



# Barriers for Homeless People in San Jose when Accessing Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)'s Transit Service

Jie Guo

May 2017

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# **Barriers for Homeless People in San Jose When Accessing Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)'s Transit Service**

A Planning Report  
Presented to  
The Faculty of the Department of  
Urban and Regional Planning

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Urban Planning

By  
Jie Guo  
May 2017

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my appreciation to all the people who have supported to finish this project.

Thank you to all the interviewees who took time out of their busy day to share with me their experience and knowledge. Your participations and inputs are invaluable to my research.

To my advisor Richard Kos, thank you so much for your words of advice, encouragement, and patience. I am gratefully indebted to your valuable comments on this thesis.

Finally, I must express my very profound gratitude to my parents and friends for providing me with unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout my 2-year study and through the process of researching and writing this thesis. This accomplishment would not have been possible without them.

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1: Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.2 Research Questions .....	3
1.3 Definition of Homelessness .....	3
1.4 Overview of Homelessness in San Jose.....	4
1.5 Methods of the Study .....	9
<b>Chapter 2: Homeless Status and Homeless Services in San Jose .....</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1 Demographic Information of Homeless People in San Jose.....	13
2.2 Distribution of Homeless Encampments, Shelters, and Services .....	19
2.3 Policies or Programs Related to Homeless People in San Jose .....	25
<b>Chapter 3: VTA Services and Performance.....</b>	<b>29</b>
3.1: Overview of Public Transit Service in San Jose .....	29
3.2 Specific Transit Services or Programs for Homeless People.....	35
<b>Chapter 4: Accessibility of the Homeless Services and Transit Services .....</b>	<b>38</b>
4.1: Access to Homeless Services .....	38
4.2 Access to VTA Transit Services .....	42
<b>Chapter 5: Conclusion .....</b>	<b>50</b>
5.1: Summary of Findings.....	50
5.2 Limitations .....	52

5.3 Recommendations.....	53
5.4 Opportunities for Future Study .....	54
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Appendix A: Homeless Service Information in Santa Clara County .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Appendix B: Homeless Shelters Information in Santa Clara County .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Appendix C: VTA Service Frequency, January 2017 .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Appendix D: Interview Questions .....</b>	<b>68</b>



## List of Tables and Figures

Table 1.1. Ten U.S. Cities with the Largest Homeless Population in 2015. ....	2
Figure 1.1. Route Map for VTA Bus Route 22 .....	5
Figure 1.2. People are riding Bus 22 at Eastridge Transit Center.....	6
Figure 2.1. Homeless Population in San Jose from 2004 to 2015 .....	14
Figure 2.2. Homeless Census Result by Shelter Status in San Jose (2004-2015) .....	14
Figure 2.3. Age of Homeless People in San Jose from 2007- 2015 .....	17
Figure 2.4. Race of Homeless People in San Jose from 2007 – 2015 .....	18
Figure 2.5. The Jungle in San Jose .....	19
Figure 2.6. “The Jungle” of San Jose, photograph by Robert Salonga, The Mercury News.....	21
Figure 2.7. Homeless people are sleeping in St James Park (photograph by Sal Pizarro, The Mercury News) .....	21
Figure 2.8. Map of PATH’s Homeless Scan Conducted on March 31, 2017.....	22
Figure 2.9. Distribution Map of Homeless Shelters and Services in San Jose .....	24
Figure 3.1. Map of VTA Service Area .....	31
Figure 3.2. VTA Transit Service by Categories .....	33
Figure 3.3. VTA Light Rail.....	34
Figure 4.1. Comparison of VTA Services with Distribution of Homeless Services and Shelters.....	40
Figure 4.2. Frequency Map of VTA Service, Weekdays 9am-3pm .....	42
Figure 4.3. Frequency Chart of VTA Service, Weekdays 9 am – 3 pm .....	43
Figure 4.4. Frequency Map of VTA Service on Saturday 9 am – 6 pm .....	43
Figure 4.5. Frequency Chart of VTA Service on Saturday 9 am – 6 pm.....	44



Figure 4.6. Frequency Map of VTA Service on Sunday 9 am – 6 pm .....	44
Figure 4.7. Frequency Chart of VTA Service on Sunday 9 am – 6 pm.....	45

## Preface

I went to the First Presbyterian Church of San Jose on a rainy day in April. There are many ladies talking and having lunch together. Those ladies came here to participate in a program named Women's Gathering Place (WGP), where women without a home can find the support of other women, connect to vital services, and find respite, spiritual renewal, and a job when there is nowhere else to go but the street. After I had told the director, Karleen, I wanted to interview some homeless people who use VTA often, she introduced me a white lady named Mrs. White. She was graceful, clean, and friendly. I thought Karleen misunderstood me, so I told her I was wanted to meet a homeless person, not a volunteer in this program. Mrs. White said she lived in the "Motel 22" (the only 24- hour bus in Silicon Valley where many homeless people ride at night as a shelter) for the previous 100 nights. Mrs. White is 72 years old, she worked hard her whole life and retired seven years ago. Mrs. White lived in a town 50 miles away from San Jose, she owned a BMW and a JEEP before she became homeless. All of her family is in the hospital, which is why she is homeless now. She said all that she can do is keep her own health and wait for her family members to get out of the hospital.

It is incredible to meet such a lady with a strong spirit. However, I feel sorry to hear her story, and I am more passionate about this research to help homeless people get out of their situation.

This report evaluates Valley Transportation Authority's (VTA) public transit services for homeless people in San Jose. The objective is to examine whether the current public transit networks meet homeless people's transportation needs and, at the end, provides recommendations for VTA to better serve the needs of San Jose's homeless population. To address this concern, the researcher implemented the following methods to assess the transportation needs of the homeless population in San Jose:

- 1) Conducted interviews with homeless people who frequently use public transit to understand their mobility needs and barriers in accessing the VTA transit system. Data collection also included their reasons for using public transit, the frequency of public

transit use, the routes, their destinations, how they access the public transportation stops, and how they like the public transit service.

- 2) Conducted interviews with homeless service providers, which include a bus driver, city staff, and transportation planner.

Interviewees were asked to discuss how they have already improved, or how they *can* improve the service to the homeless; as well as popular routes that meet homeless people's transportation needs.

- 3) Used a Geographic Information System (GIS) to analyze the bus service area in San Jose and calculate coverage rate of homeless service agencies within the service area.

These three methods allowed the researcher to offer policy suggestions as to how the VTA can better meet the transportation needs of the city's homeless population.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter provided the background and relevant information on the research topic, which focuses on homeless people using public transit in San Jose. This chapter contains five sub-sections: “Background of the Study,” “Research Questions,” “Overview to the Homelessness in San Jose,” “Definition of Homelessness”, and “Methods of the Study”. In the first subsection, a general introduction to the research topic has been presented; next, three specific research questions are raised in the “Research Question” section; and the third subsection introduced the “ Definition of Homelessness” from U.S Department of Health and Human Service; in “Overview to the Homelessness in San Jose”, this subsection covered the importance of conducting this research; finally, the research methods, data collection, and analysis have been described in “Methods of the Study” section.

---

<sup>1</sup> The White House, President’s New Freedom Initiative, 2004. Accessed October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/newfreedom/toc-2004.html>

<sup>2</sup> US Census, *Quick Facts*, San Jose City, California. Accessed October 1<sup>st</sup>,

### 1.1 Background of the Study

In 2001, the United States government adopted a national goal of ending chronic homelessness in ten years.<sup>1</sup> In Silicon Valley, both the City of San Jose and Santa Clara County have engaged in some planning efforts to address homelessness. This includes the City of San Jose’s 2003 homelessness strategy, the *Keys to Housing: a 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness in Santa Clara County Report*, the Blue Ribbon Commission on Ending Homelessness and Solving the Affordable Housing Crisis, and the Housing First (HF) Program, which are offering housing and community support services for homeless persons in San Jose and Santa Clara County.

The City of San Jose, the focus of this research, is located along the Pacific Ocean and in close proximity to San Francisco Bay. It had a population of 1,026,908<sup>2</sup> in 2015, and was the tenth largest city in the United States.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, as shown in

2016. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/0668000.00>.

<sup>3</sup> Wikipedia, *San Jose*, California. Accessed October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San\\_Jose,\\_California](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Jose,_California).

Table 1.1, the City of San Jose and Santa Clara County had 6,556 homeless persons, was ranked the ninth largest area by the homeless population in the United States in 2015.<sup>4</sup>

Table 1.1. Ten U.S. Cities with the Largest Homeless Population in 2015.

Source: U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2015

Areas	Total Homeless
New York City	75,323
Los Angeles City and County	41,174
Seattle/King County	10,122
San Diego City and County	8,742
Las Vegas/Clark County	7,509
District of Columbia	7,298
Chicago	6,786
San Francisco	6,775
San Jose/Santa Clara City and County	6,556
Boston	6,492

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), an additional focus of this research effort, undertakes the responsibility for countywide transportation planning and funding and manages the county's blueprint to reduce congestion, and provide alternative modes for residents' mobility. The type of bus routes includes nineteen primaries;

<sup>4</sup> U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2015, Accessed October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

[https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/homeles](https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/homeles)

seven local/secondary; eleven feeders; twenty-two community buses; twelve expresses; and four limited stop routes. There are 3,818 bus stops within Santa Clara County; 709 of the 3,818 bus stations have covered shelters.<sup>5</sup>

## 1.2 Research questions

What are obstacles or challenges faced by San Jose's homeless people when accessing Valley Transportation Authority's (VTA) public transit services? What policies or strategies has the agency considered to serve the homeless population better? Based on these findings, what additional policy changes might further improve the ability of persons experiencing homelessness to use VTA's services?

## 1.3 Definition of Homelessness

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) defines homelessness as:

“An individual who lacks housing (without regard to whether the individual is a member of a family), including an

s.

<sup>5</sup> FAQs, *VTA Bus Service*. Accessed October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. <http://www.vta.org/news-and-media/vta-newsroom-vta-media-relations-frequently-asked-questions>.

individual whose primary residence during the night is a supervised public or private facility (e.g., shelters) that provides temporary living accommodations, and an individual who is a resident in transitional housing. A homeless person is an individual without permanent housing who may live on the streets, stay in a shelter, mission, single room occupancy facilities, abandoned building or vehicle, or in any other unstable or non-permanent situation.”<sup>6</sup>

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines two major types of homelessness: episodic and chronic.<sup>7</sup> Episodic homelessness is defined as a homeless individual who uses a homeless shelter repeatedly; on most occasions, they have a temporary place to live.<sup>8</sup> Chronic homelessness is defined by HUD, HHS, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as “an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been

continuously homeless for a year or more, or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.”<sup>9</sup>

#### ***1.4 Overview of Homelessness in San Jose***

An estimated 564,708 people experienced homelessness in the United States on a single night in January 2015.<sup>10</sup> Continuums of Care (CoCs) organized all the communities to count homeless people on the same day and report the number to HUD. Stable housing is a fundamental human need. When people have stable housing, quality of life indicators vastly improve such as health, education, employment, and engagement in the community.<sup>11</sup> For each family or person that is stably

---

<sup>6</sup> United States Code, 2006 Edition. *Containing the General and Permanent Laws of the United States Enacted during the 110th Congress, First Session, January 4, 2007, to January 8, 2008*. Washington, D.C.: U.S.G.P. O, 2009. accessed Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> *Strategic Action Plan on Homelessness*. Accessed on Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016. <http://www.hhs.gov/programs/social-services/homelessness/research/strategic-action-plan-on-homelessness/>.

<sup>8</sup> *The Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness: Opening the Back Door*. Accessed Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016. <http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/backdoor>.

<sup>9</sup> *Defining Chronic Homelessness: A Technical Guide for HUD Programs*. Accessed October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016.

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/DefiningChronicHomeless.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> *The State of Homelessness in America 2016*. Accessed October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016. <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/the-state-of-homelessness-in-america-2015>.

<sup>11</sup> Santa Clara County, *Keys to Housing: A 10-year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness in Santa Clara County*, 2005. Accessed September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016. <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1136>.

housed, the community can save costs for emergency housing, jail, and health care.<sup>12</sup> Due to the lack of affordable and supportive housing in Silicon Valley, some homeless people stay on a 24-hour bus as a night shelter to keep warm and safe. This bus is known locally as “Motel 22”, a reference to the route number.<sup>13</sup> Route 22 is the only 24-hour bus in Silicon Valley and runs 35 miles from Palo Alto’s Transit Center to San Jose’s Eastridge Transit Center. Figure 1.1 shows the Route 22 starts from Palo Alto Transit Center to Eastridge Transit Center and Figure 1.2 shows homeless people are waiting on the Eastridge Transit Center to loading bus for a round trip.

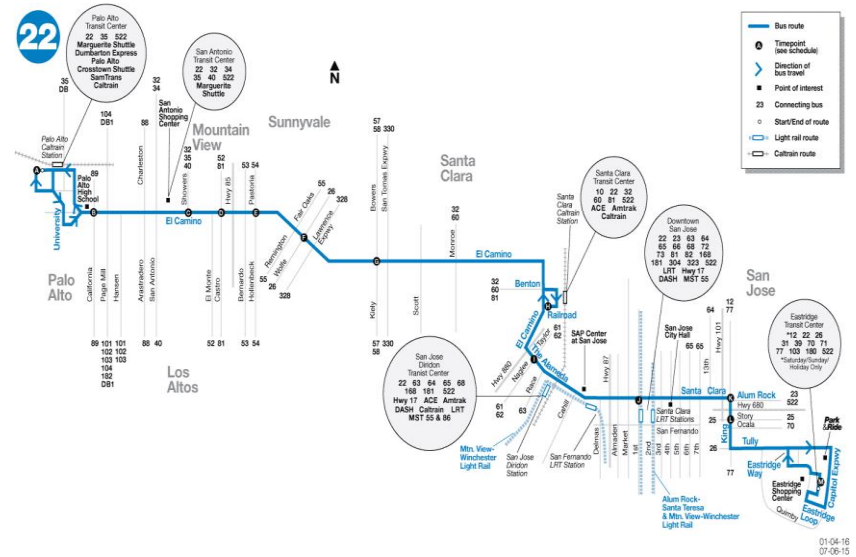


Figure 1.1. Route Map for VTA Bus Route 22. *Source:*

<http://www.vta.org/routes/rt22>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Angell, Isabel. "Finding a Home at Hotel 22." *KALW*. Accessed October 3<sup>rd</sup>,

2016. <http://kalw.org/post/finding-home-hotel-22#stream/0>.





