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IA on VTA

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IA on VTA

Welcome to a different way to look into the Industrial Archeology/Industrial Heritage of Silicon Valley, out the window of a VTA light rail car! Some of the VTA light rail lines pass through industrial areas that can give you some insights into the history and contemporary industry of the area. What we've done here is just a start. We'll be adding photos in Flickr tagged with "sia2008sjc" and "iaonvta" of some of the things you can see as well as a group "iaonvta" for discussions and comments. Add your favorites and post the results of your own research.

This was developed as part of the 2008 National Conference of the Society for Industrial Archeology (hence the "sia2008sjc" tag). Industry in the Valley is very dynamic, indeed the theme for the Conference is "Change Is the Constant", so don't be surprised if the occupants of some of the sites change or some firm's headquarters are now a pile of concrete being recycled into condos.

So, get your VTA Day Pass and take a ride!

VTA Light Rail: Downtown San Jose to Tasman



We've focused this part of the document on the line from downtown San José to the Tasman transfer station. This route takes you through a slice of industrial history from the earliest days of San José through the electronics boom that gave the area the name Silicon Valley, to the emerging solar and biotech revolution. The City plans to change the zoning to replace the low rise research/industrial buildings on North First with high rise condos and apartments over the next decade. This is still very controversial.

[Convention Center – Paseo de San Antonio]

As you pass by Plaza de Cesar Chavez on the left, you can glimpse the Tech Museum, on the west side of the plaza, and St Josephs Cathedral and the Art Museum on the east side. In the middle of the Plaza is a play fountain. In the middle of the lower point of the plaza is a large black statue of a "Plumed Serpent", possibly an Aztec god, one of the more controversial pieces of art in the city. From the Convention Center to Paseo de San

Antonio, you pass by the historic Hotel Sainte Claire on the right and the Hotel Montgomery on the left. The Hotel Montgomery was built in 1911. It was designed by architect William Binder, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It is operated by Joie de Vivre Hotels, based in San Francisco and offering themed boutique accommodations across California. The building was relocated 186 feet south of its original location in 2000 to save it from demolition during the expansion of the Fairmont Hotel.

[Paseo de San Antonio – Santa Clara]

On the left, at 89 South First Street is an empty lot. Up until January 16, 2008 it was the Porter Stock Building, a two story building built in 1867, one of the oldest commercial buildings in San Jose. It caught fire during renovation.

[Santa Clara – St. James]

On your right is Fountain Alley, named when an artesian well was dug here. The Pioneer Carriage Manufactory was located on the Alley from 1853 to at least 1881. The corner once held Krumbs Brewery and later Walteufels Book Store. Just past the Alley is the Bank of America Building, built by H. A. Minton in 1926. The bank was featured in the Architect and Engineering Record of California as one of the first earthquake-proof constructions in the area. The Bank of America has long been a "landmark" building. At 13 stories plus tower, it locates the heart of downtown San Jose. The height of downtown buildings is capped to prevent interference with airplanes approaching SJC. They can be taller as they are further east.

The corner of First and Santa Clara Streets was the location of the famous San Jose Light Tower. A replica is at History San Jose.

On your left in the first block north of Santa Clara, is El Observador, the larger of the two Spanish language newspapers in San Jose.

If you are taking the route in the opposite direction, this leg runs on Second Street rather than First Street, and you pass by the Improv, located in the Jose Theatre, the oldest surviving auditorium in San Jose, which had live vaudeville acts, such as Harry Houdini, as well as showing silent movies.

[St. James – Japantown/Ayer]

The area around St. James Park is a National Historic District. The statue of William McKinley, which can be better viewed from the Second Street Station, was erected to commemorate his visit in 1901. Here are the first two pages of the program, courtesy of the San Jose Public Library California Room. Note that 100 of the 250 rooms at the St James Hotel have private baths.

trips to local sites like the Lick Observatory. The hotel annex was destroyed in the 1906 quake, but it was rebuilt. The hotel itself was only minimally damaged. The hotel was razed in 1930 and the property was subdivided.



[Civic Center – Gish]

The Civic Center Buildings are on the left. The first is the curved, low rise, former City Hall. The building still stands empty since 2005. It was considered very stylish when it was built in the 1950s to replace the Victorian City Hall that was located on Market at the Plaza. The next is the Santa Clara County Building on the southwest corner of Hedding Street. It is affectionately (?) called the “Rust Bucket” because of the COR-TEN™ steel used in its construction. Behind the Offices are the Hall of Justice and the Main Jail as well as Juvenile Hall. Hedding Street (once called Rose Street) was the north boundary of San Jose until the mid 20th Century.

