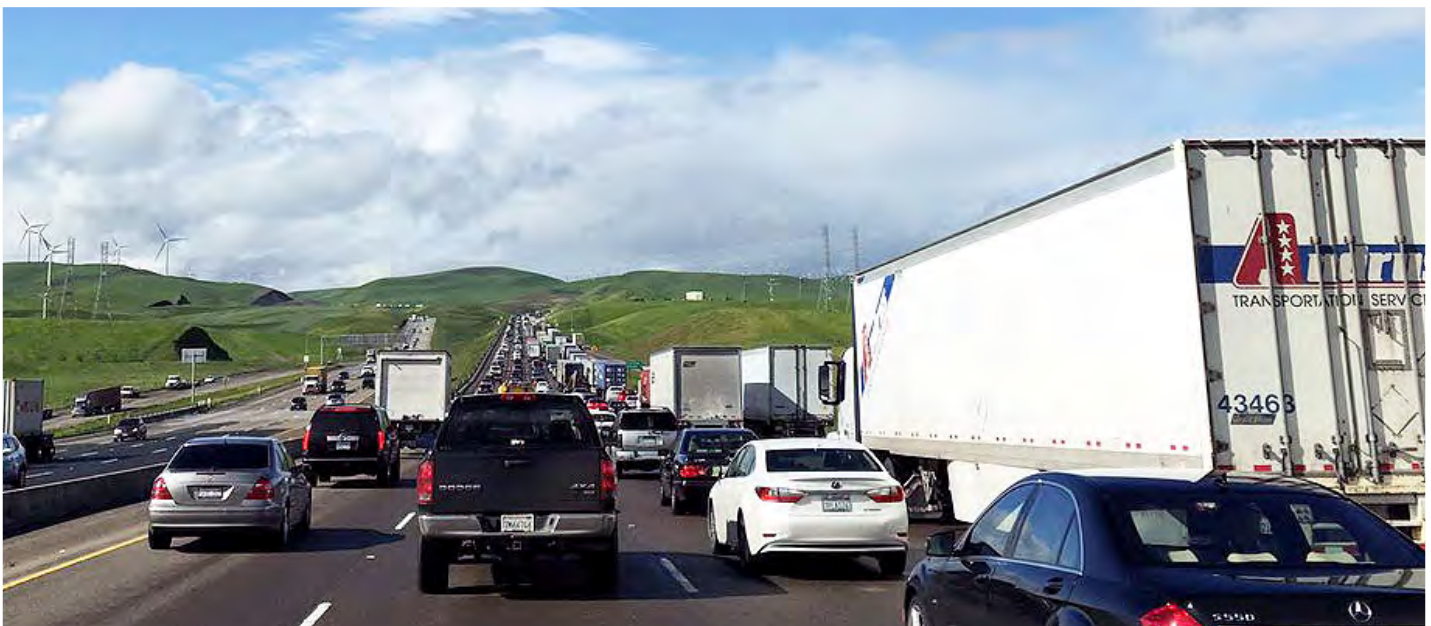
ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Valley Link Project Feasibility Report Executive Summary (Full report available at <https://www.valleylinkrail.com>)

Prepared by: Rob Cunningham, Senior Regional Planner

Project Feasibility Report

(Per Assembly Bill 758)



Board of Directors



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Supervisor, County of Alameda



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Councilmember, City of Manteca



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John Mcpartland
Director, BART

Tri-Valley - San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority



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Tri-Valley - San Joaquin Valley
REGIONAL RAIL AUTHORITY

1. Introduction and Executive Summary

Valley Link: Introduction

The Altamont Pass Corridor, located in the center of the Northern California Megaregion, connects the San Joaquin Valley to the Tri-Valley and is a vital node in the megaregion's economic ecosystem as well as a key megaregion transportation route. The Interstate 580 (I-580) freeway serves the Altamont Pass Corridor and ranks as one of the most congested freeways in the megaregion during peak hours due to a high volume of regional and interregional commuter, freight and recreational traffic. More than 82,000 commuters currently travel this route on a daily basis – and this number is expected to increase by up to 75 percent from 2016 to 2040.