Figure 1.2. People are riding Bus 22 at Eastridge Transit Center. *Photograph by: Jie Guo, April 7, 2017*

The issue of homelessness is especially severe in Silicon Valley, as it is one of the most expensive housing markets in the United States. In 2015, the Housing Department of San Jose estimated that there were 4,063 homeless people in City of San Jose, with 69 percent of those homeless, being unsheltered. 778

homeless individuals were living in informal outdoor encampments.<sup>14</sup>

The issue of homeless encampments has been controversial in San Jose. The City has identified 247 distinct encampments, 66 of which were identified as adjacent to Coyote Creek and the Guadalupe River.<sup>15</sup> To guarantee the safety and the health of the homeless persons, the City has been actively attempting to remove encampments. The number of homeless living in camps decreased from 1,230 in 2013, to 778 in 2015.<sup>16</sup> Movement into shelters seem to be a logical possible reason for explaining this decline; however only around 31 percent of the homeless population lives in emergency shelters, transitional housing facilities, or safe havens.

Shelters often have limited resources and strict regulations. For example, people must be in and out of the shelters at a specific time, thus not all homeless people prefer to live in a

<sup>14</sup> City of San Jose, *Homeless Point-in- Time Census & Survey Comprehensive Report 2015*. Accessed September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/44727>.

<sup>15</sup> The city of San Jose, *Homeless Encampment Response Report 2014*. Accessed September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<http://www.piersystem.com/external/content/document/1914/2183230/1/06-20-14HSGESD.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> City of San Jose, *Homeless Point-in- Time Census & Survey Comprehensive Report 2015*. Accessed September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/44727>.

shelter. In addition, shelter residents worry about exposure to sickness and criminal activities.<sup>17</sup> Even so, 69 percent of homeless people are unsheltered in San Jose.<sup>18</sup> The gap between the needs and services result in many homeless individuals living on the street, encampments, vacant housing, or even riding the bus as a shelter.<sup>19</sup>

"Tramp", "transient", and "drifter" are the labels that are often used to describe homeless people, who are commonly considered to be highly mobile.<sup>20</sup> Homeless people have to move around the city for shelters, food, health care, jobs, and other services. Homeless people's needs for public transportation are identical to "housed" residents. The greatest distinction between homeless people and housed people is in their customary daily destinations. Homeless people have to rely on

the urban city and move within the urban area, which is where key destinations tend to be: social services, local businesses, libraries, and other facilities. Homeless people's path is "time-space constrained" in most situations.<sup>21</sup> Because many homeless people cannot afford a vehicle or Uber, both episodically homeless and chronically homeless use public transportation as their main method to move to other places. Based on a survey of homeless people in Long Beach, California in 2008, 86 percent of homeless adults used public transportation at least once every week.<sup>22</sup> The episodically homeless people also use public transportation when they try to transition back into housing since commuting to work is an essential part of helping them move from being homeless to housed. The chronically homeless most

---

<sup>17</sup> Donley and Wright 'Shelters life for homeless men: risk or respite?' in McNamara, Robert Hartmann. *Homelessness in America*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008. Accessed May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, Google Scholar.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Nichols, Laura, and Fernando Cázares, "Homelessness and the Mobile Shelter System: Public Transportation as Shelter." *Journal of Social Policy* 40, no. 02 (2010): 333–350. Accessed May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, Academic Complete Search.

<sup>20</sup> \*Wolch, Jennifer R., Afsaneh Rahimian, and Paul Koegel, "Daily and Periodic Mobility Patterns of the Urban Homeless." *The Professional Geographer* 45, no. 2

(1993): 159–169. Accessed September 20, 2016, Google Scholar.

<sup>21</sup> \* Rowe, Stacy, and Jennifer Wolch, "Social Networks in Time and Space: Homeless Women in Skid Row, Los Angeles." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 80, no. 2 (1990): 184–204. Accessed September 20, 2016, Google Scholar.

<sup>22</sup> Jocoy, Christine L., and Vincent J. Del Casin, "The Mobility of Homeless People and Their Use of Public Transit in Long Beach, California," 2008. Accessed September 25, 2016. [https://www.metrotrans.org/sites/default/files/research-project/06-13\\_Jocoy\\_final\\_0\\_0.pdf](https://www.metrotrans.org/sites/default/files/research-project/06-13_Jocoy_final_0_0.pdf).

often use public transportation services when they move to different services or agencies, as well as shelters.<sup>23</sup>

Based on 182 surveys from homeless men and women at the 2009 Sacramento Homeless Connect held on May 29, 2009, 28.1 percent of the homeless people stated a lack of transportation as a significant barrier in staying employed. Furthermore, 27.6 percent of the surveyors did not have the transportation needed to access homeless agencies to receive services. The final report recommended expanding public transit opportunities, especially for the homeless population who take public transportation to their place of employment.<sup>24</sup>

### ***1.5 Methods of the study***

This section explained how to develop the research, reasons to collect the data, how to collect and create the GIS maps, and

how to gather the interviews information to answer my research questions.

A GIS map was created in order to evaluate how many homeless people have access to public transportation service within half-mile/10-minute walking distance of common locations. The map was based on the location of homeless shelters, encampments, VTA stations, and VTA routes. Half-mile (a 10-minute walk) is a comfortable walking distance for able-bodied persons when accessing daily destinations, which is supported by a recent study conducted by Mavoa, Witten, Creanor, and Sullivan in Auckland in 2012. It mentioned 800 m (0.5 miles) for estimating the distance that people will walk to a transit stop.<sup>25</sup> San Jose's city boundary and the road network were downloaded from the San Jose open data portal<sup>26</sup> and, from the VTA open data website<sup>27</sup>, the stops, routes, and

---

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> "National Coalition for the Homeless." *National Coalition for the Homeless*. Accessed May 10, 2017.  
<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/homelessemploymentre>

<sup>25</sup> Mavoa, Suzanne, Karen Witten, Tim McCreanor, and David O'Sullivan, "GIS-Based Destination Accessibility via Public Transit and Walking in Auckland, New

Zealand." *Journal of Transport Geography* 20, no. 1 (2012): 15–22, accessed October 3, 2016, Google Scholar.

<sup>26</sup> San Jose Open Data Portal. Accessed January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.  
<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=3308>

<sup>27</sup> VTA Open Data. Accessed January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.  
<https://data.vta.org/browse?category=Transit+Operations>

frequency data were collected. In this research, the homeless census data comes from 2015 San Jose homeless census report.<sup>28</sup> The homeless services information was obtained from the city's website<sup>29</sup>. The homeless shelter location and information came from multiple websites based on Google searches.

Two spreadsheets were created that list the homeless-related services and shelters. In order to create the transit service area map, geocoding, and address locators were used to match the address with the street map. ArcGIS Network Analyst was used to create the service area for bus and light rail stops based on 1/2-mile/10-minute walking distance along the road system of San Jose. The homeless shelters and services were added into the transit service area map to evaluate whether the public transit service covers them. Then the percentage of homeless sites within the service area was calculated.

There were eight interviewees undertaken for this research effort: two homeless service providers, four homeless people, one night bus driver of route 22, and one VTA transportation

planner, to address the three research questions stated in Chapter four.

All the interviewees live and/or work in San Jose. The interviewees provided a local perspective to complement literature review sources. Interviews were used to help assess the effectiveness of the public transit system for homeless persons in San Jose. The information included incentives for, and barriers to, successful public transportation service. The data was then used to evaluate the current public transit system and its ability to serve the needs of people experiencing homelessness. The interview results concentrated on why they do, or do not, take public transportation in San Jose. The participants explained in detail the ways in which they take advantage of public transit, their transportation needs, and their concerns about the accessibility of public transit. In addition to comparing the service area map with the location of the homeless shelters, the author sought to understand what other areas of improvement to the public transit system the homeless need. For the interview questions, see Appendix D.

---

<sup>28</sup> San Jose Homeless Report. Accessed September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=1289>

<sup>29</sup> Addressing Homelessness. Accessed December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<http://www.sanjoseculture.org/index.aspx?NID=738>.

The interviewees read the GIS maps to see if the results match the homeless people's experience in real life. Based on their response, other destinations that were important to them, but hard to access by public transportation, were highlighted. The primary barriers to medical center that interviewees mentioned were categorized. Interview information was used to analyze how satisfied the homeless population was with the public transportation in San Jose. Based on the maps and interview information, the conclusion discussed strategies to improve the public transportation in San Jose, by comparing homeless people's need with the current public transportation service. The collected responses influence the conclusion and recommendations to the VTA. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of San Jose State University approved the investigator to conduct research with human subjects.

## Chapter 2: Homeless Status and Homeless Services in San Jose

Chapter two focuses on the demographic information of homeless people as well as the homeless services in San Jose. This chapter contains three sub-sections, which are “the Demographic Information of Homeless People in San Jose”, “the Distribution of Homeless Services and Shelters”, and “Policies and Programs Related to the Homeless People in San Jose”. The first section presents key findings from the 2007-2015 San Jose Homeless Census Reports; for the “the Distribution of Homeless Shelters and Shelter.” This section includes a homeless distribution map as well as interview information from homeless individuals in San Jose. Lastly, the final section discusses some of the local housing programs in the region.

### 2.1 Demographic Information of Homeless People in San Jose

The City of San Jose has conducted point-in-time count surveys every two or three years, since 2004, to better understand the homeless population’s conditions. This section compares the past six reports to display the homeless

demographic information in San Jose.

As seen in Figure 2.1, over the last 11 years, the average homeless population is around 4,300 people. Within this time, from 2004 to 2015, the population decreased by 707 individuals.

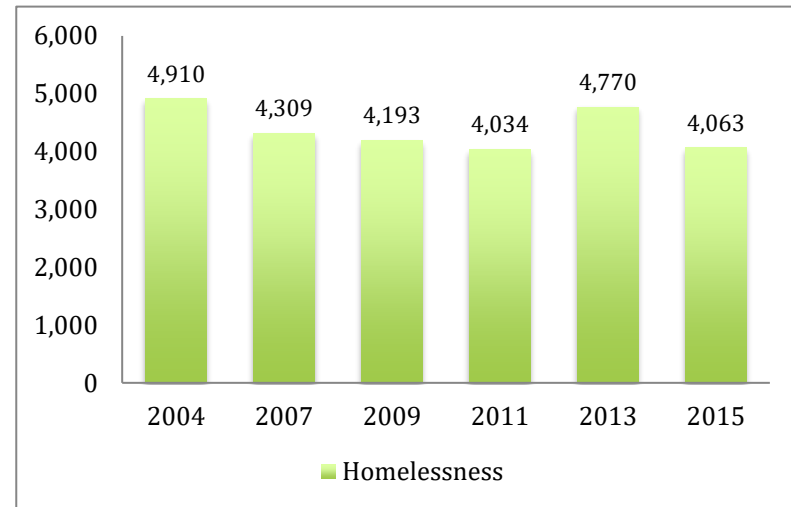


Figure 2.1. Homeless Population in San Jose from 2004 to 2015. *Source:* Applied Survey Research. (2004 - 2015), San José Homeless Census. San José, CA.

From figure 2.2, we can see that the total homeless population is quite stable. The number of sheltered homeless people dropped quite rapidly from 2004 to 2007. After that, the number of sheltered homeless people increased at a relatively slow rate. Meanwhile, from 2007 to 2013, the population of unsheltered homeless people continually increased, except for in 2009. From 2013 to 2015, the total homeless population

decreased quite significantly; as did the number of unsheltered homeless people, which decreased approximately 20 percent.

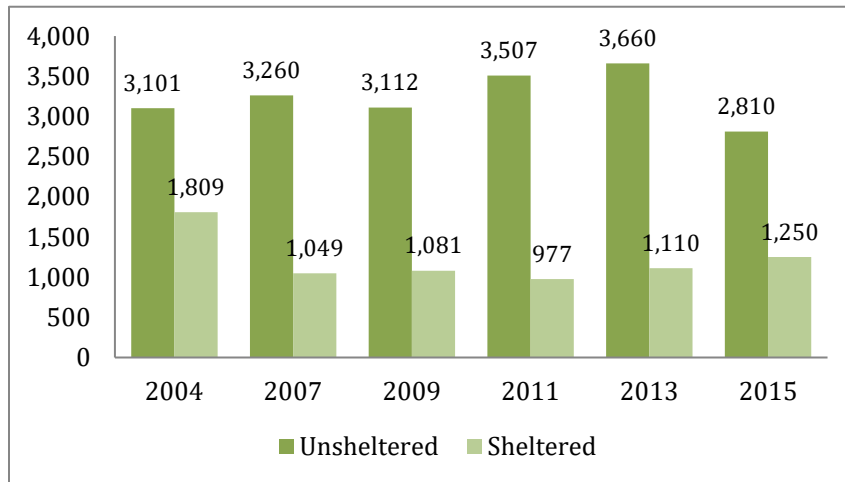


Figure 2.2. Homeless Census Result by Shelter Status in San Jose (2004-2015). *Source:* Applied Survey Research. (2004 - 2015), San José Homeless Census. San José, CA.

In 2007, the San Jose Homeless Census Survey counted 4,309 homeless people in the city and 1,049 in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and domestic violence shelters.

This figure does not include individuals who may be homeless but are currently in rehabilitation centers, jails, or hospitals.<sup>30</sup>

San Jose's homeless count translates to approximately 11,264 persons who were homeless at some point in time during 2006. Based on the 2005 population estimates from the US Census Bureau, the annual estimate of the homeless population represents one-point-two percent of San Jose's total population.<sup>31</sup>

In 2009, the report showed that there were 4,193 homeless people; 3,112 of them were unsheltered homeless people; and 1,081 were sheltered in emergency shelters or transitional housing. The results of the survey included counts of people living in rehabilitation centers, jails, or hospitals. The results of the survey also show that the primary cause of homelessness was foreclosure. Additionally, rent increases were another reason stated by six-percent of survey respondents.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> City of San Jose, *Homeless Point-in- Time Census & Survey Comprehensive Report 2007*. Accessed Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/22490>.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> City of San Jose, *Homeless Point-in- Time Census & Survey Comprehensive Report 2009*. Accessed September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5176dcd7e4b0e5c0dba41ee0/t/53e9186ce4b0c9b077c90b87/1407794147105/San+Jose+Comprehensive+Report+-+2009.pdf>.



