

# SAN JOSE TO MERCED HIGH-SPEED RAIL EIR/EIS REVIEW FOCUS ON MORGAN HILL

Akoni Danielsen  
*Principal*



# Focus of Review

## -Four alignments passing through Morgan Hill

- Alternative 1/3: Viaduct West of US 101
- Alternative 2: East of UPRR on Embankment
- Alternative 4: At-grade Blended UPRR (*HSR Preferred Alt.*)

## -Issues Reviewed

- Traffic operations, safety
- Noise/vibration
- Aesthetics
- Cultural resources
- City '4(f)' public facilities.

# Traffic and Safety

## General Concerns:

- Many roadways will be closed or modified by the project under Alt.2 or Alt. 4
- no analysis of the impacts of traffic being redistributed to other roadways.
- Project would result in adverse impacts at numerous intersections.
- However, EIR provides no details on how these impacts will be mitigated.

## Alternative 4 concerns:

- At-grade crossings increase emergency vehicle response time due to quad-gates
- Suggest a grade separation at Dunne Avenue to address potential queuing issues, project impacts along Main Avenue, and emergency response time delays due to increased gate-down time.
- Suggest a grade separation at Tennant Avenue to address potential queuing issues and emergency response time delays due to increased gate-down time .
- Suggest a grade separation at Tilton Avenue to mitigate the project impact at Monterey Road and Tilton Avenue.

# Noise/Vibration

## Noise:

- Alt. 2 is worst, due to the elevated railway on the embankment, impacts roughly 1,000 properties along the UPRR corridor.
- Alt. 4 is next, at-grade tracks impact about 800 properties.
- Alts. 1 and 3 impact roughly 100 properties primarily along US101.
- Mitigate by use of sound walls at various locations, more detail needed.
- Alt. 4 train horn blasts a major concern (176 trains daily)

## Vibration:

- Alts. 1, 2, and 3 would be minimal.
- Alt. 4, the at-grade blended option, would impact over 100 properties.

# Aesthetics

## Alternatives 1/3

- The aerial structure would rise to heights of more than 60 feet above grade and would be taller than surrounding homes, offices, and other buildings in the area.
- EIR claims the impact would be less than significant, City could disagree



# Aesthetics

## Alternative 2 Embankment

- EIR concludes less than significant, City could disagree



# Aesthetics

## Alternative 4 At-Grade

- Less impactful than Alt. 2, focus on soundwall design

## Nighttime Lighting

- EIR concludes significant and unavoidable for Alts. 1, 2, and 3
- Alternative 4 is less than significant

# Cultural Resources

## • Historic Structures in Morgan Hill

- - Madrone Underpass, UPRR underpass structure for Monterey Road crossing (**demolished under Alt. 4**)
- - Villa Mira Monte, 17860 Monterey Rd, Victorian Stick-style residence.
- - Church of Christ, 17098 Monterey Rd, Arts and Crafts-style church.
- - Cribari Winery, 18980 Monterey Rd, L-plan Craftsman-style building. (**demolished under Alt. 2**)



# City 4(f) Public Facilities

## Potentially Affected 4(f) properties in Morgan Hill

- Morgan Hill Community and Cultural Center (Alts. 2/4 require mitigation)
- Morgan Hill Outdoor Sports Center
- Morgan Hill Aquatics Center
- Villa Mira Monte (Alts. 2/4 require mitigation)
- Madrone Underpass (demolished under Alt. 4)
- Sanchez Park