After you cross Hedding Street, the County Sheriffs Office appears. Behind it is a rail yard for the light rail trains.

The train passes under Highway 880, which goes north to Oakland and south to Los Gatos.

[Gish – Metro Airport]

Gish Road is named after David E. Gish who arrived in San Jose as a miner, and established a farm near here. On the right through this area are many hotels and motels that serve the airport. On the left you can see the sign ‘Siemens’ on one of the tall new buildings between First Street and Guadalupe, but most of them show their face to Guadalupe and the Airport. Another business on the left is Nolte, a civil engineering firm. On the right, there is the low rise California Water Services Company complex. The SONY building on the right is the headquarters of their Component Solutions Business Division. Their website says “With the consolidation of its resources into a single domestically-based organization, fully 60 percent of all Sony semiconductor sales in the U.S. is expected to come from products designed by the Semiconductor Products Group in San Jose for North American customers.” California Water Service Company (Cal Water) is the largest investor-owned water utility in the western United States.

[Metro Airport – Karina]

The train next passes Highway 101 that links San Jose to San Francisco and Los Angeles.

[Karina – Component]

From the station, you can see Alacritec on the left. They offer accelerators to offload network tasks from servers, improving their performance and ideally reducing the number of servers for the same operational level, reducing costs for equipment, power, software licenses and IT support. It is privately held.

There are a few companies of interest on the right side:

- Kintetsu International is a Japan-based travel services business that began as the Osaka Electric Railroad in 1911, running 30 kilometers between Osaka and Nara.
- NBC11, KNTV Bay Area is the only San Jose based major TV network outlet. (ABC and CBS are in San Francisco, the traditional communications hub, and Fox is in Oakland.) It recently began publicizing that it is the first US station running on wind power.

On the left on this stretch, there are several companies of interest:

- eBay is probably well known to you.
- BEA Systems makes business process management (BPM) software on a service oriented architecture (SOA). If you haven't been told this yet, the Valley uses many, many three letter acronyms, which we call TLAs. BEA was recently acquired by Oracle, so the name on the sign may soon be changed.
- AMDOCS provides software for integrated customer management (ICM), which is a specialty sector of Customer Relationship Management (CRM), based on industry standards like SOA and they have trademarked the phrase 'intentional customer experience'.

As you pass them, you can see the Owens Corning Fiberglas plant in the distance. It was built in 1949 and at the time it was in the middle of orchards. Of course, at that time, where you are right now, you would have been in the middle of a pear orchard.

[Component - Bonaventura]

On the right are the following:

- Kawasaki Microelectronics America, a fabless ASIC semiconductor manufacturer. ASIC is an acronym for Application Specific Integrated Circuit, a chip that is customized rather than general purpose.
- Qimonda, a Munich based DRAM manufacturer that branched off from Siemens.
- NYDEN USA is a subsidiary of MYCOM, a Japanese company. They manufacture motion control equipment such as stepper motors.

On the left is IPLocks, a maker of software products to keep data safe in enterprise databases, such as Oracle.

[Bonaventure – Orchard]

On the left are the following:

- Winbond makes a wide variety of memory and logic integrated circuits and provides foundry services for fabless manufactures in Taiwan.
- Novellus makes advanced process equipment for the semiconductor industry, such as chemical vapor deposition (CVD), physical vapor deposition (PVD), electrochemical deposition (ECD), chemical mechanical planarization (CMP), and surface preparation systems.

On the right you can see

- Sanmina-SCI is a leading Electronic Manufacturing Services (EMS) provider who delivers end-to-end manufacturing capabilities for Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) who can then concentrate on product development and marketing.
- ChipMOS is a leading independent provider of total semiconductor testing and packaging solutions to fabless companies, integrated device manufacturers (IDM) and foundries.
- SMC Networks, with headquarters in Irvine, is a subsidiary of Accton, and makes various network devices such as routers, switches, and network storage.
- Novellus Systems, with headquarters further north on First St, supplies chemical vapor deposition (CVD), physical vapor deposition (PVD), electrochemical deposition (ECD), chemical mechanical planarization (CMP), ultraviolet thermal processing (UVTP), and surface preparation equipment – all used in semiconductor manufacturing.