In 2011, 4,034 homeless people were counted in San Jose, equating to roughly nine-percent of the total population rate. 76 percent) of those individuals were unsheltered. Those who occupied cars, vans, RVs, encampments, and abandoned buildings were also counted as unsheltered homeless. Additionally, of the individuals counted, 24 percent of them were classified as sheltered. This number also included those who live in emergency shelters. Lastly, eight-percent of homeless people in San Jose lived with families in 2011.<sup>33</sup> These findings are significant because it indicates that the majority of the population is unsheltered, whereas societal perception may lead us to think that the majority of the homeless are in shelters.

In 2013, the survey counted 4,770 homeless people in San Jose, slightly more than the 2011 count. 77 percent of them were unsheltered, including 1,230 people living in encampments. 23 percent of homeless people lived in emergency shelters, transitional housing facilities, and safe havens. The number of

sheltered homeless people grew slightly from 2011; however the most notable increase occurred among the unsheltered homeless population – an increase from 3,057 people to 3,660.<sup>34</sup>

In 2015, 4,063 homeless people were counted in San Jose. Approximately 69 percent of the homeless population was unsheltered, including 778 people living in encampments. Thirty-one percent of them were sheltered in facilities, including emergency shelters, transitional housing facilities, and safe havens. There was a 15 percent decrease in the homeless population of San José between 2013 and 2015 – a reduction totaling 705 people. Furthermore, the number of unsheltered homeless people living in encampments decreased from 1,230 in 2013 to 778 in 2015, whereas the sheltered homeless population increased by thirteen-percent. 2013 is an outlier year in this data set, as there was a relatively large increase in the homeless

---

<sup>33</sup> City of San Jose, *Homeless Point-in- Time Census & Survey Comprehensive Report 2011*. Accessed September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016.  
<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1108>.

<sup>34</sup> City of San Jose, *Homeless Point-in- Time Census & Survey Comprehensive Report 2013*. Accessed September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016.  
<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/18821>.

population. Whereas, the number of homeless people in San Jose in 2015 was similar to that in 2011.<sup>35</sup>

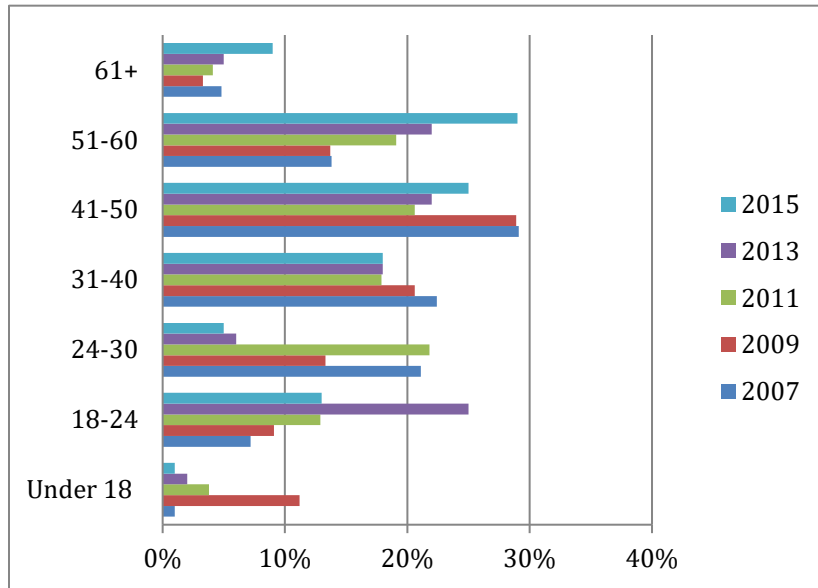


Figure 2.3. Age of Homeless People in San Jose from 2007- 2015. *Source* : 2015 N: 625; 2013 N: 430; 2011 N: 673; 2009 N:519; 2007 N: 709 Applied Survey Research. (2007 - 2015), City of San Jose Homeless Survey.

When looking at the age of the homeless people in 2009, there was a significant portion of the homeless population, about eleven point two percent, under the age of 18. While in other years, that ratio remained lower than five-percent. Four years after that, in 2013, there was also a dramatic increase in the

percentage of those homeless between the ages of 18-24. This jump might correspond to the unusually high ratio of homeless children in 2009, as homeless teens in 2009, would be counted in the age group of 18- 24 in 2013. In addition to the years where there was a high proportion of homeless children and teens children 2015 showed an increase in the number of middle-aged adults. According to census data, there were quite a lot of people over 51 years old who become homeless in 2015.

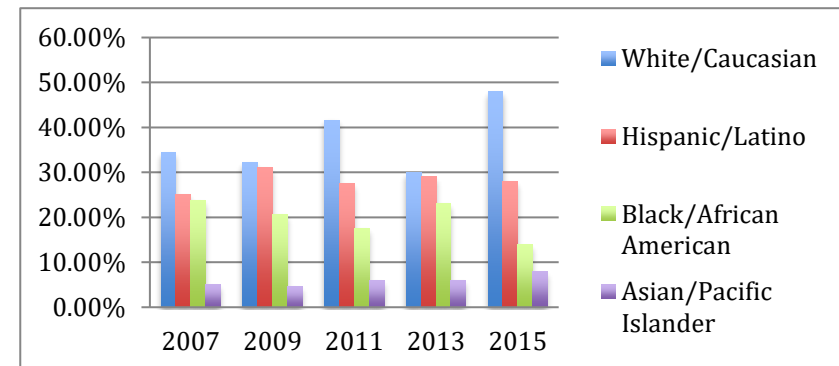


Figure 2.4. Race of Homeless People in San Jose from 2007 - 2015 *Source*: Applied Survey Research. (2007-2015), City of San Jose Homeless Survey.

Note: The original data didn't separate the race and ethnicity.

Figure 2.4 charts the racial composition of the homeless population from 2007-2015. The percentage of homeless

<sup>35</sup> City of San Jose, *Homeless Point-in- Time Census & Survey Comprehensive Report 2015*. Accessed September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016,

Hispanic and Asians remained quite stable overtime, comprising approximately 25 percent and six-percent of the total homeless population respectively. In contrast, there was a visible change overtime among the White and Black homeless populations. The percentage of White homeless individuals increased over time, from roughly 34 percent to 48 percent. Interestingly, while there was an overall growth, between 2011 and 2015, the rate of the White homeless population dropped from 41.6 percent in 2011 to 30 percent in 2013 before increasing again in 2015. Whereas the percentage of Black homeless individuals, decreased from twenty-three percent to fourteen-percent overtime. Interestingly, 2013 was the only year where the Black homeless population grew, before declining again in 2015. This data shows that there is indeed a racial difference in the rate of homelessness among different groups. The percentage of White homeless individuals was much higher than any other population group. This may correspond to overall demographics in San Jose, mirroring some of the racial splits in the city as a whole.

## 2.2 Distribution of Homeless Encampments, Shelters, and Services in San Jose



Figure 2.5. The Jungle in San Jose. *Source:* San Jose Poised to Close “the Jungle”<sup>36</sup>, The Mercury News, September 23, 2014

“The Jungle” was a 30.4-acre area at the intersection of Coyote Creek at Story Road.<sup>36</sup> The site used to be the nation’s largest homeless encampment with 300 homeless people, once

<sup>36</sup> San Jose Direct Discharge Trash Control Plan. Accessed Dec.10<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

[http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb2/water\\_issues/programs/stormwater/MRP/Provision](http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb2/water_issues/programs/stormwater/MRP/Provision)

[C.10/San\\_Jose\\_Direct\\_Discharge\\_Plan\\_Supplemental\\_Final.pdf](#),

spread along the Coyote Creek.<sup>37</sup> As a result, the creek became polluted with human waste and garbage, prompting local water regulators to pressure the city to close the camp, a place that had been in existence for three decades, according to former residents.<sup>38</sup> Initially, the City and the Water District began the physical abatement work on the less populated eastern bank adjacent to Remillard Court in May 2014. Following the cleanup, the City installed several deterrent measures which included: a fence, parking controls, and no trespassing signage, to reduce the incidence of re-encampment on the site. To further support this work, San Jose Park Rangers from the Watershed Protection Team began regularly patrolling the area. As a result of these actions, no major re-encampment has occurred along the eastern bank since the initial effort.<sup>39</sup> All the homeless individuals were moved out of “The Jungle” after the city of San

Jose fenced off the site in December of 2014. The city cleaned up 618 tons of debris, 2,850 gallons of bio-waste, 1,200 needles, and 315 shopping carts resulting from the homeless encampment’s activities.<sup>40</sup>



Figure 2.6. “The Jungle” of San Jose, photograph by Robert Salonga, The Mercury News

After “The Jungle” was closed, homeless people had to find other places to live. Another 20-acre encampment, named “The

---

<sup>37</sup> San Jose’s “Jungle”: Former homeless encampments returns to nature. Accessed December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016 <http://www.mercurynews.com/2015/07/09/san-joses-jungle-former-homeless-encampment-returns-to-nature/>.

<sup>38</sup> Former Residents of “the Jungle” Homeless Encampment to Gather for Reunion. Accessed on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016. <http://peninsulapress.com/2015/12/03/san-jose-jungle-former-residents-homeless-encampment-reunion/>.

<sup>39</sup> Placed Based Encampment Pilot Status and Update on Temporary Housing Initiatives: Story Road Encampment Response Report. Accessed December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016. <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/41659>.

<sup>40</sup> Placed Based Encampment Pilot Status and Update on Temporary Housing Initiatives: Story Road Encampment Response Report. Accessed December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016. <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/41659>.



Jungle Part 2" emerged, located between Interstate 880 and Highway 87. Forty to fifty homeless people lived there until it was cleaned up in 2015. In addition to "The Jungle" and "The Jungle Part 2", a lot of homeless people live in the parks near downtown, such as St. James Park, Backesto Park, and Roosevelt Park.



Figure 2.7. Homeless people are sleeping in St James Park (photograph by Sal Pizarro, The Mercury News)

The People Assisting the Homeless (PATH), street outreach team coordinates a homeless scan by vehicle and foot within the San Jose Downtown Core once a month. Aiko Yep, the associate director of PATH San Jose, showed me the map of PATH's Homeless Scan conducted on March 31, 2017 (see figure 2.8)

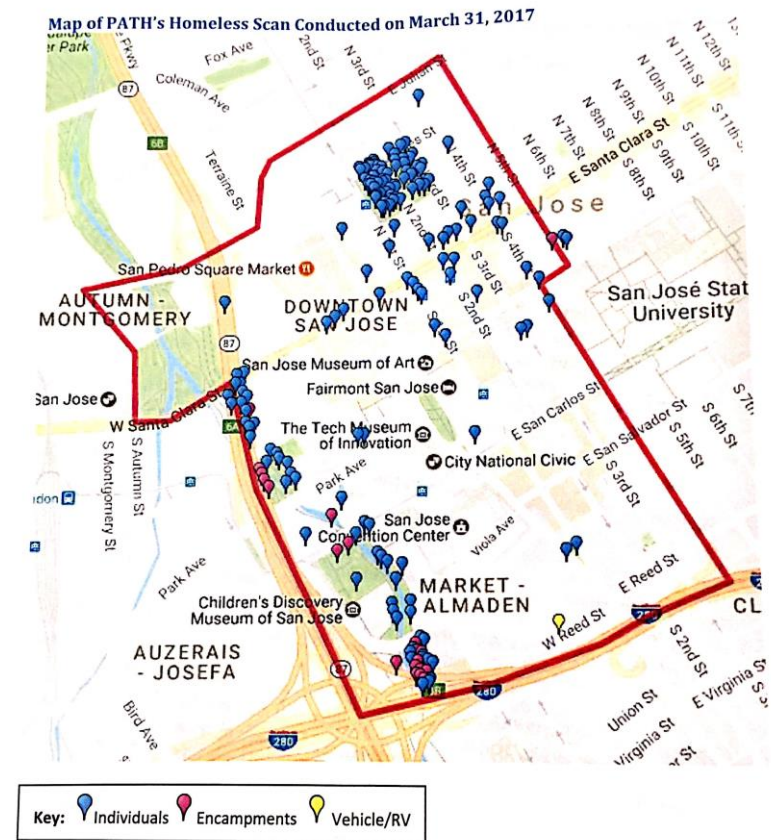


Figure 2.8. Map of PATH's Homeless Scan Conducted on March 31, 2017

As you can see in Figure 2.8, the boundary of the Downtown core is bordered by Julian Street to the north, 5<sup>th</sup> Street and San Jose State University to the east, Interstate-280 freeway to the south, and Interstate-87 freeway to the west. The boundary encompasses one of San Jose's downtown districts, known as the Congressional District (zip code: 95113). On

March 31, 2017, the total homeless population within this district was 164 individuals; including 20 tents, and makeshift shelters, and one vehicle or RV used for sleeping.<sup>41</sup> Counts within Guadalupe River Trail, Saint James Park, and Arena Green Park were conducted on foot; for the rest of the locations, the team drove around to count the number of homeless people. The team found a higher concentration of individuals along the Guadalupe River Trail, especially under the I-87 freeway between Santa Clara Street and Park Avenue and St. James Park. The encampment alongside the Guadalupe River had the most number of individuals ranging in their 20's to 30's. The warm weather during the count may have contributed to the increase in the number of individuals observed, as many people were seen gathered at the park and throughout the Downtown Core.

Beyond the encampments on the street, homeless people also need to access local homeless services or homeless shelters. A spreadsheet of the homeless service information has been created, which includes the name of the agency, address, zip code, as well as the city of the homeless service. Some services

may be located at the same place. Thus, to make the map easy to read, the repeated addresses were removed. The addresses were matched to the map by geocoding. A Google search provided all the homeless shelters' information in the South Bay, using this information, another spreadsheet was created with the address information. The list of homeless shelters was geocoded as well. The distribution map of homeless services and shelters is shown in Figure 2.9.