More than 82,000 commuters currently travel over the Altamont Pass route on a daily basis – and this number is expected to increase by up to 75 percent from 2016 to 2040.

Strategic and planned interregional mobility throughout the Altamont Pass Corridor is essential to sustained economic vitality in the megaregion. Connecting the Bay Area Rapid Transit District's (BART) rapid transit system and the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE), and providing expanded passenger rail connectivity between the San Joaquin Valley and the Bay Area, will increase interregional mobility and provide much needed highway capacity for expanded goods movement to the Bay Area's five seaports and the inland Port of Stockton. It will help alleviate pressure on I-580 from the exponential population growth projected for the San Joaquin Valley. It will connect people, jobs and housing, and support the vision of the California State Rail Plan.

1. Introduction and Executive Summary

Legislative Support: California State Assembly Bill 758 (AB 758)

Assembly Bill (AB) 758, co-authored by Assemblywomen Catharine Baker and Susan Eggman, was signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown on October 13, 2017, establishing the Tri-Valley San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority (Authority). The legislation received substantial bipartisan support from both the Assembly and the Senate.

The Authority is led by a 15-member governing Board comprising representatives from the cities of Dublin, Lathrop, Livermore, Manteca, Pleasanton, Stockton, Tracy, Danville, San Ramon, and the Mountain House Community Services District; the counties of Alameda and San Joaquin; and the Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA), BART and the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRRC).

Tri-Valley - San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority Board of Directors



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Supervisor, County of Alameda



Veronica Vargas (Vice Chair)
Mayor Pro Tem, City of Tracy



Boardmember Paul Akinjo
Councilmember, City of Lathrop



Boardmember Bob Elliott
Supervisor, County of San Joaquin



Boardmember Melissa Hernandez
Councilmember, City of Dublin



Boardmember Sol Jobrack
Councilmember, City of Stockton



Boardmember John Marchand
Mayor, City of Livermore



Boardmember John McPartland
Director, BART



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Vice Mayor, City of Manteca



Boardmember Philip G. O'Loane
Vice Mayor, City of San Ramon



Boardmember Karen Stepper
Councilmember, Town of Danville



Boardmember Jerry Thorne
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Boardmember Bernice Tingle
Director, Mountain House



Boardmember Bob Woerner
LAVTA Boardmember



Boardmember Leo Zuber
Commissioner, ACE

The Authority was established for purposes of *planning, developing and delivering cost-effective and responsive transit connectivity between BART and ACE in the Tri-Valley, that meets the goals and objectives of the communities it will serve.*

1. Introduction and Executive Summary

Feasibility Report Requirements

AB 758 requires that the Authority provide a project feasibility report to the public on or before July 1, 2019. At a minimum, the report must include the following elements:

- 1** Recommendations for expediting the development of cost-effective and responsive connectivity between BART and ACE rail systems in the Tri-Valley.
- 2** The identification of a preferred entity or entities to deliver transit connectivity, including the role each entity will play in planning, designing, financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, and the leasing, developing of land, facilities or equipment necessary to delivery transit connectivity.
- 3** A funding plan describing any grants, loans, allocations, fund transfers, or awards of local, regional, state, federal, or private funds that are proposed to be made available for achieving transit connectivity.
- 4** A description of any plan to finance the development of transit connectivity, including a description of any revenue source or sources to be pledged for financing, the duration of time to complete the financing, and the estimated total cost of financing.
- 5** A proposed schedule for completion of transit connectivity.
- 6** Preliminary design for the project or projects to complete transit connectivity, including the identification of right-f-way, routes, stations, equipment, and any other facilities necessary to achieve transit connectivity.

The Project Feasibility Report meets all of the key requirements of AB 758. It also includes a review of extensive public outreach and community engagement efforts that have occurred throughout this effort. Furthermore, the report provides additional analysis of the potential beneficial impacts that a proposed rail service may have on environmental sustainability, social equity and transit-oriented development (TOD) in the megaregion.

1. Introduction and Executive Summary

Recognizing the extensive *ACEforward* Environmental Impact Report (EIR) efforts in this corridor and the BART EIR process underway at the time, AB 758 also contains a provision stating the Authority “may use any relevant environmental review documents previously completed by the Bay Area Rapid Transit District or the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission to prepare the report.” A specific provision in the bill restricting the Authority’s activities relative to BART became inoperative on July 1, 2018 due to the BART Board action to not adopt a preferred alternative for an extension to the I-580/Isabel Avenue interchange.