Near the station on the left, you can see VLSI Standards who designs and manufactures standard and reference products for calibrating semiconductor equipment.

[Orchard – River Oaks]

On the left you can see:

- Wafernet is a supplier of Silicon Wafers.
- Kawasaki Robotics is a part of the Kawasaki Consumer Products and Machinery Company, a part of Kawasaki Heavy Industries. (The robots all seem to be for manufacturing rather than home use.) This office supports semiconductor machinery manufacturers.
- Taseon is a networking company that enables an industry-first fully integrated packet-over-all optical solution designed to support the rapid growth of packet services over a flexible, scalable and cost effective network infrastructure.

As we approach Montague, the large black building on the right is a branch office of Micron. Micron is principally known as a DRAM manufacturer, but they also make flash memory and solid state drives. Their headquarters are in Boise, Idaho.

Hynix, with a branch office on the left on the other side of Montague, makes various memory products, such as synchronous DRAM (SDRAM), and mobile memory.

[River Oaks – Tasman]

From the station, you can see an alfalfa field on the right – this is the last of the agricultural past.

On your left you can see these companies:

- Wyse Technology operates in the “thin computing” market, providing client hardware and software for network computing.
- Pericom Semiconductor focuses on three main areas of technology: serial protocol switching, silicon-and-quartz-based timing, and signal conditioning solutions, and these focus areas combine to provide a system-level solution for high-speed serial protocol implementation.
- Polycom, with headquarters in Pleasanton, provides integrated, end-to-end unified collaboration solutions that include hearing each other (audio), seeing each other (video) and showing each other things (content).

On your right, you can see these companies:

- Hitachi US Life Sciences Division, makes a variety of products primarily in the area of DNA/RNA analysis.
- Allied Telesyn focuses entirely on end-to-end, purpose-built Ethernet/IP applications, with a product line that includes Layer 2 & 3 switches and fiber/copper Multiservice Access Platforms.
- Altera is a fabless semiconductor company that offers Field Programmable Gate Arrays (FPGAs), Complex Programmable Logic Devices (CPLDs), and structured Application Specific Integrated Circuits (ASICs) in combination with software tools, intellectual property, and customer support.
- Canon Semiconductor Equipment Division supplies step-and-repeat and step-and-scan photolithography tools and solutions used in the design and fabrication of semiconductor devices, read/write heads for magnetic storage systems and micro-electromechanical systems (MEMS).

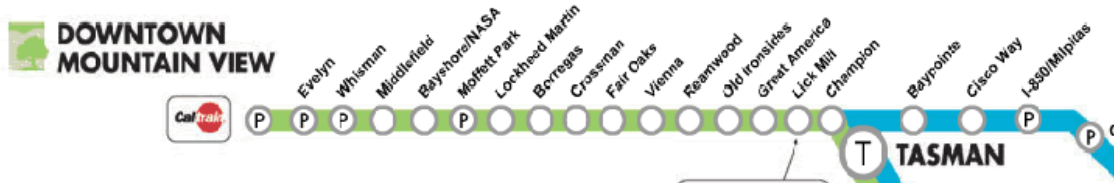
Also on your right, you can see in the distance the historic water tower of the Agnews Hospital East Campus.

[Tasman Station]

From the Tasman Station (where you are likely to spend some time if you are transferring or catch the train back to downtown) you can see the following businesses:

- Wi Chorus – core platforms for Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access (WiMAX) and LTE networks. LTE (Long Term Evolution) is the next phase in phone communications after third generation (3G).
- ARC International - licenses intellectual property (IP) to system-on-chip (SoC) companies
- Nuvation - an Engineering Design Services (EDS) consultancy

VTA Light Rail: Tasman to Mountain View



This part of the document describes the journey from Tasman Station across the “Golden Triangle” delineated by CA 237, US101, and I880, that is a key area for semiconductor and electronics companies. Now the industry is more diverse. The route also goes through the Moffett Park area, which is still dominated by the Lockheed-Martin complex. It ends in Mountain View, where there a lots of delightful restaurants and shops along Castro Street. From downtown San José, the trip to Mountain View takes about 55 min.