---

<sup>41</sup> PATH San Jose, *Report on Homeless Scan of San Jose's Downtown Core*,

March 31th, 2017.

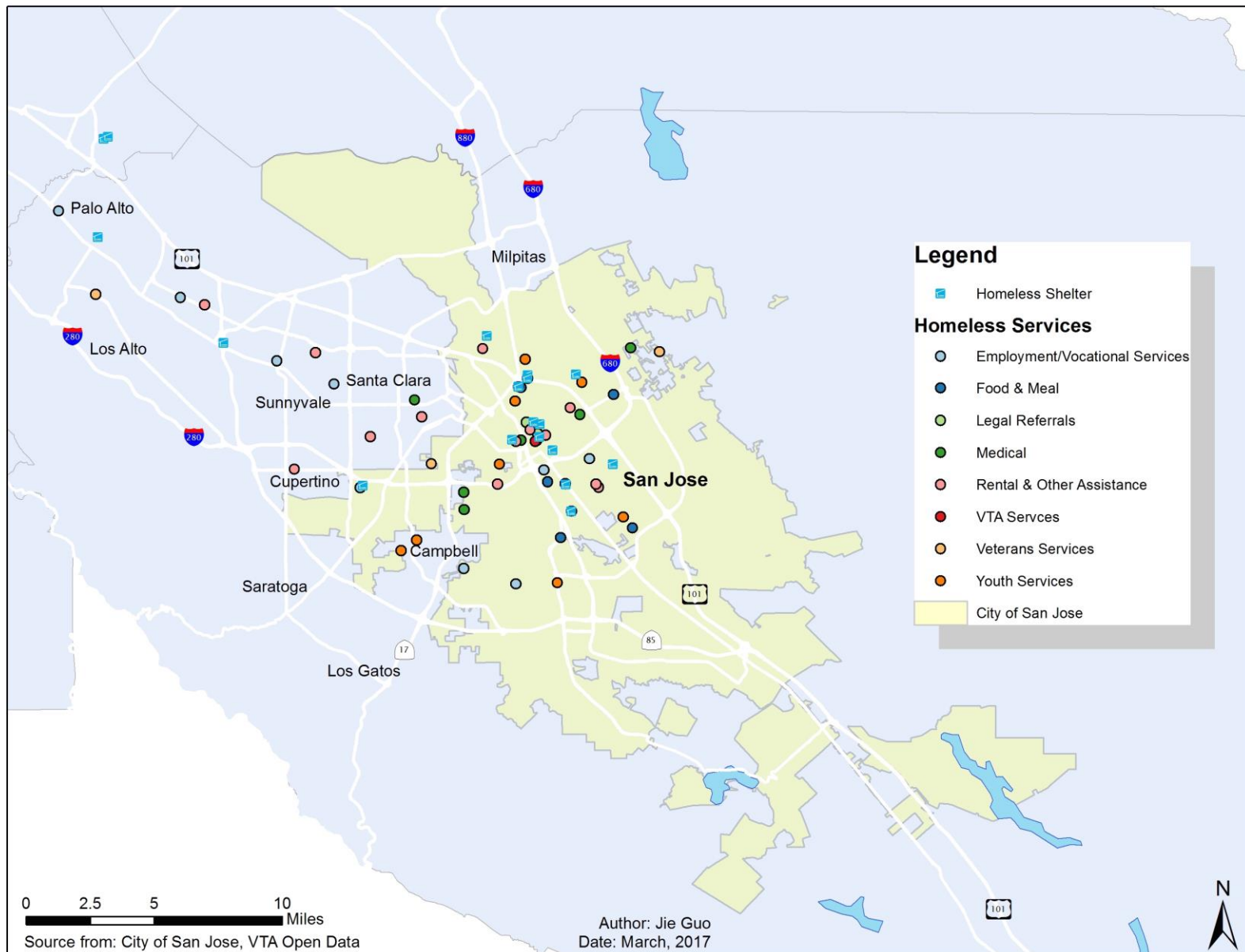


Figure 2.9. Distribution Map of Homeless Shelters and Services in San Jose

Table of Homeless Services and Homeless Shelter is presented in Appendix A and Appendix B.



As seen in figure 2.9, 53 homeless services are provided within the City of San Jose and surrounding cities. There are six medical services, five of which are located in San Jose, and one in the City of Santa Clara. Additionally, there are seven meal services in San Jose. Some of the other salient services include employment service centers and youth service centers. Four of the nine employment service centers are in San Jose, two of the employment centers are in Sunnyvale, and the remaining three are in Mountain View, Palo Alto, and Campbell. Lastly, there are eight youth services on this map, six of them are in San Jose, the other two are in Campbell.

### ***2.3 Policies or Programs Related to Homeless People in San Jose***

The issue of affordable housing and homelessness is particularly severe in the Silicon Valley as it is one of the most expensive housing markets in the United States. Homeless people need more assistance to affordable housing, transportation, health, education, and jobs to get out of the

homeless situation. The services they require are more than what is currently available. Every homeless person has a different story, different hardships, and different needs. For example, some homeless individuals may need support attaining and maintaining housing; while others may need a short-term subsidy to gain economic self-sufficiency. Despite the specific needs, there is a common bond in that everyone deserves a home and everyone should have a home.

The City of San Jose implemented a five-year Housing Investment Plan (HIP) from 2007- 2012. The HIP was intended to serve as a guide to the City's housing policies and production goals, as well as provide a concise summary of the City's actions towards achieving its vision for meeting the City's housing needs. The policy aims to increase the affordable housing supply, maintain the existing affordable housing supply, and provide services to homeless and at-risk populations.<sup>42</sup>

The HIP was approved by the City Council on June 17, 2007. It planned to have 4,304 affordable housing opportunities. Of which 1,191 were slated to be newly constructed units; 421 as

---

<sup>42</sup> City of San Jose Five- Year Housing Investment Plan, 2007-2012. Accessed

Oct.10<sup>th</sup>, 2016. <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=1274>

acquisition of existing units or the rehabilitation of existing units; 626 single-family rehabilitation grant or loan programs, and 724 mobile home rehabilitation grant or loan programs.<sup>43</sup> The city was able to achieve some components of the goal. However, with the economic recession in 2008, the funding of these projects became more difficult. The city has since expanded the program from the original implementation. The Homeless Services Program in Santa Clara County provides a variety of programs to the county's homeless population. There are three programs, strategies and funds used to serve the homeless:

Alternative 1: The Housing Trust Fund (HTF) -- Local fund

The purpose of the Housing Trust Fund (HTF) is to ensure ongoing funding for affordable housing programs. The HTF provides a source of funds for agencies to provide short-term emergency services and assistance to homeless persons and those at-risk of becoming homeless. Funds are awarded on an ongoing basis of program applicability and funding availability.

Alternative 2: Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS

(HOPWA) -- Federal entitlement fund

The City administers both Santa Clara and San Benito Counties' grant programs. The HOPWA programs provide tenant-based rental subsidies, supportive services, and housing placement assistance to foster independence for people living with HIV/AIDS. Additionally, the counties' programs provide affordable housing opportunities and supportive services such as food vouchers and utility assistance to very-low and low-income residents who are disabled with HIV/AIDS.

Alternative 3: Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) -Federal entitlement grant

The overall goal of the ESG program is to provide financial assistance to agencies to provide services to the homeless or those at risk of becoming homeless. ESG funds are distributed to pay for emergency shelter operations, essential services, and homeless prevention.

This chapter discussed the many homeless services available to homeless individuals in San Jose and surrounding cities. As we have seen in this chapter, there are many organizations

---

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

providing for the needs of the homeless in the region. However, the question remains: can the homeless easily access those services? The next chapter seeks to answer that question by evaluating VTA's performance and other programs.

## Chapter 3: VTA Service and Performance

Chapter three discusses the public transit services in San Jose. This chapter provides an overview of the public transit service in San Jose, focusing specifically on four categories of the bus services and three lines of light rail. The second section will look at programs that provide transit passes to individuals; the report highlights the Universal Pass for Low-income Family Transit (UPLIFT) and Transit Assistant Program (TAP) in how effective they are in helping homeless people get around.

### *3.1 Overview of Public Transit Service in San Jose*

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), is an independent special district since 1972, which provides sustainable, accessible, community-focused transit service, that is environmentally responsible, and promotes the vitality of Silicon Valley.<sup>44</sup>

The bus, light rail, Capitol Corridor, and the Altamont Corridor Express are all programs funded by VTA. In addition to providing public transit services, VTA is responsible for

transportation planning in the Bay Area.. Transportation planning includes congestion management, the design and construction of specific highways, pedestrian, and bicycle improvement projects, as well as the promotion of Transit Oriented Developments (TODs).

VTA's service area covers the county, including the municipalities of Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Milpitas, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Saratoga and Sunnyvale. VTA continually builds partnerships to deliver transportation solutions to meet the public's needs of mobility and accessibility.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> About VTA. Accessed January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017. <http://www.vta.org/about-us/inside-vta/about-vta>.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

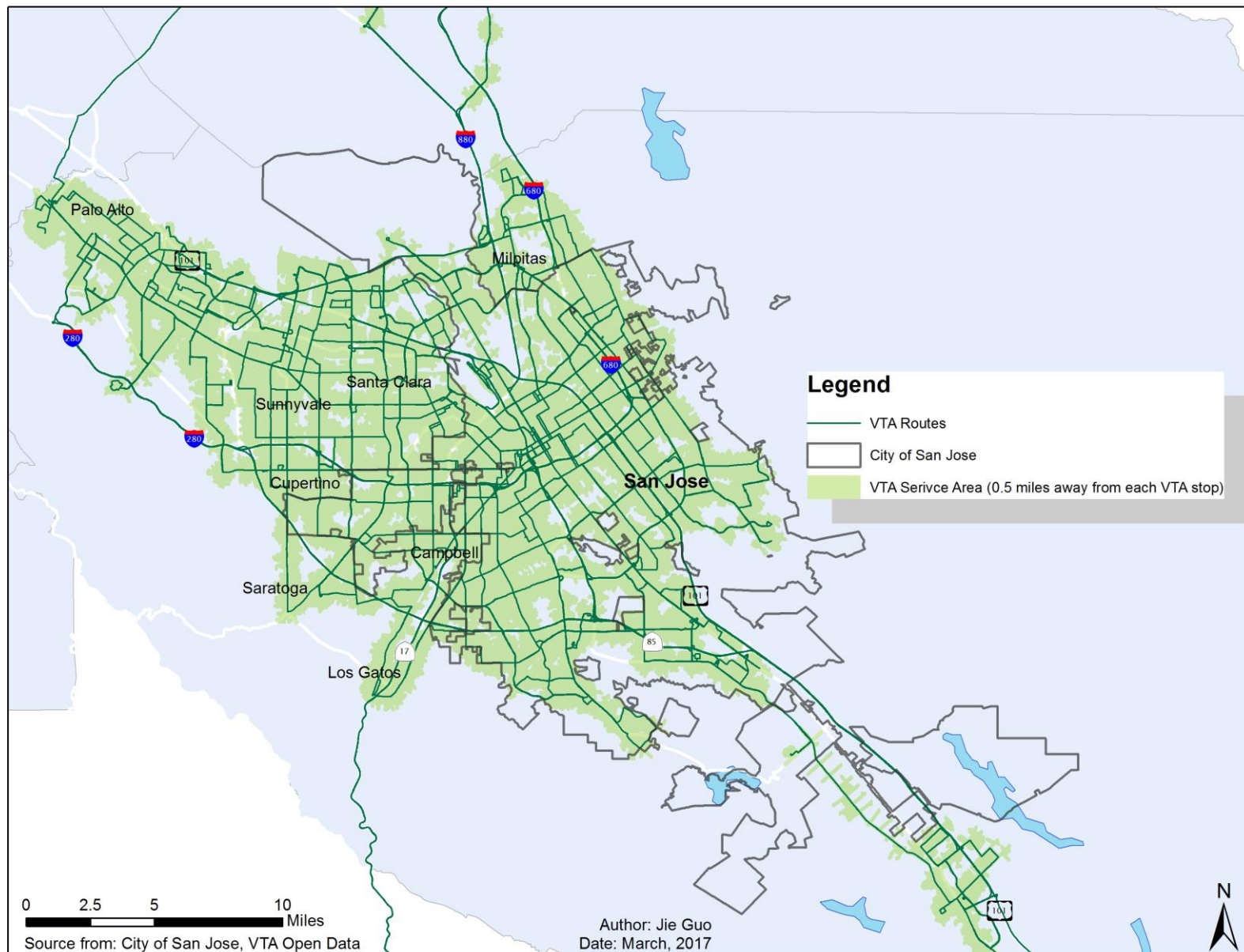


Figure 3.1. Map of VTA Service Area

This chapter uses previous VTA reports to highlight the available public transit services in the region. Although there are various modes of public transit service, only bus and light rail will be focused on in this section. Within VTA's 346-square-mile service area in Santa Clara County, there are three light rail lines and 426 buses on a total of 77 routes. More specifically, the sum of all the VTA bus services, cover a total of 1,236 miles. All the buses have disabled access for riders who use a wheelchair or mobility devices, or for anyone who has difficulty in climbing steps. Also, riders are encouraged to load their bicycle on the bike-rack in the front of the bus.

In addition to the bus service spanning across a relatively large area, there are a total of 3,777 bus stops; of those, 2,220 have shelters or benches. This is an important amenity to consider as passengers are exposed to the elements while waiting for the bus. These amenities make waiting slightly more comfortable for clients. VTA offers even further amenities to meet client needs, there are thirty-

seven park-and-ride lots along the bus stops, with 11,269 parking spaces available for passengers.<sup>46</sup>

VTA classifies its buses into four categories by the frequency:

- **Core:** These buses have a higher-ridership, and come at a high frequency-- every 15 minutes all day. These buses cover area in the central part of Santa Clara County.
- **Local:** These buses operate every 30 minutes all day with a long span.
- **Community:** These buses are infrequent, with buses coming every 60 or more minutes all day.
- **Express or limited stops:** These buses are long-distance busses that utilize freeways and expressways between different cities and regions.