The following table identifies the specific chapters that address each element outlined by the AB 758 legislation.

AB 758 Required Element	Relevant Section in Feasibility Report
Recommendations for expediting the development of cost-effective and responsive connectivity between BART and ACE rail systems in the Tri-Valley.	2. Project Goals 3. Proposed Project and Options 4. Alignment Options 5. Stations and Facilities Overview 6. System Integration and Connections 10. Service Characteristics
The identification of a preferred entity or entities to deliver transit connectivity, including the role each entity will play in planning, designing, financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, and the leasing, developing of land, facilities or equipment necessary to delivery transit connectivity.	14. Project Delivery 15. Project Management and Staffing
A funding plan describing any grants, loans, allocations, fund transfers, or awards of local, regional, state, federal, or private funds that are proposed to be made available for achieving transit connectivity.	12. Capital and Operating Costs 13. Funding and Finance Plan 14. Project Delivery
A description of any plan to finance the development of transit connectivity, including a description of any revenue source or sources to be pledged for financing, the duration of time to complete the financing, and the estimated total cost of financing.	7. Environmental Sustainability 12. Capital and Operating Costs 13. Funding and Finance Plan 14. Project Delivery
A proposed schedule for completion of transit connectivity.	14. Project Delivery
Preliminary design for the project or projects to complete transit connectivity, including the identification of right-of-way, routes, stations, equipment, and any other facilities necessary to achieve transit connectivity.	3. Proposed Project and Options 4. Alignment Options 5. Station and Facilities Overview 6. System Integration/Connections 7. Environmental Sustainability 9. Station Area Planning 10. Service Characteristics 11. Vehicle Technology

1. Introduction and Executive Summary

Caltrans Sustainable Communities Grant

In 2018, Valley Link was awarded a Sustainable Communities Grant to support the development of the Feasibility Report including station area planning and outreach. The Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program was created to support the California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) mission: Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability. The overarching objectives of the Sustainable Communities Grant under the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program include the following efforts to enhance the transportation system and network: promote sustainable practices and innovation, preserve the integrity of the system, increase accessibility and safety, support the economic vitality of the area, and prioritize communities most affected by poverty and air pollution.

Many of Valley Link's benefits directly address the overarching objectives of the Sustainable Communities Grant:

Enhanced Multi-Modal Transportation System and Congestion Relief

Valley Link will increase the accessibility to public transit by linking nearly 500 miles of commuter and intercity rail with more than 130 stations in the Northern California Megaregion. This linkage, combined with reduced travel times as compared to automobile travel, will result in significant ridership and congestion relief.

Improved Social Equity and Environmental Justice for Disadvantaged Communities

Valley Link will provide and promote transportation solutions that focus on and prioritize the sustainable transportation needs of communities within the Northern California Megaregion, while reducing emissions and the resulting pollution burden.

Improved Public Health and Safety

Shifting commuters and other travelers to rail transportation between the San Joaquin Valley and the Bay Area highly desirable as a means to offset some of the effects on air quality produced by growth in automobile travel. With an increase in rail passengers, Valley Link will decrease greenhouse gas (GHG) and harmful air pollutant emissions, and reduce serious injuries and fatalities on the highway system while promoting a healthier and better quality of life.

Improved Community Sustainability

Valley Link will provide opportunity for and enhance transit-oriented development at several new and existing stations creating livability in the development of new community hubs without the need for automobiles.

Finally, Valley Link is consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the California Transportation Plan 2040 and specifically included in the 2018 California State Rail Plan. This is a high priority for State Legislature and the Governor as approved by AB 758 (Eggman and Baker).



1. Introduction and Executive Summary

Feasibility Report

At its inaugural meeting on January 17, 2018, consistent with the mandate of AB 758, the Authority Board took immediate steps to advance a Work Program concept to expedite the development of cost-effective and responsive transit connectivity between the BART system and ACE rail service in the Tri-Valley region. Over the past 18-months, the Board has met monthly to oversee advancement of this work program—focusing on key decisions within a highly structured timeframe. Key milestones have included the adoption of project goals and the identification of a preferred project concept, with a plan for expedited project delivery and funding.