[Tasman – Champion]

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As you round the corner from 1st onto Tasman, you can see a Samsung office on the right. Behind Samsung, you may be able to see some white tanks. These belong to Maxim Integrated Products’ X3 Fab, one of the few wafer fabrication plants remaining the in the valley. Just past Samsung on Tasman is Xambala, a startup that delivers message stream processing subsystems –hardware and software - for the financial marketplace. Most of the buildings in this area belong to Cisco, and the train will be passing through the extended Cisco campus until you cross the Guadalupe River.

[Champion – Lick Mill]

The Guadalupe “River”, which passes from past downtown San Jose through here to the Bay, is really more of a seasonal stream. At this point, it is the border between San Jose and Santa Clara. Looking right from the bridge, you can see to Highway 237, the most northern road across the Valley.

Just past the river on the left is Ulistac Natural Area, an unusual Santa Clara City Park. It is a 40 acre open space showing natural habitats like grasslands, woodlands, wetlands, and savannah. The park is reverting back to its natural riparian condition from previous development. This is a charming one hour walk.

On the right, you can see a Sales Office of SAVVIS, an IT infrastructures and services provider.

Lick Mill Blvd. is named for James Lick, a very interesting – and wealth – character of the late 19th Century who built a flour mill south of here – which was never a tremendous success due to the swampy nature of the land and the intermittency of the river. Do look

him up. A mansion and the granary from the mill are down the road on the property of Mansion Grove Apartments. Although it is a National Historic Landmark, it is a little tricky to find a place to park and the path to the buildings.

[Lick Mill – Great America Station]

On the right, you can see Solaicx, a company that manufactures silicon ingots and wafers for photovoltaic (PV) applications used in solar energy production.

As we pass over Lafayette, we are over a rail line and the Amtrak Santa Clara Station, where you can pick up the Amtrak Capital Corridor train and the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) train to Stockton, which calls this station Great America to differentiate it from their Santa Clara station near the University that also serves CalTrain.

Just across Lafayette on the left is the San Francisco 49ers Headquarters and training field – it's just past the youth soccer field. Beyond this point is the parking lot that could some day soon become the 49ers Stadium. Negotiations are in progress with the City of Santa Clara. On the right at this point is a golf course that once was a landfill. It used to have the same problems as Shoreline Park with cigarettes igniting methane escaping from the ground.

Great America Amusement Park then follows on the left, indicating that you are arriving at the Great America Station. On the right is the Santa Clara Convention Center. Beyond it is the TechMart Meeting Center.

[Great America – Old Ironsides]

As you cross the street after the station, you can see the headquarters of Foundry Networks and Citrix on your left. Citrix is a virtualization company, enabling workers to access applications and data when they are out of the office. Foundry Networks makes switching, routing, security, and application traffic management solutions.

Some of the companies you can see on the right are:

- VUDU – This is a movie-on-demand service provider using a set top box.
- iSuppli – this is a branch of a supply chain intelligence company – their product helps you track what your company's suppliers are doing.
- Rio Design – this is a San Antonio, Texas based design firm
- Teak Technologies – maker of scalable switching solutions for data centers
- MEDCONX designs and manufactures Smart Block™ Connectors, cables and Smart Cable Connector™ Systems for minimally invasive surgical (MIS) handpieces, instrumentation, and generators.

[Old Ironsides – Reamwood]

The headquarters building of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) is on your right. They focus on corporate services rather than private accounts. The headquarters of Coherent, a maker of lasers and laser optics, is located at the corner of Patrick Henry. The low rise offices on the left are mostly empty, but once were home to some of the valley's main employers.

[Reamwood – Vienna]

On your right, you will see Logosol, a maker of servo and stepper motor based motion control components and systems. Also on the right is Pactron, a provider of Electronics Design & Manufacturing Services specializing in board-level new product introduction.

[Vienna – Fair Oaks]

This stretch is all mobile homes – on both sides of the street.

[Fair Oaks – Crossman]

On the right is a large, mostly empty campus. Based on faded markers, it appears to have once been occupied by Atari in one or another of its incarnations. It may also have been a field office of Northrup Grumman. The train turns right at the first intersection and goes over 237. After the cross-over, on the right is Network Appliances, ‘NetApp’, maker of network servers and supporting software. Around the corner is Sunext, a branch of a Taiwan company making semiconductors and solutions for optical disk drives.