The core bus is the most common of all four-bus types. Sixty-six-percent of the buses are core bus, seventeen-percent are local buses, eight-percent are community buses, nine-percent of the buses are express or limited stops.<sup>47</sup> This is an important

---

<sup>46</sup> Bus System Overview. Accessed January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

<http://www.vta.org/sfc/servlet.shepherd/document/download/069A0000001FvwYIAS>

<sup>47</sup> Transit Choice Report, VTA, Accessed Dec 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016

factor to keep in mind for later sections, as the bus frequency impacts one's ability to access services.

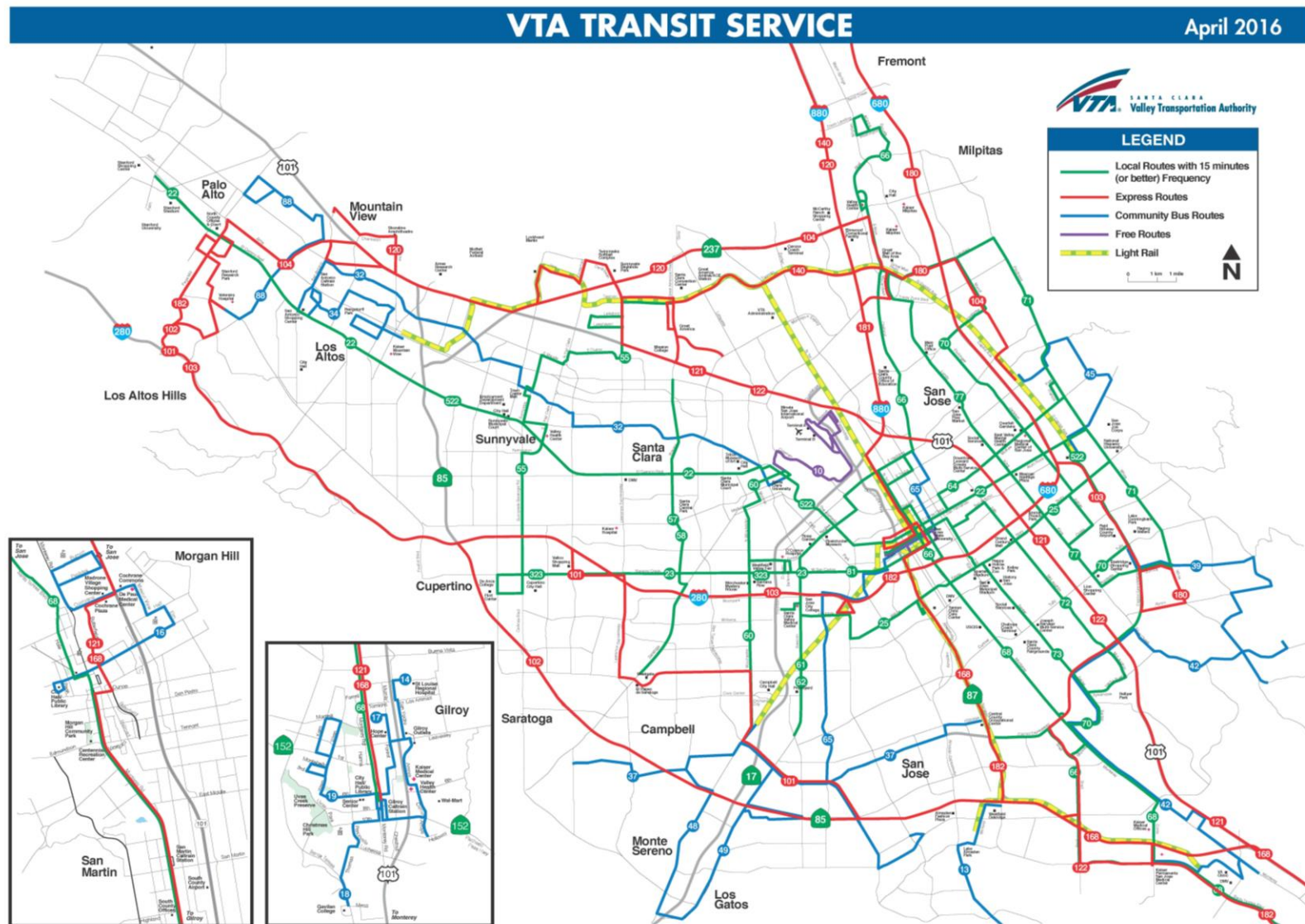


Figure 3.2. VTA Transit Service by Categories. *Source:*  
<http://www.vta.org/getting-around/schedules/by-type>



As shown in Figure 3.3, VTA operates 42-miles of light rail service with 61 total stations within Santa Clara County.<sup>48</sup> The three light-rail lines VTA operates are depicted on the map in green, red and blue. These three lines run from Mountain View to Winchester, Alum Rock to Santa Teresa, and from Ohlone to Almaden.



Figure 3.3. VTA Light Rail. *Source* : VTA Light Rail System Overview, <http://www.vta.org/sfc/servlet.shepherd/document/download/069A0000001FvwxIAC>

The Alum Rock – Santa Teresa line, shown in blue on the map, is 27-miles with 38 stations. It operates between the Santa Teresa Station in South San Jose, and the Alum Rock Transit

Center in East San Jose. The train comes at a frequency of every 15 minutes everyday. Some of the more common stops on this line include, West Valley Freeway, Guadalupe Parkway, downtown San Jose, and North 1<sup>st</sup> Street.<sup>49</sup>

The Mountain View – Winchester line, shown in green on the map, includes 22 miles and 37 stations. The service is provided between the Mountain View Transit Center in downtown Mountain View, and the Winchester Transit Center in Campbell. This train comes every 15-minutes during weekday peak hours, and every 30 minutes on mid-day weekdays, as well as on weekends. Major service- areas covered by this line include, Downtown San Jose, the North First Street, Levi's Stadium, and some tech companies in Santa Clara, Sunnyvale, and Mountain View.<sup>50</sup>

The Ohlone/Chynoweth-Almaden Line, shown on the map in orange, is only one mile with three stations, which operates

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

between the Almaden Station and the Ohlone/Chynoweth Station in south San Jose. It operates every 15 minutes all day.<sup>51</sup>

### ***3.2 Specific Transit Service or Programs for Homeless People***

#### **UPLIFT (Universal Pass for Low-income Family Transit)**

UPLIFT was created April 1, 2011, through an agreement between VTA and the County of Santa Clara Social Services, to support transit access for low-income families. The current agreement runs through June 30, 2018. The program allocated 2,400 transit stickers for low-income families, at a price \$15 per sticker (the original value is \$210 each). The County Mental Health Department, County Social Service Agency, and the City of San Jose all share the cost to support this program. The program also aims to provide free quarterly transit passes to homeless persons, those at risk of becoming homeless, as well as those undergoing case management. Santa Clara County coordinates and monitors the program's performance, as well as

the activities of the social service providers, to ensuring that the guidelines are followed.

#### **TAP (Transit Assistant Program)**

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) provides grant funds for VTA to promote transit ridership, by providing free or low-cost transit passes to low-income persons in Santa Clara County not currently receiving other forms of transportation assistance (such as UPLIFT). The initial agreement between VTA and the County of Santa Clara Social Services started on August 13, 2013. The current agreement runs from January 2016 through June 2017 with an option, upon mutual agreement, to extend the program for an additional two. The one-year terms ends without a possibility of renewal, if the allocated, 18,000 passes, have not been distributed by June 2017. The member agencies of the Emergency Assistance Network (EAN) receive the monthly passes and distribute them to eligible clients, based on the allocation requirements determined by the County. The EAN is a countywide network of safety net providers. The program targets the working poor –

---

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

those residents of Santa Clara County who are at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. Clients are sold the passes for \$25, EAN agencies then reimburse VTA for the passes. EAN member agencies are also responsible for monitoring clients, and reporting on outcomes. The County Social Services Agency provides the coordination between the EAN agencies and VTA. The County invoices VTA quarterly for the administration of the program based on the number of participating EAN agencies.

Other transportation organizations in Bay Area have similar programs to support homeless people. SamTrans provides homeless people a free pass to Safe Harbor Shelter. People who live in the shelter can use four one-way passes a day on county buses. Furthermore, AC Transit offers discounted passes to local service agencies and schools for homeless people in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Santa Cruz Metro transit agency also offers discounts to homeless people.<sup>52</sup>

VTA transit services provide sustainable, accessible, and community-focused transportation options to promote the

residents' quality of life. UPLIFT and TAP play a significant role in supporting the mobility of low-income individuals. The next chapter will discuss how homeless people use VTA transit to access homeless services.

---

<sup>52</sup> Homeless to Get Free Rides on Mass Transit in Santa Clara County. Accessed Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017. <http://www.mercurynews.com/2011/02/03/homeless-to-get-free-rides->

[on-mass-transit-in-santa-clara-county](#)

## Chapter 4: Accessibility of Homeless Services and Transit Services in San Jose

This chapter discusses the barriers for San Jose homeless to access public transit services using GIS analysis and stakeholder interviews. Additionally, this chapter provides an evaluation of the effectiveness of VTA services, programs, and strategies for homeless people.

### 4.1 Access to Homeless Services

Based on the literature review, four main factors often drive the mobility of a homeless person: keeping in touch with family and friends, obtaining social services, finding work, and escaping a “degrading milieu.”<sup>53</sup> The finding was supported by Jocoy’s and Casino’s study, which was based on 118 homeless surveyors and two focus groups. Twenty-two-percent of homeless people use public transportation to access medical care; 22 percent for social services; fourteen percent for job-hunting; and only five-

percent of the homeless use public transit for commuting. The study indicated that a significant portion of the homeless in Long Beach, California, 68 percent, rely on public transit as their sole method of transportation. It is important to note that only ten-percent of social service providers in Long Beach offer shuttle vans for homeless individuals to access the services mentioned above. Furthermore, only seven percent of the homeless population surveyed drove their vehicles to access other places, such as friends’ houses.<sup>54</sup>

Homeless and housed people more often than not differ in their final destinations on public transit. Key destinations for homeless people tend to be in urban areas, thus transportation needs will reflect that. Cities and urban areas are often home to social services, local businesses, libraries, and other facilities, frequented by the homeless. This reality influences the social network of homeless people, their mobility routes, and coping success as most of their time is spent in the urban core.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup> Wolch, Jennifer R., Afsaneh Rahimian, and Paul Koegel, “Daily and Periodic Mobility Patterns of the Urban Homeless.” *The Professional Geographer* 45, no. 2 (1993): 159–169, accessed September 20, 2016, Google Scholar.

<sup>54</sup> Jocoy, Christine L., and Vincent J. Del Casin, “The Mobility of Homeless People and Their Use of Public Transit in Long Beach, California”, 2008. Accessed

September 25, 2016, [https://www.metrotrans.org/sites/default/files/research-project/06-13\\_Jocoy\\_final\\_0\\_0.pdf](https://www.metrotrans.org/sites/default/files/research-project/06-13_Jocoy_final_0_0.pdf).

<sup>55</sup> Wolch, Jennifer R., and Stacy Rowe, “On the Streets: Mobility Paths of the Urban Homeless.” *City Society* 6, no. 2 (1992): 115–140, accessed September 20, 2016, Google Scholar.

Homeless people may get a token from social agencies, which is a one-day transit pass. However, tokens are only provided for those “showing proof of critical appointment,”<sup>56</sup> such as a doctor’s appointment. The homeless provider applies the tokens from VTA and distributes them to the homeless people. The token program is gradually being replaced by UPLIFT passes in San Jose.

---

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

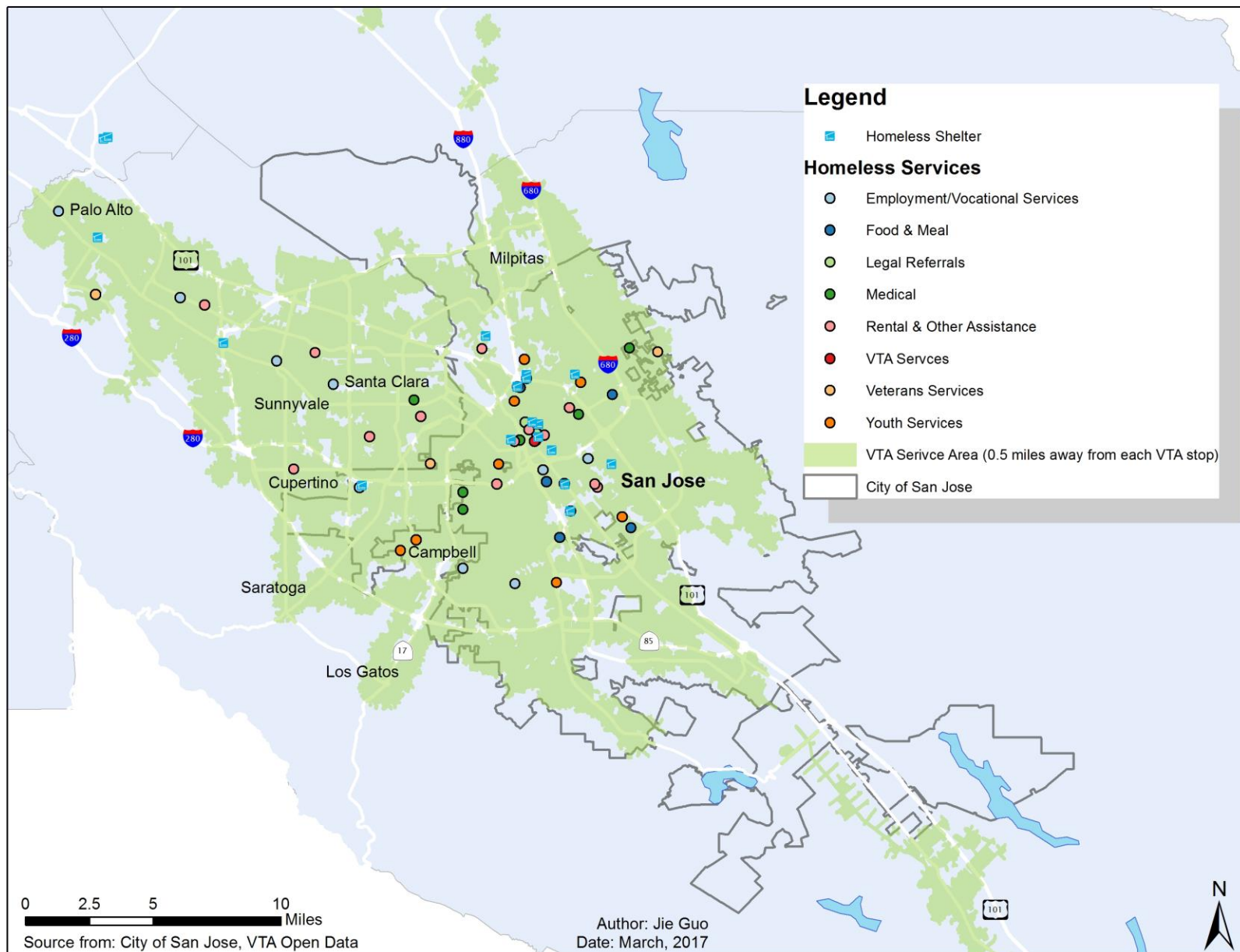


Figure 4.1. Comparison of VTA Services with Distribution of Homeless Services and Shelters

In Figure 4.1, depicts the 53 homeless services and 27 homeless shelters in Santa Clara County. Thirty-seven of the homeless services are in San Jose, and all of those locations are covered by VTA's service area, translating as an easy 10-minute walk to the nearest bus stop. Fifteen of the homeless shelters are in the city of San Jose, and 13 of them are within the VTA service area. Overall, from the GIS analysis, we can conclude that homeless people can access most of the homeless services in San Jose by bus.