This Feasibility Report is the result of months of diligent work, informed by technical analysis of project alternatives, diligent public outreach and engagement, and assessment of the potential impacts and benefits of the project across multiple sectors.

The Authority Board provided clear guidance in the form of specific directions for key project areas. This direction is included in each section of the Project Feasibility Report as well as the documentation that supported and informed Board discussion and decision-making at each of the key project milestones.



1. Introduction and Executive Summary

Assembly Bill 758:

Established the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority Member Agencies:



Mandate:

Project implementation that is fast, cost-effective and responsive to the goals and objectives of the communities it will serve.

Goal:

Deliver a cost-effective connection from the San Joaquin Valley to the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) system and the Altamont Corridor Express in the Tri-Valley, to address regional economic and transportation challenges.



Requirement:

"On or before July 1, 2019, the Authority shall provide a project feasibility report to the public, to be posted on the authority's Internet Web site, on the plans for the development and implementation of transit connectivity in the Tri-Valley region."



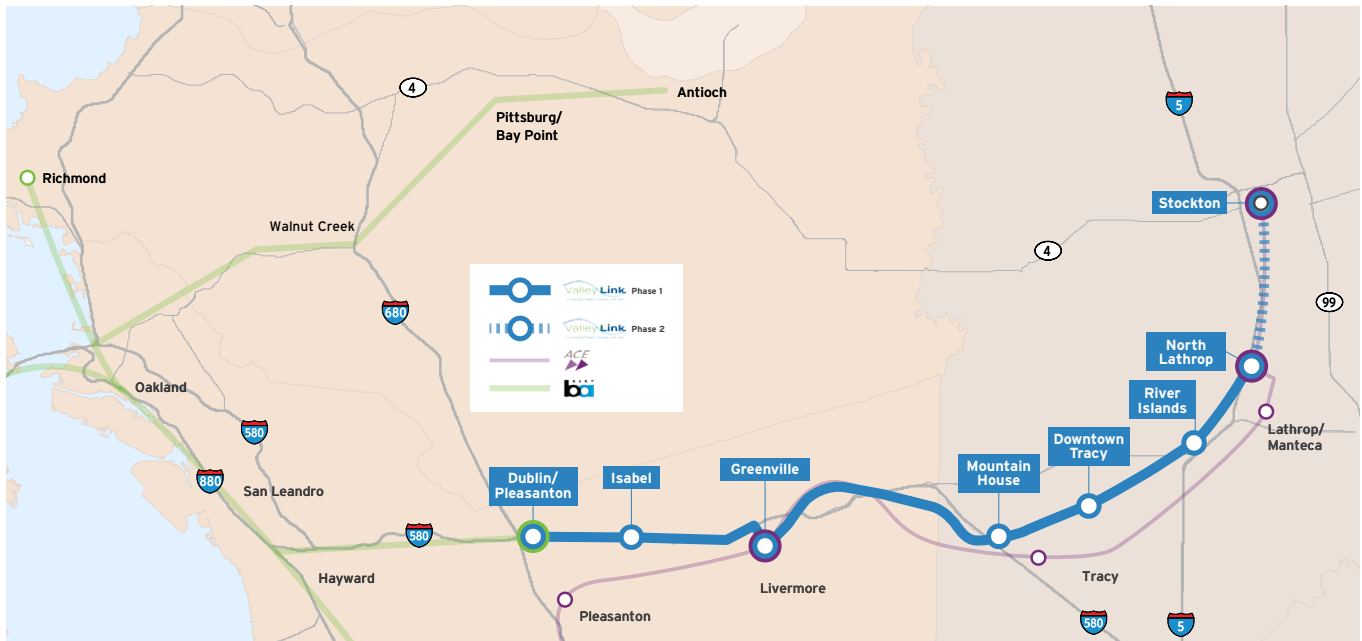
Tri-Valley + San Joaquin Valley
REGIONAL RAIL AUTHORITY

1. Introduction and Executive Summary

KEY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How will Valley Link Connect to BART and ACE?