[Crossman – Borregas]

On the right is Environmental and Occupational Risk Assessment, EORM, maker of assessment tools for companies to complete their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) performance statements. To the left is Kyphon whose mission is to restore spinal function with minimally invasive therapies. Headquarters of eHealthInsurance is on the right, representing over 160 health insurance companies online. Miradia is a start-up company making MEMS (Micro-Electro-Mechanical Systems) products, mechanical devices on the scale of semiconductor devices. CTT makes power amplifiers, frequency converters, frequency multipliers, transmitters, transceivers, and receivers using PC board and MMIC technologies. FutureDial's software solutions enable wireless carriers to provide content transfer, backup, restore, and download services to mobile phones. On the right is nSTREAMS which has developed interactive TV (iTV) technologies.

[Borregas – Lockheed Martin]

Infinera, on the right, makes digital optical networks that make use of the latest advances in both large-scale photonic integration and optical system design. RGB Networks is on the left. Their products allow multiple system operators (MSOs) and other video service providers to implement switched digital networks. As we turn left to go down Mathilda, you can see Yahoo! on the right. Who knows what the name will be soon... We are now skirting the Onizuka Air Force Base, and we are in the middle of the defense contractor Lockheed.

[Lockheed Martin – Moffett Park]

On the left at the station is Juniper Networks, offering platforms and software for networking, in the buildings with the green glass front. Up ahead on the right as we turn is “The Blue Cube”, a windowless pale blue five story building surrounded by antennae. Beginning in 1968, this was the control center for all military satellite communications. Originally called the Air Force Test Center, and then the Air Force Communications Center, it was renamed Onizuka Air Force Base in 1986 after one of the members of the

Challenger crew. This function is now handled at Shriever AFB in Colorado and Onizuka, now an Air Force Station, is being decommissioned.

[Moffett Park – NASA Bayshore]

On the right is an office of Motorola. Also on the right is an extensive new business development called Moffett Towers. We are now at the 101 – 237 interchange. On the right are Moffett Hangars Number Two and Three, part of the Moffett Historical District. They were built to house blimps during WWII. Due to shortages of steel, their frames are made of wood. The bus will go down below grade level as we pass by the Moffett runways.

[NASA Bayshore – Middlefield]

In 1931 the Navy constructed the Moffett Field to house the dirigible USS Macon (ZRS-5) in the massive Hanger 1. The Macon was a flying aircraft carrier. It could launch and recover small Curtis F9C Sparrowhawk biplanes, extending its search range in its role in fleet defense. The Macon was lost in a storm off Big Sur in 1935. The NASA Ames wind tunnel – the largest in the world - is also on the right. It is now operated by the US Air Force. Most of NASA’s research into aerodynamics is now done on very large supercomputers. The train turns left to go under 101 and enters a rail corridor rather than following a street, so there is less building signage on this stretch.

[Middlefield – Whisman]

Verisign buildings are on both sides of the track as the train leaves Middlefield Station. VeriSign is a secure sockets layer (SSL) Certificate Authority enabling secure e-commerce and communications for Web sites, intranets, and extranets. When the little lock displayed in your browser locks, an exchange between your browser and, say, the Amazon web server, has occurred that validates that it is actually Amazon, and establishes cryptographic keys so that your credit card information, etc. can be transmitted securely.

[Whisman – Evelyn]

The townhouses built in this area were built as part of the plan to increase the housing density along the light rail corridor. The train turns right to run between Central Expressway and the Caltrain line. As it turns, you may be able to see The Corporate Center on the left. This complex is on the site of the old Ferry Morse plant, where seeds were packaged for shipment. Later on the left is Duarte Design. They were instrumental in putting together the most famous Powerpoint ever – “An Inconvenient Truth”.

[Evelyn – Downtown]

As we pass under Highway 85, the pedestrian and bike path along Stevens Creek runs overhead. Just before the train reaches the Mountain View Station, you can see Minton Lumber on the left. It opened here in 1911. From the station, you can pick up Caltrain to San Francisco. There are many restaurants and interesting shops to visit along Castro Street.

VTA Light Rail: Great Mall to Tasman



The line beyond Great Mall is mostly residential/commercial. There is one strange destination at the Alum Rock stop (end of the line), the distinctive Mark's Hot Dogs housed in a building shaped like an orange. This was such a local icon that it was moved when the street was widened for light rail.

[Great Mall]

The Great Mall of the Bay Area is an outlet shopping mall constructed in an adaptively reused former Ford assembly plant. Very few traces of the plant's history remain. Some of the best dim sum in the Bay Area can be had at the Mayflower Restaurant.

