

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION



An aerial, black and white photograph of a city street. The street is wide with multiple lanes, and several cars are visible. A large, leafy tree stands on the left side of the road. Buildings with flat roofs are visible at the bottom of the frame.

Introduction


As it has evolved from the county seat of “The Valley of Heart’s Delight,” to “The Capital of Silicon Valley,” San José has grown enormously over the past 60 years. The population has surged from just over 600,000 in 1960 to well over a million residents today. To accommodate that growth, the city has grown through outward development and annexation, following a very typical pattern of California-style sprawl, to reach its current size of 180 square miles.

Though San José takes up an area more than half the size of New York City, it has less than an eighth of the Big Apple’s population. Without the population density or land-use patterns to support high transit use or active modes like walking and biking, the car became the predominant form of travel.

Wide, fast roads were built to accommodate that suburban framework, but eventually space became too scarce to continue widening. Moreover, the city began to see the downsides of this pattern: increased traffic congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, traffic collisions, and, ironically, continued urban sprawl.

In 2011, the City of San José adopted the Envision San José 2040 General Plan. The ambitious document spells out a vision for the future of California’s third-largest city, characterized by sustainable growth, economic vibrancy, and preservation of the city’s historical and natural resources. Urban Villages are core to that vision. West José has 11 urban villages, five with adopted plans. The five adopted urban villages plans are West San Carlos, Stevens Creek Boulevard, Santana Row / Valley Fair, Winchester Boulevard, and South Bascom.

**THE WEST,
SAN JOSE
URBAN
VILLAGE
PLANS
TOGETHER
PLAN FOR:**

 **5,094,000**
square feet of
commercial space



11,500
new homes

16,980



new
jobs

Together the plans establish land use and transportation strategies that promote walkable, bicycle-friendly, transit-oriented, mixed-use places.

Figure 3 - Planned Growth Adopted in the Urban Villages within the WSJ MTIP

URBAN VILLAGE PLAN	HOUSING (DU)	COMMERCIAL SPACE (SF)	JOBS
Stevens Creek Blvd	3,860	1,350,000	4,500
Santana Row / Valley Fair	2,635	2,550,000	8,500
Winchester Blvd	2,200	600,000	2,000
West San Carlos	1,245	294,000	980
South Bascom Ave	1,560	300,000	1,000

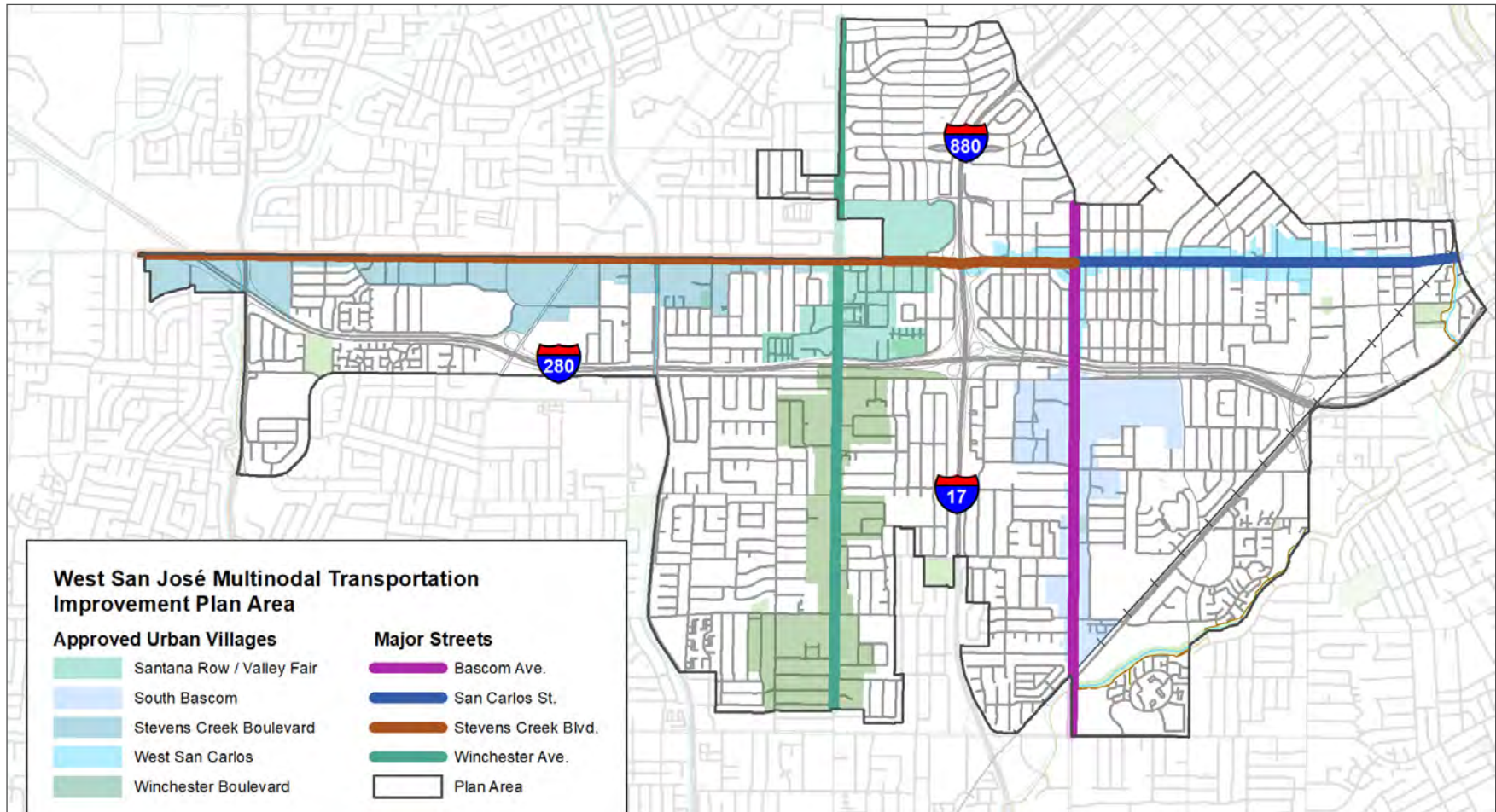
Source: San José Urban Village Plans

The West San José Multimodal Transportation Improvement Plan (WSJ MTIP) has been created by San José’s Department of Transportation (DOT) to connect and bolster these urban villages with a more detailed understanding of transportation needs and solutions, with a focus on improving roadway safety and achieving ambitious mode shift and greenhouse gas reduction goals.

This 20-year strategic plan identifies and prioritizes specific transportation projects, programs and policies that would reduce dependency on single occupancy automobile trips and improve access and mobility for West San José residents, workers, and visitors.

The WSJ MTIP area expands one mile from Stevens Creek Boulevard, West San Carlos Street, Winchester Boulevard, and Bascom Avenue to encompass all adopted urban villages and all but one planned urban village.

Figure 4 - Plan Area and Adopted Urban Villages



Source: San José Urban Village Plans