Corridor Snapshot



41
miles

7
stations

25,000
daily riders by 2040

35,000
metric tons of CO₂
equivalent/year
reduction in Greenhouse
Gas (GHG) emissions
in 2040

Seamless
connections to BART and
ACE



Tri-Valley + San Joaquin Valley
REGIONAL RAIL AUTHORITY

1. Introduction and Executive Summary

Proposed Project

Phase 1:

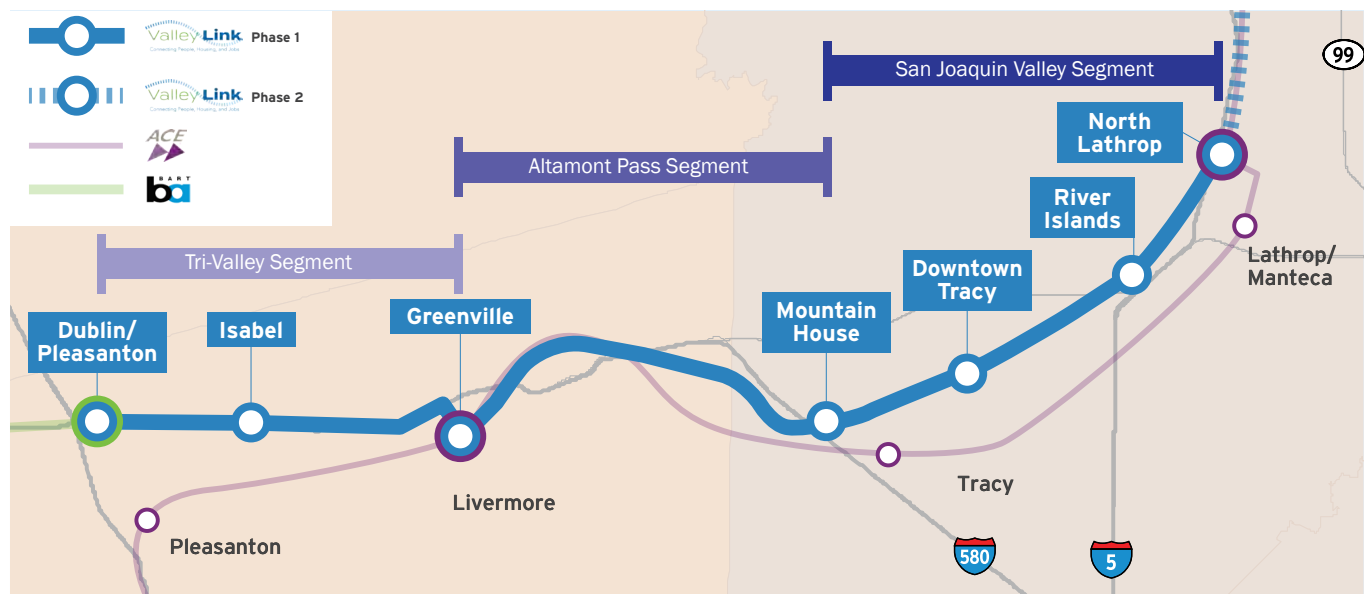
Rail service from the existing Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station to the proposed North Lathrop ACE Station, utilizing existing transportation rights-of-way where feasible.

Phase 2:

Rail service extended from the North Lathrop ACE Station to the existing Stockton ACE/San Joaquin Station.

Alignment

Rail service from Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station to the proposed ACE North Lathrop ACE Station, utilizing existing transportation rights-of-way where feasible.



Stations:

- Dublin/Pleasanton BART Intermodal
- Isabel (Livermore)
- Greenville ACE Intermodal (Livermore)
- Mountain House
- Downtown Tracy
- River Islands (Lathrop)
- North Lathrop ACE Intermodal
- Stockton ACE/San Joaquin Intermodal

Infill Stations:

- Southfront (Livermore)
- Grant Line Road (Alameda County)
- Ellis Historical (Tracy)

Operations and Maintenance Facility:

- Hansen Road (San Joaquin County)



1. Introduction and Executive Summary

System Integration

- Seamless transfer to BART and ACE
- Integrated fare systems
- Expanded connectivity to local transit and feeder service
- Key element of the California State Rail Plan vision