[I880/Milpitas – Tasman]

As you leave the station, on your left you can see:

- [SS8 Networks](#),
- [Amity Systems](#), and
- [Array Networks](#)

All three companies make networking products. SS8's product line includes "compliant lawful intercept solutions". Amity specializes in internet (IP) multimedia video conferencing collaboration systems. Array Networks builds "Secure Sockets Layer" (SSL) "Virtual Private Network" (VPN) and application acceleration systems.

On your right is the beginning of a long series of [Cisco Systems](#) buildings. The headquarters is further along on Tasman on a stretch through San José. Cisco makes a wide range of networking products. Growing through acquisitions, the list of Cisco trademarks on its website has over 60 entries.

You can see an office of [Avaya](#) on your right at the first intersection, McCarthy. Avaya is a New Jersey based company that spun off from Lucent Technology in 2000. It is also a networking company. Further down McCarthy is [SanDisk](#), which should be familiar to you if you have a digital camera, or other piece of electronics using flash memory.

Soon you cross [Coyote Creek](#). Coyote run from Anderson Reservoir. As you cross it you can see the old [Agnews Tower](#) to the left. This was on the East Campus of Agnews Hospital, which had a long history in California. Agnews was originally an insane asylum established in 1889. The main multi-story building collapsed in the 1906 Earthquake

killing over 100 persons, the highest documented loss of life from the earthquake in a single building. It was rebuilt in a cottage campus style and over time transitioned to serving the mentally disabled. Agnews was closed in 1996 and the two properties were developed for industry and housing.

Right after the bridge, you can see the Calpine/Cisco cogeneration plant.

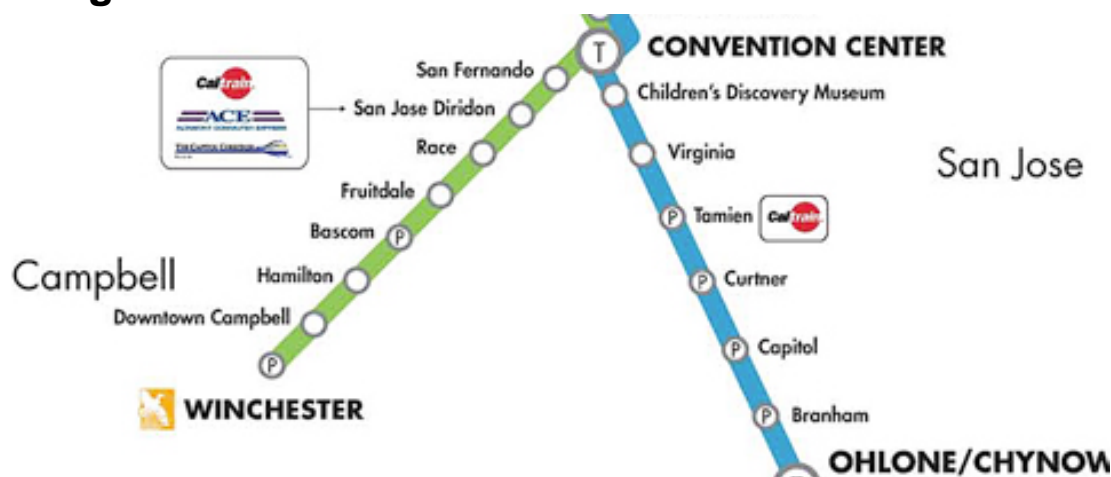
[Cisco Way – Bay Pointe and Tasman]

Most of this leg is occupied on both sides by Cisco buildings – and several empty complexes. As we cross Zanker Road, looking down to your left, you can see some new multi-story housing. As recently as eight years ago, that property was still a farm growing alfalfa; there is still a small orange grove at the south end of the old farm. As a side note, Zanker Road follows the main sewage line out of San José to the treatment plants at bay side. Going north on Zanker also leads to the southern station of the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge.

On the right, you can see a research facility of RFMD, who makes components that enable wireless devices to transmit and receive signals.

At the Bay Pointe Station, the other businesses include a branch of Interwoven, a “content management” company, Palmer Chiropractic College and University of Phoenix. Bay Pointe used to be the transfer station – but this moved the Tasman Station as lines were changed.