From the interviewees' response, the most important homeless service destinations are those offering a meal, medical attention, and housing. Aiko Yep, the director of PATH San Jose, mentioned there are some important destinations that are hard to access:

"It's difficult for people to go to medical service. We don't have a big hospital in downtown. They have to take the bus and access the hospital. Also, we help people to find a permanent house, so people use the bus to go to different apartment sites to look at the apartment, to meet the Lawrence [an agency for applying for affordable housing] or [apartment] manager. Sometimes, it could be challenging, because there is a specific address, we provide maps and directions, but they have to take the bus and make sure they get off the right place and then from there walk to the specific

location."

Mrs. White, as a senior citizen, pointed out that medical services are difficult to access by public transit:

"It's hard to take a bus to the hospital. There is no hospital near the San Jose downtown. If you have to take the bus to the hospital, you have to transfer [a] few times, however, when you arrive [at] some places, you have to wait around 1 hour to the hospital. Sometimes, you will miss the appointment."

Jay Tyree, a senior transportation planner at VTA, was asked if the bus service area adequately reached typical homeless services. He said it depended on the location of homeless services:

Jay Tyree, notes the primary challenge for homeless people to access necessary homeless services is that public transit cannot always reach the services. In other words, the location of the homeless service is a significant variable. Because transportation plans are often based on the land use, density, and street grid, services may be in a remote area, or in a place with a terrible pedestrian environment, making it difficult for clients to access.

## 4.2 Access to VTA Transit Services

This section presents the frequency of VTA service maps, specifically highlighting the differences in the frequency charts on weekdays to Saturday, and Sunday. This section also discusses interviewees' opinions of the main barriers and challenges San Jose's homeless face in accessing public transit services.



Figure 4.2. Frequency of VTA Service, Weekdays 9am-3pm

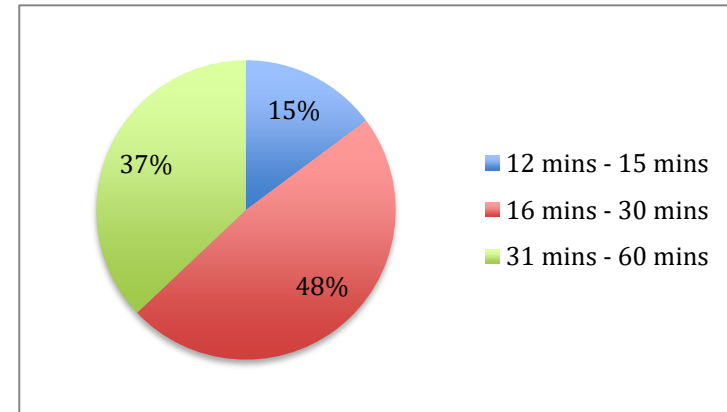


Figure 4.3. Frequency of VTA Service, Weekdays 9 am – 3 pm

Figure 4.2, maps the frequency of VTA services offered mid-day on a weekday. As the map shows, the bus-line reaches nearly all the homeless services. The pie chart in Figure 4.3, breaks down the frequency of the buses. Fifteen percent of the buses are high frequency, which means they come every 12- 15 minutes; forty-eight percent of the service are moderate frequency, which is 16- 30 minutes; and thirty-seven percent of the service are low frequency, meaning if people miss a bus they have to wait for 31- 60 minutes for the next one. Assuming individuals keep track of bus schedule and arrive at bus station on time, the bus is the most convenient option for homeless



people to reach common destinations,.

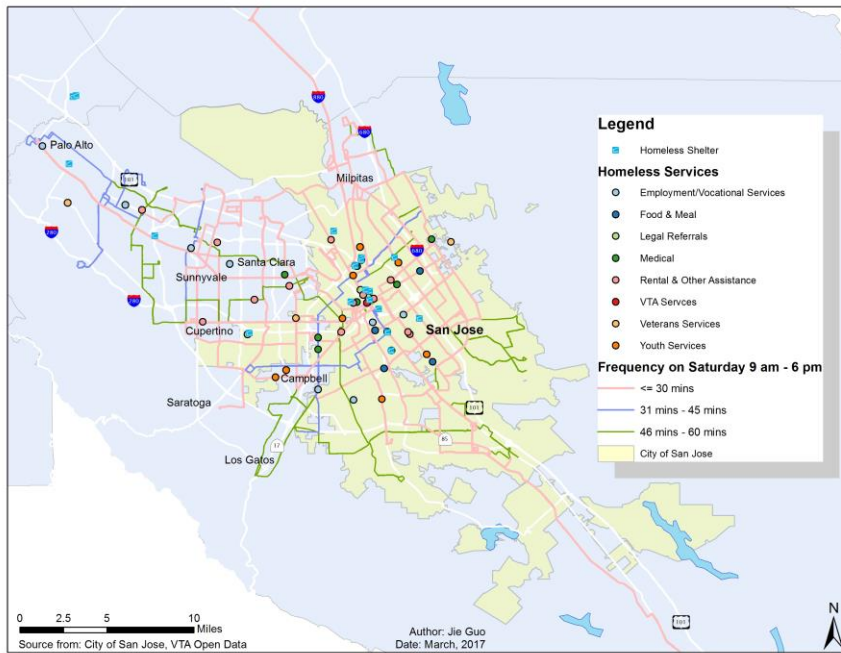


Figure 4.4. Frequency of VTA Service on Saturday 9 am – 6 pm

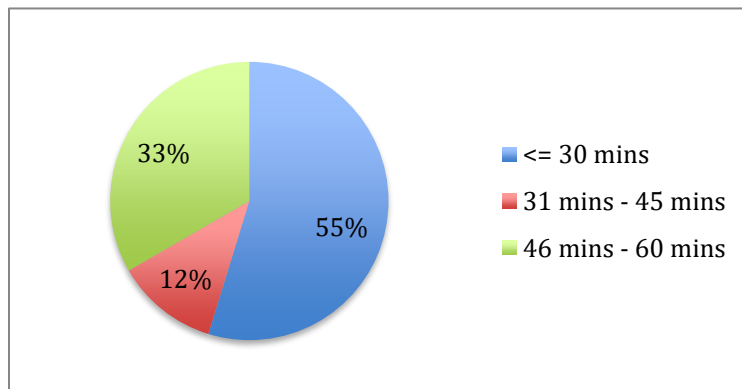


Figure 4.5. Frequency of VTA Service on Saturday 9 am – 6 pm

Figure 4.4 maps the frequency of VTA service between 9am-6pm on Saturday. The map depicts most of the homeless services in the region. The pie chart in Figure 4.5, breaks down the frequency of bus services. The majority, 55-percent, of VTA bus services arrive every 30-minutes or less Twelve-percent of the service arrives the station every 31 – 45 minutes. Thirty-three-percent of the service arrive every 46 – 60 minutes. VTA’s Saturday transit service coverage is fine as all services are still reached, however, buses are less frequent serving as a potential barrier for homeless clients.



Figure 4.6. Frequency of VTA Service on Sunday 9 am – 6 pm

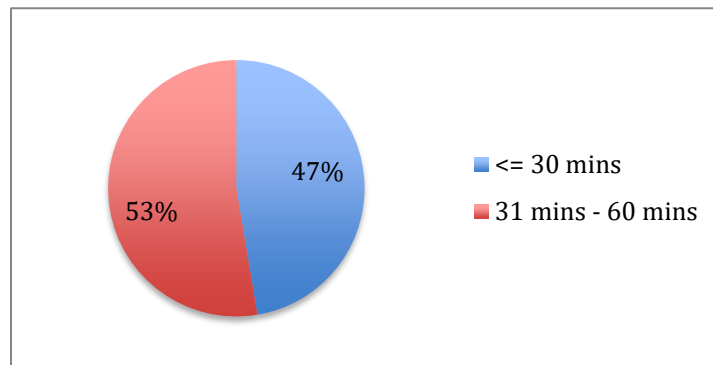


Figure 4.7. Frequency of VTA Service on Sunday 9 am – 6 pm

Figure 4.6 maps the frequency of VTA service from 9am-6pm on Sunday. The map depicts the routes to some of the

popular services in the region. The pie chart, Figure 4.7, shows the frequency of transit service. Transit service is much slower on Sunday than any other day, forty-seven-percent the VTA services arrive at the station in 30-minutes or less. Fifty-three-percent of the service arrives the station between 31 and 60 minutes. This can serve as a potential barrier if, for example, homeless people have to reach an important service, such as a medical appointment on a Sunday.

When comparing midday transit frequency on weekday to Saturday and Sunday, it is easy to see that there are more bus routes on weekdays with more frequent services. Thus, to access vital services, homeless individuals should take VTA on a weekday or a Saturday, rather than a Sunday.

When asked which aspect should be improved for the VTA services, Karina, who has been homeless three times in last ten years, said:

“I took the bus to everywhere since I lost my car, six years ago. I love the public transit system here; it is very convenient and cheap. I walk from my home to bus stop only 7 minutes, when I pick an apartment, the most important thing is to consider how far to access the bus stop. [If] One thing could be change[d], it might be the frequency of the

VTA service, if you missed one bus, you have to wait another 30 minutes or 1 hour, that's stressful if you are heading to work.”

Three studies in Los Angeles mentioned that homeless people cannot afford a bus ticket, which serves as a significant obstacle to mobility. The 2008 study in Long Beach has the largest sample size of the three studies. The Long Beach study was based on 118 homeless surveyors' response, in contrast, this study only has eight interviewees, thus the results of this study may be spurious. The small sample size is a significant limitation, as it cannot be extrapolated to represent all the opinions of all homeless people in San Jose. A further difference between this study and the one in Los Angeles is the location; the transit fare system might be different in the two cities.

The transportation planner, Jay, hypothesized the bus fare might be a barrier for homeless people to take public transit, he stated:

“ ... if you're homeless you probably have a barrier in getting a Clipper card and some of our fare products are only available on Clipper...in our next transit service plan...implemented later this year, we are proposing to offer free transfers on the VTA system ... but that would only be

offered to folks that are paying with Clipper ... Now I don't know how that relates to the TAP [Transit Assistance Program], I imagine they're also eligible for the free ride because they'll have a card.”

Jay's perspective differed from most other interviewees' responses. I noticed that the bus ticket was not a significant barrier for homeless people in San Jose- as Jay hypothesized. Mark, the route 22 bus driver said most bus users use a Clipper card instead of cash to take the bus. However, people can get the UPLIFT or bus token (day pass) via the homeless agency if needed. He also mentioned those programs help homeless people to get around in San Jose.

Homeless interviewees were asked if they were aware of UPLIFT. Dale, a man who broke up with his girlfriend two weeks ago and took "motel 22" as a night shelter in the last ten days, said:

"Free? I don't know the program. What's the name again? I just became homeless one week ago. \$2 is fine, I can stay on "Motel 22" from Palo Alto to San Jose for 2 hours, and I [only] need to take two routes until the morning. I spent \$8 and had a safe, warm space to stay. Sometimes I only paid \$1; the bus driver still let me ride the bus so that I can save \$1 for the next one."

Mrs. White does not use UPLIFT, but she gets the discount pass from VTA:

“I know many people use UPLIFT, but for me, a 72-year old senior, I only need to pay \$25 per month. It’s affordable. I can take the bus to the mall at day and kill time in a bookstore. I will have lunch at McDonald at Scott Street. It’s near to the bus stops.”

Aiko Yep said UPLIFT is an effective program and talked about the process to apply it:

“We would determine if that access to public transit would help them get out of homelessness or remain housed if they are housed. Each agency will have their UPLIFT program, and then from there the county would be able to see who link connect to this program, and they provide the card and stickers, then go pick them up then provide to the clients. Clients do need to do that to take the bus, share the public transit, benefit that people need this go to work. Work could be the most destinations for people to use the pass.”

Eugene Doan, the UPLIFT program analyst, pointed out UPLIFT provides case-managed clients a quarterly pass to access VTA transportation at no cost to the client. The UPLIFT program has been one of the contributors in improving people’s lives. The program grew from 28 participating agencies to close

to 50 agencies in the April – June 2017 quarter. During the last three-quarters (Jul-Sep’16, Oct-Dec’16, and Jan-Mar’17), the program served, on average, 2,300 clients. Last quarter (Jan-Mar’17) UPLIFT had reached 2,400 clients before the quarter ended.

