

**RESOLUTION NO. 80639**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN JOSE APPROVING A NEW CITY COUNCIL POLICY 5-8, ENTITLED “TRANSIT FIRST POLICY” TO PRIORITIZE TRANSIT OPERATIONS AND ACCESS IN PLANS AND OPERATIONAL DECISION-MAKING**

**WHEREAS**, San José’s Envision 2040 General Plan and Climate Smart plan, along with the Council approved Paris Accord and Zero Emissions 2030 pledge set bold goals of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) reduction for the City, including making transit more attractive in order to reduce auto use and dependence, and the resulting emissions; and

**WHEREAS**, in February 2020, the City Council added the *Citywide Transit First Policy Framework* to the Department of Transportation (DOT) work plan through the City Council priority setting process, which directed staff to develop a Transit First Policy (Policy) and work with stakeholders to identify improvements the City can make to street design, signals, sidewalks, and other infrastructure along identified transit corridors to “achieve our mobility, transit accessibility, efficiency, and affordability goals; and

**WHEREAS**, *Council Policy Priority #14: Citywide Transit First Policy Framework* directed that the Policy include the following:

1. Whenever a street where transit operates is part of a planning effort, the effort should incorporate how to make transit faster, more useful, and a more viable option.
2. Any street that operates large amounts of buses per hour or where speeds are below an ideal threshold should be considered for transit priority improvements

**WHEREAS**, the Policy articulates the value of transit for the City, outlines the needs of equitable, reliable, and competitive transit over those of other road users on *Grand*

*Boulevards*, and how the City makes decisions on street design and use of the entire right-of-way across many departments and processes, and to ensure these different processes align with the overall goal of improving transit; and

**WHEREAS**, the Policy includes two components: 1) the Transit First Policy, which articulates the value of transit for the City (Exhibit “A”), and 2) a Transit First Toolkit, which guides designers to the appropriate infrastructure and technology to support transit operations at different locations throughout the City (Exhibit “B”); and

**WHEREAS**, a working group comprised of the City’s Department of Transportation, VTA, and Councilmember Pam Foley’s Office (District 9 ) worked to collaboratively develop the policy; the City also worked with Latinos Unidos por una Nueva America (LUNA), a community-based organization focused in the Silicon Valley to conduct outreach and facilitate community discussions to inform the policy; and

**WHEREAS**, the City proposes to adopt a new San José City Council Policy 5-8, entitled “Transit First Policy” (“Policy 5-8”) that establishes the following guidelines:

1. Prioritize the public transit system and its riders along Grand Boulevards throughout the city above other modes, barring safety concerns, to achieve the three goals of Equity, Reliability, and Competitiveness. Evaluate and recommend streets serving High Quality Transit upon which to similarly prioritize the public transit system.
2. Dedicate City right of way on streets designated as Grand Boulevards and recommended streets serving High Quality Transit, in a way that prioritizes the public transit system and rider needs, before other road users are accommodated, barring safety concerns. Designs should prioritize the mobility and access of transit vehicles and riders, including improvements to transit stops and the pedestrian realm.

3. Evaluate and recommend via Multimodal Transportation Improvement Plans (MTIP) and similar area plans the re-assignment of City Connector and Local Connector General Plan designated streets serving High Quality Transit routes, where appropriate, as Grand Boulevards.
4. Seek grant funding, available City funding, and developer mitigation contributions for public transit improvements.
5. Apply equity screening and prioritize disadvantaged communities when investing in street improvements to improve ridership, desirability, and on-time performance of the public transit system.
6. Utilize the Transit First Toolkit to select the appropriate infrastructure and/or technology to best achieve City goals in the design process.
7. Implement transit-supporting infrastructure and technology in street design on streets served by or proximate to transit where feasible.
8. Continue to monitor the effectiveness of tools within the Transit First Toolkit, and tools recommended by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), and international best practices; update the Transit First Toolkit over time.
9. Support the implementation of transit infrastructure for *frequent transit routes* on County and VTA right-of-way; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Section 15168(c)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines, the City of San José has determined that approval of the Policy is pursuant to, in furtherance of and within the scope of the previously approved program evaluated in the Final Program Environmental Impact Report for the Envision San José 2040 General Plan (the “FEIR”), for which findings were adopted by City Council through its Resolution No. 76041 on November 1, 2011 and Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (the “SEIR”), through Resolution No. 77617, adopted by City Council on December 15, 2015, and Addenda

thereto, and does not involve new significant effects beyond those analyzed in the FEIR and SEIR; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of San José is the decision-making body for approval of the new Policy;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN JOSE THAT:

1. The recitals above are incorporated herein as findings for the adoption of City Council Policy 5-8.
2. City Council Policy 5-8, entitled "Transit First Policy", as set forth in Exhibit "A," is hereby adopted.
3. The City Manager or designee is authorized to promulgate guidelines necessary to implement the requirements of City Council Policy 5-8. The guidelines shall be published on the City's website.

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ADOPTED this 9<sup>TH</sup> day of August, 2022, by the following vote:

AYES: ARENAS, CARRASCO, COHEN, DAVIS, ESPARZA,  
FOLEY, JONES, JIMENEZ, MAHAN, PERALEZ,  
LICCARDO.