VTA Light Rail: Convention Center to Winchester



We've focused this part of the document on the line from downtown San José to Campbell. The round trip is an hour or so, and Campbell makes a delightful stop for lunch or a snack.

[Convention Center – San Fernando]

From the Convention Center stop you can see the San José Civic Auditorium on your right. It was built by the Works Progress Administration in 1934. Behind it is the Montgomery Theatre used for smaller presentations. On your left is the Convention Center, named after Tom McEnery, mayor of San José from 1983 to 1990. He is now an author and vice president of the San José Sharks Hockey Team. Also on your left is the old Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, which was opened in April of 1970 and was used until 2003 when the new main library of the same name opened at 4th and San Fernando. The new library, which is a partnership between San Jose and San Jose State, will be used for Saturday's paper sessions. The Convention Center grew up around this building in the mid 80's. As you cross palm-tree lined Almaden Boulevard, you see the local Ernst and Young offices on the left and the Center for Performing Arts on the right. The architectural merits of the CPA can be debated, but most people can accurately guess when it was built. After you cross the Guadalupe River, the Children's Discovery Park appears with its giant Monopoly Board. You can rent pieces to play. The purple building at the end of the park is the Children's Discovery Museum, located on Woz Way, named after Steve Wozniak, founder of Apple, benefactor of the Tech Museum, San José Ballet (including improvements to the Center for Performing Arts where they perform) and the Children's Discovery Museum, and kid at heart.

The train goes under Highway 87, and you can see signs twice for Delmas St., named for Antonio Delmas, an early vintner in San José. You can also see boarded-up housing awaiting more urban renewal. Sharply to your right, you can see two high rise corporate buildings: the Adobe Headquarters and the Headquarters of Acer America. You can also see the San José Water Company Building, built in 1934 and a San José City Landmark. According to a press release, Adobe purchased the property in 2005 since they are leasing their current space. The Water Company only has access through June 2008, but Adobe promises to keep the façade intact when they develop the whole property.

[San Fernando – San José Diridon]

From the station you can see Arena Green across the parking lot to the right. You can see HP Pavilion itself (to geek *cognoscenti*, the play on words of the HP laptop line is amusing). On the left at the end of the station is a set of colorfully striped lion sculptures entitled “Life is a Circus”. As the train pulls away, you cross Los Gatos Creek. It flows into the Guadalupe about a quarter mile north of this point. Soon you go into a short tunnel to pass under the railroad tracks at the station. On your right as you go through the RR station area, you can see new construction on your right. This is “Fifty-One”, a condominium complex that uses the exterior walls of the Calpak/Del Monte Cannery Number 51. This site is on a Sunday tour. Diridon Station is named after Rod Diridon, a former Chairman of the County Board of Supervisors and Member of the Transit Board, and the principal force behind the development of the light rail system here. It was built in 1935 as part of a relocation of the SP tracks away from downtown. It’s listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural and historical significance. The station serves Caltrain (Peninsula service to San Francisco and to Gilroy), Capitol Corridor (San José to Sacramento), ACE (Altamont Commuter Express, Stockton to San José) and AMTRAK. AMTRAK busses connect to cities all over the region.

[San José Diridon – Race]

At the station you can also see another condo complex past ‘51’ called Cahill Park, which was originally other cannery buildings, but you can’t really tell from the way the area was developed. The old railroad water tower is on the right as you pull away from the station. You can also see the fire department training tower on your left.

The Monte Vista condominium construction is soon on your left. Note the gray concrete wall fragments with a diamond pattern, and the last remnant of the distinctive sawtooth roof. These “moderne” walls are from Del Monte Cannery Number 3 that was razed to make way for the condos. This plant was the last major cannery in the Valley to close. You can also see the preserved water tower from the cannery. In addition to these mitigations, KB Homes also funded the History San José website section on “Cannery Life” – an excellent web visit. This development is on Auzerais, which is named after pioneers John and Edward Auzerais, early merchants and vintners, who also built the Auzerais House, a famous early hotel on East Santa Clara Street.

Just past the condos on the left are some old white warehouse buildings that deserve some investigation...

As you approach Race, you can see a 19 acre property on your right that’s under redevelopment. It was originally cannery property. Over time it was called Hershel California Cannery, Glorietta Foods and Pacific Coast Cannery. It was sold in the early 1980’s to Sobrato, a local developer, who built an office complex of six buildings. According to a Mercury News article, the first tenants included Acrian, which manufactured radio amplifiers; Censtor, a semiconductor company; and Array Technology, which made programmable chips. When these companies were acquired or went under, StrataCom leased all six buildings until it was acquired by Cisco Systems in 1996. Finally, the property was subleased to several companies, including DirecTV. Now that the neighborhood has gone “post industrial” and residential – it will soon be condos.