From the perspective of the homeless interviewees, three of them highly recommended VTA services. They considered VTA very convenient to access most of the places and also felt that it satisfied their needs. Both homeless individuals and homeless providers interviewed, consider UPLIFT to be an effective program to help homeless people cope with their situation.

When asked about the challenge in accessing VTA transit service, Aiko said:

“Some of our clients have physical disabilities, they have to use wheelchairs... [or] have trouble walking. Even if there are a lot of bus stops... it can be hard to walk two blocks for some people.

[Furthermore] we do have clients who lose the pass, lose the[ir] ID, lose their documents... We are not able to replace the pass until the next quarter. They don’t have access [in the interim], or they have to find their funding to use the bus.”

Beatriz Ramos is the program manager of HomeFirst–outreach team. HomeFirst seeks to provide a consistent presence on the streets of San Jose and other outdoor locations throughout San Jose to build rapport and trust with unsheltered residents. She pointed out that a lost UPLIFT pass is an obstacle for homeless people to use public transit. Beatriz notes there are additional obstacles for clients who use public transit. For example, she noted that accessing the bus might be difficult for people with physical disabilities, or language barriers in reading. She also some people lose track of time and miss the bus. Mrs. White and Dale agreed with those sentiments, emphasizing that disabled people have a harder time accessing public transit, especially on a rainy day.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

### *5.1 Summary of findings*

Overall, the VTA adequately serves the homeless population in San Jose, based on the GIS analysis and the data collected from the interviews. This finding is specifically a regarding spatial coverage of the available transit routes, other potential variables are not considered in the GIS analysis. The Distribution Map of Homeless Services and Shelters depicts 53 homeless service centers, and 27 homeless shelters in the region. Of those, 37 of the homeless services are located in San Jose, and all of those locations are covered by VTA service. This means the closest bus stop is a half-mile walk. Furthermore, 15 of the homeless shelters are located in the city of San Jose and 13 of them are within the VTA service area. The VTA reaches the majority of homeless services in San Jose. Thus, access by public transit to these places is not a significant variable.

In contrast, lost UPLIFT cards, physical disabilities, and lack of service information are the primary challenges for people to access the VTA public transit system. Most homeless people in San Jose take advantage of the UPLIFT, TAP, or bus token program. These programs allow them to take the VTA to go to

homeless services, meet with friends, or simply allow them to “kill time” on the bus. Also, there are many people who take the bus line, 22, as shelter, dubbed “motel 22” during the night. From my interviewees’ perspective, the price of bus tickets is affordable with the assistance of various programs. Karina, a homeless interviewee, has medical issues that allow her to get a discounted Clipper card for \$25 per month from VTA. Mrs. White, a 72 years old homeless woman, can use the senior discount to obtain a \$25 Clipper card as well. Both of them appreciate the VTA service and think the Clipper card is affordable. For the homeless people who used the VTA transit service everyday, they know the bus schedule and routes pretty well.

However, there are significant barriers that may prevent the homeless from adequately utilizing public transit. Lost UPLIFT passes, mean individuals have to pay the full bus fare, until they get a new UPLIFT pass in the next quarter. Also, some homeless people are unable to read or have language barriers. It can be difficult for them to take public transit to get around to needed services without written or verbal language comprehension. The last but not the least, a terrible pedestrian or sidewalk environment can be a barrier for people to access the public transit—especially

for those with disabilities.

Those who have been homeless for a long time know the available services, however, new homeless individuals lack information about VTA services and other homeless services. One interviewee, Dale, mentioned that he did not know of any discount program or free pass program. Furthermore, he did not know where to grab a bus schedule or where to get information about other homeless services such as information about meal programs or employment centers. He often missed the bus or took a wrong bus, because of the lack of information. One anecdote he shared is that he took the wrong bus and went to San Francisco by mistake on a rainy night.

UPLIFT and TAP are the two main programs to improve homeless people's mobility in San Jose. Homeless agencies previously provided clients with bus tokens, but those only serve as a day pass, compared with UPLIFT, which is a 3-month pass. UPLIFT is more convenient for both homeless service providers and homeless people. UPLIFT is working with VTA to explore the option of expanding the program to serve more homeless clients in the future. Additionally, UPLIFT encourages more agencies to participate the distribution program.

## ***5.2 Limitations***

This is a small-sample study in one geographical location in the United States, thus conclusions must be made tentatively. This study interviewed four homeless individuals on their perspective of public transit. The result of this study are much smaller, and may be spurious especially when compared to the Long Beach study, which was based on interviews with 118 homeless individuals,. However, despite the small sample size the spatial analysis supports the interviewees' opinion that public transit is convenient.

Besides the small sample of this research, the data reflecting the encampment size may not accurate, as some homeless people stay in different places everyday. Additionally, some homeless services may not be included in the Santa Clara homeless service handbook, or there may be new homeless services not represented in this research.

## ***5.3 Recommendations***

Understanding the mobility and transportation behavior of the homeless population is a worthy objective of VTA and homeless service programs. Such knowledge provides insight into

ways in which accessibility to transportation may be constrained, and offer strategies to improve the transit access.

Furthermore, if the UPLIFT pass was a number instead of a clipper card, people would simply need to remember their card number in order to take the bus. This would address the barrier faced when clients lose an UPLIFT card, VTA can implement this strategy by having clients can enter their UPLIFT number on the ticket machine when loading the bus, the identification information will pop up with a photo of the UPLIFT holder. Thus, this would eliminate the worry if they lost the card in the middle of the quarter. VTA and Santa Clara County can work together to provide this UPLIFT benefit to their clients.

For homeless people with physical disabilities or those who need to use a wheelchair to access public transit, the homeless agency should conduct a Peer-to-Peer model. The Peer-to-Peer model would encourage homeless people to help each other to access the VTA transit as well as other homeless services together.

To access emergency services such as the hospital, homeless services should have an agreement with the hospital for certain days to book homeless clients. Thus, the homeless service provider can provide a shuttle to drop off and pick up all the

clients at the hospital.

In terms of improvements for homeless agencies or homeless service providers, they can add more outreach teams to work with homeless people. These outreach services can let homeless people know where and how to access the different services, how to apply for the free bus pass, and how to apply for housing. Future homeless agencies should be located downtown, near public transit stops, which would help homeless people to easily access the services.

#### ***5.4 Opportunities for further study***

Future researcher can investigate the barriers in accessing the homeless services by quantitative and qualitative methods. This can be done through conducting interviews with more homeless people, handing out surveys, and meeting with a focus group to discuss the homeless population' transportation needs. Furthermore, the researcher can give the report recommendations to homeless providers rather than the VTA.



## Bibliography

About VTA. <http://www.vta.org/about-us/inside-vta/about-vta>.

Advani, Mukti, B. Srirama, and SK Pathan. "Improvement in Transit Service using GIS-Case Study of Bhavnagar State Transport Depot."2005.

Amin, Ratna. "Freedom to Move: How the VTA Can Create Better Transportation Choice in South Bay?" *SPUR*, March 28, 2014.

Amin, Ratna and Sara Barz. "Seamless Transit: How to Make Bay Area Public Transit Function Like one Rational, Easy-to-Use System." *SPUR*, March 31, 2015.

Andreassen, Tor Wallin. "(Dis)Satisfaction with Public Services: the Case of Public Transportation." *Journal of Services Marketing* 9, no. 5 (1995): 30–41.

Angell, Isabel. "Finding a Home at Hotel 22." *KALW*. <http://kalw.org/post/finding-home-hotel-22#stream/0>.

Bus System Overview. <http://www.vta.org/sfc/servlet.shepherd/document/download/069A0000001FvwYIAS>

City of San Jose, *Homeless Encampment Response Report 2014*.

<http://www.piersystem.com/external/content/document/1914/2183230/1/06-20-14HSGESD.pdf>.

City of San Jose Five- Year Housing Investment Plan, 2007-2012. <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=1274>

City of San Jose, *Homeless Point-in- Time Census & Survey Comprehensive Report 2007*.

<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/22490>.

City of San Jose, *Homeless Point-in- Time Census & Survey Comprehensive Report 2009*.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5176dcd7e4b0e5c0dba41ee0/t/53e9186ce4b0c9b077c90b87/1407794147105/San+Jose+Cprehensive+Report+-+2009.pdf>.

City of San Jose, *Homeless Point-in- Time Census & Survey Comprehensive Report 2011*.

<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1108>.

City of San Jose, *Homeless Point-in- Time Census & Survey Comprehensive Report 2013*.

<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/18821>.

City of San Jose, *Homeless Point-in- Time Census & Survey Comprehensive Report 2015*.

<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/44727>.

Cloke, Paul, Paul Milbourne, and Rebekah Widdowfield. “The Complex Mobilities of Homeless People in Rural England.” *Geoforum* 34, no. 1 (2003): 21–35

Cunningham, Lawrence, Clifford Young, and Moonkyu Lee. “Methodological Triangulation in Measuring Public Transportation Service Quality.” *Transportation Journal* (2000): 35-47.

*Defining Chronic Homelessness: A Technical Guide for HUD Programs*. Accessed October 3rd, 2016.

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/DefiningChronicHomeless.pdf>.

Delmelle, Eric M., Shuping Li, and Alan T. Murray. “Identifying Bus Stop Redundancy: A Gis-Based Spatial Optimization Approach.” *Computers, Environment and Urban Systems* 36, no. 5 (2012): 445–455.

FAQs, *VTA Bus Service*. <http://www.vta.org/news-and-media/vta-newsroom-vta-media-relations-frequently-asked-questions>.

FAQs, *What’s VTA*, Accessed October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. <http://www.vta.org/bart/faq#c>.

Foda, Mohamed, and Ahmed Osman. “Using GIS for Measuring Transit Stop Accessibility Considering Actual Pedestrian Road Network.” *Journal of Public Transportation JPT* 13, no. 4 (2010): 23–40.

Former Residents of “the Jungle” Homeless Encampment to Gather for Reunion. <http://peninsulapress.com/2015/12/03/san-jose-jungle-former-residents-homeless-encampment-reunion/>,

- Friman, Margareta, and Markus Felleson. "Service Supply and Customer Satisfaction in Public Transportation: The Quality Paradox." *Journal of Public Transportation* 12, no. 4 (2009): 57–69.
- Givoni, Moshe, and Piet Rietveld. "The Access Journey to the Railway Station and Its Role in Passengers' Satisfaction with Rail Travel." *Transport Policy* 14, no. 5 (2007): 357–365.
- Hensher, David A., Peter Stopher, and Philip Bullock. "Service quality—developing a service quality index in the provision of commercial bus contracts." *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice* 37, no. 6(2003): 499-517.
- House the Homeless, *Homeless Employment Report*.2007. <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/homelessemploymentreport/>.
- Homeless to Get Free Rides on Mass Transit in Santa Clara County. <http://www.mercurynews.com/2011/02/03/homeless-to-get-free-rides-on-mass-transit-in-santa-clara-count>
- Hsiao, Shirley, Jian Lu, James Sterling, and Matthew Weatherford. "Use of Geographic Information System for Analysis of Transit Pedestrian Access." *Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board* 1604 (1997): 50–59.
- Javaid, U., et al. "Assessment of Transit Stops Service Area Using Geographical Information System—A Case Study of Punjab University Transportation" *Pakistan Journal of Science* 67, no. 4(2005):350-358.
- Jinxing, Shen, and Li Wenquan. "Evaluating the Satisfaction of Passengers with Different Backgrounds for Public Transit." *Urban Transport* XX (2014).
- Jocoy, Christine L. and Vincent J. Del Casino. "The Mobility of Homeless People and their use of Public Transit in Long Beach, California" (2008).
- Lai, Wen-Tai, and Ching-Fu Chen. "Behavioral Intentions of Public Transit Passengers—The Roles of Service Quality, Perceived Value, Satisfaction and Involvement." *Transport Policy* 18, no. 2 (2011): 318–325.
- Litman, Todd. "Valuing transit service quality improvements." *Journal of Public transportation* 11, no. 2(2008): 3.

- Mavoa, Suzanne, Karen Witten, Tim McCreanor, and David O'Sullivan. "GIS Based Destination Accessibility via Public Transit and Walking in Auckland, New Zealand." *Journal of Transport Geography* 20, no. 1 (2012): 15–22.
- Murray, Alan T., Rex Davis, Robert J. Stimson, and Luis Ferreira. "Public Transportation Access." *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment* 3, no. 5 (1998): 319–328.
- Nichols, Laura, and Fernando Cázares. "Homelessness and the Mobile Shelter System: Public Transportation as Shelter." *Journal of Social Policy* 40, no. 02 (2010): 333–350.
- Paulley, Balcombe, Kackett, Titheridge, Preston, Wardman, Shires, White. "The demand for public transport: The effects of fares, quality of service, income and car ownership." *Transport Policy* 13, no. 4(2006): 295-306.
- Place-Based Encampment Pilot Status and Update on Temporary Housing Initiatives: Story Road Encampment Response Report. <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/41659>.
- Prasertsubpakij, Duangporn, and Vilas Nitivattananon. "Evaluating Accessibility to Bangkok Metro Systems Using Multi-Dimensional Criteria across User Groups." *IATSS Research* 36, no. 1 (2012): 56–65.
- Report on Homeless Scan of San Jose's Downtown Core, March 31th, 2017.
- Rittner, B. and A. B. Kirk. "Health Care and Public Transportation use by Poor and Frail Elderly People." *Social Work* 40, no. 3 (1995): 365-73.
- Rogalsky, Jennifer. "The Working Poor and What GIS Reveals about the Possibilities of Public Transit." *Journal of Transport Geography* 18, no. 2 (2010): 226–237.
- Rowe, Stacy, and Jennifer Wolch. "Social Networks in Time and Space: Homeless Women in Skid Row, Los Angeles." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 80, no. 2 (1990): 184–204.
- Saghapour, Tayebah, Sara Moridpour, and Russell G. Thompson. "Public Transport Accessibility in Metropolitan Areas: A New Approach Incorporating Population Density." *Journal of Transport Geography* 54 (2016): 273–285.

Sanchez, Thomas, Qing Shen, and Zhong-Ren Peng. “Transit Mobility, Jobs Access and Low-Income Labour Participation in Us Metropolitan Areas.” *Urban Studies* 41, no. 7 (January 2004): 1313–1331.