NOES: NONE.

ABSENT: NONE.

DISQUALIFIED: NONE.



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SAM LICCARDO  
Mayor

ATTEST:



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TONI J. TABER, CMC  
City Clerk

City of San José  
Council Policy

<b>TITLE</b> TRANSIT FIRST POLICY	<b>PAGE</b> 1 of 3	<b>POLICY NUMBER</b> 5-8
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	<b>REVISED DATE</b>	
<b>APPROVED BY COUNCIL ACTION</b>		

**BACKGROUND**

The Envision San José 2040 General Plan sets forth a vision and comprehensive road map to guide the City’s continued growth through the year 2040. The General Plan strategically links land use and transportation to reduce the environmental impacts of growth by promoting compact mixed-use development that supports walking, biking, and transit use. The General Plan seeks to focus new developments along transit corridors and in Planned Growth Areas, bringing together office, residential, and service land uses to internalize trips and reduce VMT. The General Plan also encourages the development and use of non-automobile transportation modes to minimize vehicle trip generation and reduce VMT.

The Transit First Policy (the Policy) implements the General Plan. It supports General Plan goals: TR 1 Balanced Transportation System, TR 3 Maximize use of Public Transit, and TR 4 Passenger Rail Service. Additionally, the Policy aligns with Climate Smart San José by supporting strategies: 2.3 Create Clean, Personalized Mobility Choices, 2.4 Develop Integrated, Accessible Public Transport Infrastructure, and the Plan goal of a commute mode shift goal of 35% Transit by 2040. This Policy is based on best practices research and expert knowledge of a working group comprising City and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Staff. The Policy intends to contextualize industry-leading design with local considerations to enhance transit in ways best suited to San José.

The Policy is divided into two sections: this Policy Statement and a Transit First Toolkit. Together, these sections will guide City staff decision-making going forward.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Policy:** Direction to City staff to be incorporated into planning efforts, roadway design, operations, and decision making to make transit equitable, reliable, and competitive for all San Joseans.

**Transit First Toolkit:** A list of recommended design, infrastructure and technology to support the Policy goals, and the appropriate context for implementing each tool. The Toolkit will be used by staff to implement the direction of the Policy.

**Grand Boulevards:** A General Plan street classification that prioritizes transit use. These streets, while accommodating all modes including private autos, are designed with the movement of transit vehicles and the rider experience of transit users as their first design criteria. After providing for transit, pedestrians should be prioritized and designed for next, as transit riders typically begin their trips as pedestrians. Once these two modes are addressed, the remaining road space and resources are equitably distributed among other road users, taking the surrounding network and routing options for various modes into account.

**High Quality Transit:** Transit routes served by headways of 15 minutes or less, with buses, trains, or other vehicles arriving at a stop within every 15 minutes during peak commute hours.

**Public Transit System:** The vehicles, right of way, and technological and signal systems used by VTA and other public agencies to provide mobility and access to transit users.

## **POLICY**

The City of San José shall take an active role in making transit successful by improving transit operations and access in the right of way elements under its control. This shall include taking responsibility to prioritize equitable, reliable, and competitive transit in all planning, infrastructure design, and policy decisions. The City shall collaborate with and support local, regional, and state agencies, including VTA, and Caltrain to accomplish this goal. This Policy intends to provide a public transit system rooted in the three goals of:

**Equity**, providing for the just distribution of investment in infrastructure and transit improvements as outlined in the Transit First Toolkit across San José based on need and highest positive impact; emphasize rider affordability, ease, dignity, and wellbeing when on, waiting for, and accessing transit vehicles and facilities;

**Reliability**, enabling high on-time performance, convenient rider information and wayfinding, easy and intuitive transfers between transit lines and different transit systems, and minimizing service interruptions due to City actions or City permitted activity;

**Competitiveness**, supporting auto-comparable travel times and experience along transit corridors, to Planned Growth Areas, and to major destinations via investment in transit mobility, technology, and transit curb access.

### **Policy Guidelines:**

1. Prioritize the public transit system and its riders along Grand Boulevards throughout the city above other modes, barring safety concerns, to achieve the three goals of Equity, Reliability, and Competitiveness. Evaluate and recommend streets serving High Quality Transit upon which to similarly prioritize the public transit system.
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should prioritize the mobility and access of transit vehicles and riders, including improvements to transit stops and the pedestrian realm.

3. Evaluate and recommend via Multimodal Transportation Improvement Plans (MTIP) and similar area plans the re-assignment of City Connector and Local Connector General Plan designated streets serving High Quality Transit routes, where appropriate, as Grand Boulevards.
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5. Apply equity screening and prioritize disadvantaged communities when investing in street improvements to improve ridership, desirability, and on-time performance of the public transit system.
6. Utilize the Transit First Toolkit to select the appropriate infrastructure and/or technology to best achieve City goals in the design process.
7. Implement transit-supporting infrastructure and technology in street design on streets served by or proximate to transit where feasible.
8. Continue to monitor the effectiveness of tools within the Transit First Toolkit, and tools recommended by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), and international best practices; update the Transit First Toolkit over time.
9. Support the implementation of transit infrastructure for frequent transit routes on County and VTA right-of-way.