[Race – Fruitdale]

The train crosses I280 and Meridian Ave. and follows Southwest Expressway. More new housing is being built along this corridor on the left. This property used to be a KMart.

[Fruitdale – Bascom]

This section has vintage 50's and 60's housing (quadriplexes and apartments) on the left. The route is now along a rail line that it will follow to the terminus. The rail line continues on to service the Hanson Permanente (formerly Kaiser Permanente) Cement plant in the Cupertino foothills. Bascom Avenue is named for Dr. L. H. Bascom, who came with his wife Anna Maria Bascom to California in 1849. They arrived in San José just as the first legislature was meeting, and they opened their home on Second and San Fernando Streets to others who had no place to stay, so Anna Maria was dubbed the first hostess of the city.

[Bascom – Hamilton]

As you approach the Hamilton station, you are over the Los Gatos Creek Trail, which extends from Lexington Reservoir to the south up to the Willow Glen area of San José. It is a popular route for exercise. The trail runs along a set of percolation ponds that restore the aquifer under the Valley.

[Hamilton – Downtown Campbell]

From the station you can see the Pruneyard Towers. Campbell was known as “The Orchard City” during the years of the Valley of Heart's Delight, and up until a few years ago there was an annual Prune Festival. As tastes have changed and memory has dimmed, the festival is now Cajun themed. To its credit, the Highland Gathering and Games are still held here in Campbell. You pass over Highway 17, which leads to Santa Cruz, and then you are in the backyards of Campbell.

Just past 17, you can see an outlet of Fry's Electronics on the right. This one has an Egyptian theme. Fry's was started by one of the children of the Fry's Food (grocery stores) family, and they are known for having everything that a nerd needs – both potato chips and computer chips. A visit to one of them is recommended while you are here.

[Downtown Campbell – Winchester]

You might choose to get off here to explore Campbell. If you do, you have either a 15-20 minute break before the train returns, or a 75 minute visit before the next train. (Check for exact times.) Within a short walk of the station are the Campbell Water Tower (it has a plaque), the Campbell Historical Museum and the Ainsley House. There are also some nice eateries along Campbell Ave. John Colpitts Ainsley came to Campbell in the late 1800s and operated a canning business, employing up to 750 people in the peak season. Considered progressive, the cannery provided a nurse, on-site nursery and kindergarten and worker housing.

In addition, there was the Campbell Fruit Growers Union, established in 1892, that primarily shipped fresh and dried fruit. George Hyde, the Union's major stockholder, changed its name to the George E. Hyde Company in 1909. He both canned and dried fruit. The drying grounds occupied about 17 acres. Hyde also provided day care and men's and women's housing. Various owners followed Hyde until closure in the 1970s.

Finally, the California Prune and Apricot Growers Association also was located in Campbell. Their plant later became known as Sunsweet Plant 1. It closed in 1971.

[Downtown Campbell – Winchester]

If you choose to ride out to Winchester, you can see the sign “Geo E Hyde and Sons Co 1909” on the left on the way back.

VTA Light Rail: Downtown to Santa Teresa

This is the least industrial of the VTA Light Rail routes, with nothing of great very interesting from an IA standpoint until you get to the very end, where to the north of the Santa Teresa Station is the former IBM Cottle Road complex, which was the primary site for research, development and manufacturing of disk drives. The disk drive was perfected in a rented lab building at 99 Notre Dame in downtown San José in 1956 by a research team headed by Rey Johnson. The Cottle Road complex opened a bit later, and grew to be one of the largest employers in the Valley. Many companies in the storage business can trace their roots back to IBMers such as Alan Shugart who founded a several different companies in the business over his career. In 2003 IBM sold the disk business to Hitachi Global Storage Systems. Most of the operation had been shut down as manufacturing and R&D shifted elsewhere. Building 25, one of the first on the site had been the focus of controversy, as preservationists felt it worthy of keeping, while Lowe's wanted to tear it down to put up a parking lot, as part of site redevelopment. In early 2008, Building 25 was heavily damaged in a fire of suspicious origin.