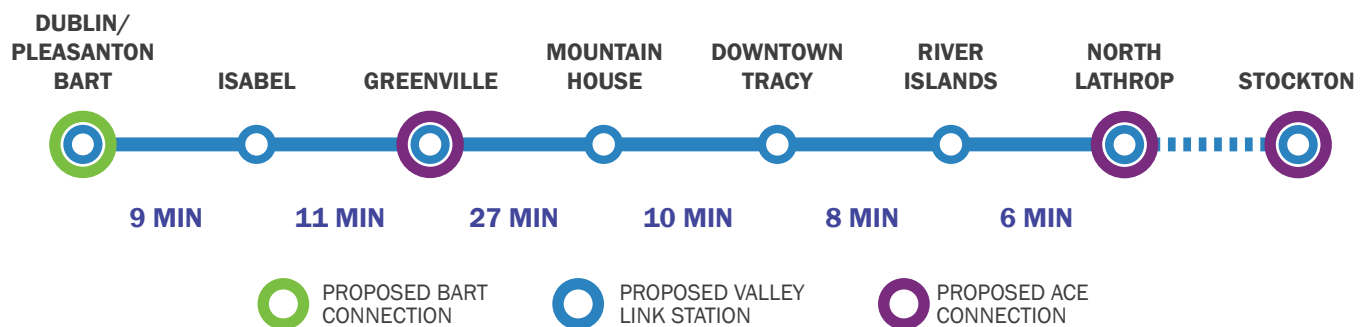
Service Characteristics

Regular service throughout the day in both directions with the ultimate goal of matching BART hours of operation and frequency.

Initial Service

	PEAK	OFF-PEAK
Between Dublin/Pleasanton BART and Greenville	12 min (meeting every BART train)	30 min (meeting every other BART train)
Beyond Greenville	24 min (meeting every other BART train)	60 min (meeting every 4th BART train)
Operation of initial service	From 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	

Travel Times



1. Introduction and Executive Summary

Who will operate and manage the system?

It is recommended to establish the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority as the entity to deliver the Valley Link transit connectivity, including planning, designing, financing, constructing, operating, maintaining, and the leasing, developing, or disposing of land, facilities, or equipment, necessary to deliver and operate Valley Link. Staff will continue to evaluate potential rail agencies that can strengthen the ability of the Authority to construct and operate Valley Link in a managing agency role.

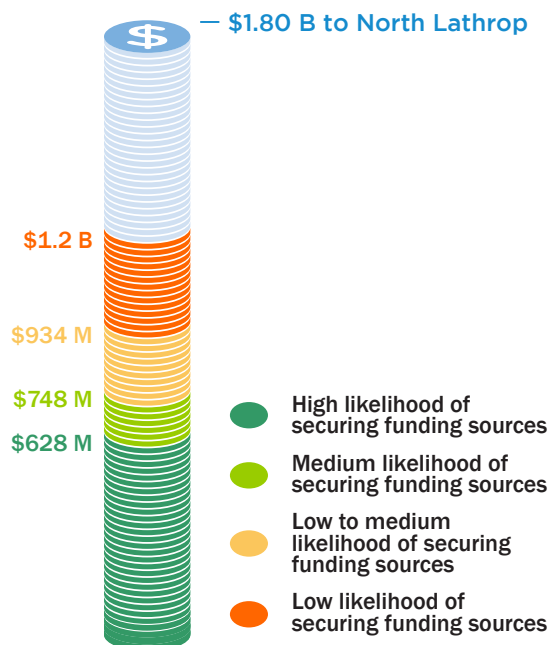
How much will it cost?

In 2018 dollars, the full Valley Link project between Dublin/Pleasanton BART and North Lathrop including alignment, stations, an operations and maintenance facility, and vehicles is estimated to cost \$1.8 billion. Based on similar services, operating and maintaining this system in 2025 would cost \$26.7 million annually (year of expenditure dollars).

What is the funding plan and finance plan?

The Plan identifies capital funding sources and operating revenue sources, and rates them according to how likely they will become available for the project. Capital funds reallocated from the BART-to-Livermore project and from City of Livermore impact fees have the highest likelihood, and total \$628 million. Along with the farebox revenue and parking revenue generated by the project, estimated to cover up to half of required operating funds, high-likelihood operating revenue sources include Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) funds and FTA Section 5307 and 5337 formula funds designated to San Joaquin County.

Based on capital funding assumptions, there is a funding gap for Valley Link. Financing could be considered if no additional capital funds are secured. The Plan identifies several revenue streams that can be used for debt service payments. A hypothetical Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Loan would require an annual \$31 million debt service.



When will Valley Link be in service?

A draft program schedule has been developed for planning and managing the overall program delivery, and provides a plan for a forecast completion of the program in the early third quarter of 2026.

Sustainability Policy

The Authority has adopted a policy to be a model of sustainability in the design, construction and operation of the Valley Link Project.



1. Introduction and Executive Summary

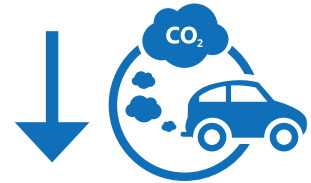
Environmental

Valley Link will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, pursue renewable energy sources, strive to attain 100% self-sufficiency, and apply global best practices to design and construct sustainable infrastructure.

- Valley Link will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 24,000 metric tons of CO_{2e} emissions in 2025.
- To the extent possible, Valley Link will strive to operate largely on energy produced onsite by photovoltaic cells and wind power.
- Sustainable design and construction practices will include implementing high-efficiency lighting, LED signage, drought-tolerant landscaping, and using building materials with recycled content.



**35,000 MT CO_{2e} Emissions
Reduced Annually in 2040**



Station Area Planning

Valley Link will preserve land and right-of-way to allow for the implementation and phased design and infrastructure in support of Sustainable Community Strategies (Senate Bill [SB] 375). In addition, the Authority will work in partnership with communities to identify and incorporate high priority local goals and objectives for individual stations.

- The Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC's) Plan Bay Area 2040 identifies Priority Development Areas (PDAs) – two of which are located in Livermore at the Isabel and Greenville Valley Link stations.
- The San Joaquin Council of Governments' (SJCOG's) Smart Growth Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan includes a half-mile radius around the Downtown Tracy transit station as well as infill sites in proximity. On April 4, 2019, the City of Tracy City Council authorized staff to initiate TOD development planning in Downtown Tracy in preparation for Valley Link.
- The Authority has coordinated with River Islands, one of California's premier mixed-use master planned communities, to locate a Valley Link station at its 350-acre business park.



1. Introduction and Executive Summary

Equitable Access

The Authority will encourage engagement in planning and decision-making for the Valley Link project to ensure a meaningful level of participation from disadvantaged communities and low-income communities and households. Benefits to disadvantaged communities and low-income communities and households in project planning and design will be maximized.

- Valley Link expresses the objectives of the Sustainable Communities Grant Program by promoting sustainable practices and innovation, preserving the integrity of the transportation network, increasing accessibility and safety, supporting economic vitality, and prioritizing communities most affected by poverty and air pollution.
- The proposed stations Downtown Tracy, River Islands, and North Lathrop are all within disadvantaged community geographic areas. Areas designated as low-income are also near these stations, as well as the Mountain House station.
- An online survey, launched on February 12, 2019, is available in both English and Spanish.
- The CalEnviroScreen 3.0 screening methodology identifies communities disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution. Senate Bill (SB 535) Disadvantaged Communities are defined as the top 25 percentile scoring areas from CalEnviroScreen. Valley Link station areas exhibit high scores for multiple CalEnviroScreen indicators.



Vehicle Technology

Valley Link will focus analysis on multiple unit trains featuring hybrid technology, with the ability to convert to fully-electric operations in the future.

- Currently, there are rapid advances in MU technology, including development of vehicles for the U.S. market that can draw partial power from batteries.
- Hybrid rail vehicles could use both diesel engines and batteries to power electric motors. With this technology, it is possible that diesel engines could be sequentially replaced by battery-powered motors.
- Another promising technology is the use of hydrogen fuel cells to power train motors. This technology, along with all-electric trains, has the potential for zero-emission operations.