San Jose Direct Discharge Trash Control Plan.

[http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb2/water\\_issues/programs/stormwater/MRP/ProvisionC.10/San\\_Jose\\_Direct\\_Discharge\\_Plan\\_Supplemental\\_Final.pdf](http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb2/water_issues/programs/stormwater/MRP/ProvisionC.10/San_Jose_Direct_Discharge_Plan_Supplemental_Final.pdf).

San Jose’s “Jungle”: Former homeless encampments returns to nature. <http://www.mercurynews.com/2015/07/09/san-joses-jungle-former-homeless-encampment-returns-to-nature/>.

Santa Clara County, *Keys to Housing: A 10-year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness in Santa Clara County*, 2005.

<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1136>.

*Strategic Action Plan on Homelessness*. <http://www.hhs.gov/programs/social-services/homelessness/research/strategic-action-plan-on-homelessness/>.

The State of Homelessness in America 2016. <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/the-state-of-homelessness-in-america-2015>.

*The Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness: Opening the Back Door*. <http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/backdoor>.

The White House, President’s New Freedom Initiative, 2004.

Transit Choice Report, VTA.

US Census, *Quick Facts*, San Jose City, California. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/0668000,00>.

U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013.

United States Code, 2006 Edition. *Containing the General and Permanent Laws of the United States Enacted during the 110th Congress, First Session, January 4, 2007, to January 8, 2008*. Washington, D.C.: U.S.G.P. O,

"VTA On-Board Passenger Survey Report 2013", VTA Board, 2013.

Wikipedia, *San Jose*, California. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San\\_Jose,\\_California](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Jose,_California).

Wolch, Jennifer R., Afsaneh Rahimian, and Paul Koegel. "Daily and Periodic Mobility Patterns of the Urban Homeless." *The Professional Geographer* 45, no. 2 (1993): 159–169.

Wolch, Jennifer R., and Stacy Rowe. "On the Streets: Mobility Paths of the Urban Homeless." *City Society* 6, no. 2 (1992): 115–140.

## Appendix A: Homeless Service Information in Santa Clara County

Agency Name	Address	City	State	Category
Adult Protective Services	333 West Julian Street	San Jose	CA	Medical
Alum Rock Counsellinf Center	1245 East Santa Clara Street	San Jose	CA	Medical
Momentum for Mental Health	438 North White Road	San Jose	CA	Medical
Pathway Society	1659 Scott Boulevard, Suite 30	Santa Clara	CA	Medical
National Alliance for Mental Illness	1150 South Bascom Avenue, Suite 24	San Jose	CA	Medical
Valley Medical Call Center	751 South Bascom Avenue	San Jose	CA	Medical
City Team	1174 Old Bayshore Hwy	San Jose	CA	Food & Meal
Eastside Neighborhood Center	2150 Alum Rock Avenue	San Jose	CA	Food & Meal
St. Maria Goretti Church	2980 Senter Road	San Jose	CA	Food & Meal
Goodwill	1080 North 7th Street	San Jose	CA	Food & Meal
Martha's Kitchen	311 Willow Street	San Jose	CA	Food & Meal
Second Harvest Food Bank	750 Curtner Avenue	San Jose	CA	Food & Meal
Cypress Center	4001 North 1th Street	San Jose	CA	Food & Meal
Ascent Employment Program	4911 Moorpark Avenue	San Jose	CA	Employment/Vocational Services
Center for Training & Careers	749 Story Road, Suite 10	San Jose	CA	Employment/Vocational Services
Day Worker Center of Mountain View	113 Escuela Avenue	Mountain View	CA	Employment/Vocational Services
Downtown Streets Team	811 Henderson Avenue	Sunnyvale	CA	Employment/Vocational Services
Oppoetunity Center	33 Encina Avenue	Palo Alto	CA	Employment/Vocational Services
NOVA/Job Seekers Center	505 West Olive Street,Suite 550	Sunnyvale	CA	Employment/Vocational Services
Center for Employment Training (CET)	701 Vine Street	San Jose	CA	Employment/Vocational Services
Work2Future One Stop 1	1601 Foxworthy Avenue	San Jose	CA	Employment/Vocational Services



Work2Future One Stop 2	2450 South Bascim Avenue	Campbell	CA	Employment/Vocational Services
Bill Willson Center	3490 Almaden Expressway	San Jose	CA	Youth Services
The Hub (Foster Youth Resource & Community Center)	591 North King Road, Suite 1	San Jose	CA	Youth Services
Uplift Family Service	251 Llewellyn Avenue	Campbell	CA	Youth Services
Rebekah Children's Services	11600 West Campbell Avenue	Campbell	CA	Youth Services
San Jose Conservation Corps	2650 Senter Road	San Jose	CA	Youth Services
San Jose Conservation Corps	1560 Berger Drive	San Jose	CA	Youth Services
Unity Care Group	237 Race Street	San Jose	CA	Youth Services
StandUp For Kids - Sillicon Valley	25 East Hedding Street	San Jose	CA	Youth Services
HomeFirst/Veterans Services	2011 Little Orchard Street	San Jose	CA	Veterans Services
Homeless Veterans Emergency Housing Facility (HVEHF)	10 Kirk Avenue	San Jose	CA	Veterans Services
Santa Clara County/Veterans Services Office	68 North Winchester Blvd	Santa Clara	CA	Veterans Services
Veterans Administration (VA) Palo Alto Heath Center	3801 Miranda Avenue	Palo Alto	CA	Veterans Services
Bay Area Legal Aid	2 West Santa Clara Street	San Jose	CA	Legal Referrals
Law Foundation of Sillicon Valley	152 North 3rd Street	San Jose	CA	Legal Referrals
Legal Aid Society of Santa Clara County/Housing Counseling Program	480 North First Street	San Jose	CA	Legal Referrals
Sacred Heart Community Service	1381 South First Street	San Jose	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
Salvation Army	359 North First Street	San Jose	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
LifeMoves/Georgia Travis House	260 Commercial Street	San Jose	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
City of San Jose/Rental Rights & Referrals Program	200 East of Santa Clara Street	San Jose	CA	Rental & Other Assistance

Community Services Agency of Mt.View & Los Altos	204 Sterlin Road	Mountain View	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
The Health Trust/AIDS Services	1400 Parkmoor Avenue, Suite 230	San Jose	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara	505 West Julian Street	San Jose	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
Salvation Army	3090 Homestead Road	Santa Clara	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
San Jose Unified School District	1149 East Julian Street, Building G	San Jose	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
Santa Clara County/General Assistance	1919 Senter Road	San Jose	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
Santa Clara County/Benefits Assistance Center	1867 Senter Road	San Jose	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
Santa Clara Unified School District	1840 Benton Street	Santa Clara	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
Silicon Valley Independent Living Center	2202 North First Street	San Jose	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
Sunnyvale Community Services	725 Kifer Road	Sunnyvale	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
West Valley Community Services	10104 Vista Drive	Cupertino	CA	Rental & Other Assistance
MTA Downtown Customer Service Center	55A West Santa Clara Street	San Jose	CA	MTA Services

## Appendix B: Homeless Shelters Information in Santa Clara County

Homeless Shelter	Address	City	State
ALANO Club of San Jose	1122 Fair Ave.	San Jose	CA
Asian Women's Home	240 Moorpark Ave.	San Jose	CA
Casa de Clara San Jose Catholic Worker	318 N. 6th St.	San Jose	CA
City Team Ministry Rescue Mission - Community Services	1297 North 13th Street	San Jose	CA
HomeFirst Program San Jose	2011 Little Orchard St	San Jose	CA
HomeFirst Boccardo Family Living Center	13545 Monterey Road	San Jose	CA
Montgomery Street Inn Shelter	358 N. Montgomery St.	San Jose	CA
InnVision: Georgia Travis Center	297 Commercial St	San Jose	CA
Salvation Army Emmanuel House	405 N. 4th St.	San Jose	CA
Family Supportive Housing's San Jose Family Shelter	692 N. King Road	San Jose	CA
CityTeam Ministries San Jose	2304 Zanker Road	San Jose	CA
Heritage Home Shelter - CityTeam Ministries	35 North Third Street	San Jose	CA
United States Mission Transitional Housing San Jose	420 S. 5th St.	San Jose	CA
Commercial Street Inn	260 Commercial Street	San Jose	CA
City Team Ministry Men's Shelter	1174 Old Bayshore Hwy	San Jose	CA
El Concillo - Shelter Network	1798 Bay Road	East Palo Alto	CA
WeHOPE Shelter	1858 Bay Road	East Palo Alto	CA
The Opportunity Center	2507 Alma Street	Palo Alto	CA
Graduate House Shelter	813 Alice Avenue	Mountain View	CA

## Appendix C: TA Service Frequency, January 2017

Frequency Chart  
Effective: January 2, 2017

		Weekday						Saturday					Sunday							
		Headway					Headway					Headway								
		AM	Midday	PM	Night	Late	Morning				Base	Night	Late	Morning				Base	Night	Late
Line	RT Category	Span	5a-9a	9a-3p	3p-7p	7p-11p	11p-5a	Span	5a-9a	9a-6p	6p-10p	10p-5a	Span	5a-9a	9a-6p	6p-10p	10p-5a			
10	Local	5a-1130p	15	15	15	20-30		530a-1130p	30-60	30	30	30	530a-1130p	30-60	30	30	30			
12	Local							930a-630p		30			930a-630p		30					
13	Community	630a-730p	60	60	60															
14	Community	8a-6p	45	40	45			930a-530p		60			930a-530p		60					
16	Community	630a-9a, 2p-530p	60		60															
17	Community	730a-530p	45	40	40			10a-5p		60			10a-5p		60					
18	Community	7a-930p	30	40	45	60														
19	Community	530a-7p	45	40	45			830a-6p	60	60			9a-6p		60					
22	Core	24 hrs.	12	12	12	20-30	30-60	24 hrs.	15-30	15	15-30	30-60	24 hrs.	15-30	15	15-30	30-60			
23	Core	530a-1a	12	12	12	20-60	60	6a-1a	15-30	15	15-30	60	600a-1a	15-30	15	15-30	60			
25	Core	5a-12mid	10/30	10/30	10/30	15-60	60	530a-1130p	15-30	15/30	15-60	60	530a-1130p	20-30	20/40	20-60	60			
26	Core	530a-11p	15/30	30	15/30	30-60		630a-1030p	30-50	30	30-60		630a-1030p	30-50	30	30-60				
27	Local	6a-8p	30	45	30	60		830a-730p		60	60		9a-530p		60					
31	Local	6a-10p	30	30	30	60		730a-630p	60	60			9a-530p		60					
32	Community	6a-8p	30	30	30			9a-530p		60										
34	Community	930a-3p		60																
35	Local	6a-930p	30	30	30	60		830a-830p		45	60		830a-8p		60	60				
37	Community	630a-10p	30	30/60	30	60														
39	Community	630a-730p	30	60	30			830a-7p		60	60		930a-6p		60					
40	Local	630a-1030p	30	30	30	60		8a-630p	60	45			930a-6p		60					
42	Community	630a-7p	45	45	45			9a-6p		60										
45	Community	630a-630p	60	60	60															
46	Local	6a-630p	30	60	30			9a-6p		60										
47	Local	6a-930p	30	30	30	30-60		8a-8p	30	30	30-60		830a-730p		45-60	60				
48	Community	6a-7p	45	60	45			8a-7p	60	60	60		930a-530p		60					
49	Community	630a-730p	45	60	45			730a-630p	60	60	60		10a-5p		60					
52	Local	7a-930p	30	30	30-60	60														
53	Local	7a-630p	60	60	60															
54	Local	6a-9p	30	30	30	60		8a-730p	60	45	60		9a-7p		45-60	45				
55	Core	530a-1030p	15/30	30	15/30	30-60		8a-830p	30-60	30	30-60		8a-8p	60	45	45-60				
57	Local	530a-1030p	30	30	30	30-60		8a-830p	30	30	30-60		8a-730p	60	30	60				
58	Local	6a-730p	30	60	30	30														
60	Core	530a-1030p	15/30	30	15/30	30-60		7a-10p	30-60	30	30-60		7a-9p	30-60	30	30-60				
61	Core	6a-9p	30	30	30-40	40-60		6a-9p	60	60	60		6a-830p	60	60	60				
62	Core	6a-1030p	30	30	30-40	60		630a-930p	60	30/60	60		7a-930p	60	30/60	60				
63	Local	630a-10p	30	45	30	30-60		8a-7p	60	60	60		9a-530p		60					
64	Core	530a-11p	15/30	15/30	15/30	30-60		630a-1030p	30-45	30	30-60		7a-930p	30-45	30	30-60				
65	Community	630a-7p	45	45	45															
66	Core	5a-1130p	15	20	15	20-60		6a-1130p	30-45	20	30-60	60	6a-1030p	30-45	20	45-60				
68	Core	4a-1230a	15	20	15	20-60	60	6a-1230a	30-45	20	30-60	60	6a-1230a	30-45	20	30-60	60			
70	Core	5a-11p	15	15	15	20-60		6a-11p	30-60	20	30-60	60	6a-11p	30-60	20	30-60	60			
71	Core	530a-10p	15	30	15	30-60		7a-9p	60	30	45-60		7a-9p	60	45	45-60				
72	Core	530a-1030p	15	15-20	15	30-60		630a-930p	30-45	30	30-60		630a-930p	45	45	45-60				
73	Core	530a-930p	15	20	15	30-60		7a-9p	30-45	30	30-60		7a-8p	45-60	45	45-60				
77	Core	6a-930p	15	20	15	30-60		7a-730p	30-45	30	30-45		7a-730p	30-45	30	30-45				
81	Local	6-730p	30	30	30-60	60		930a-530p		60										
82	Local	6a-9p	30	30	30	30-60		730a-8p	45-60	45	45-60		8a-630p		60					
88	Community	630a-630p	60	60	60															
89	Local	630a-630p	30	30-40	30															

Frequency Chart  
Effective: January 2, 2017

Line	RT Category	Weekday						Saturday					Sunday				
		Span	Headway					Span	Headway				Span	Headway			
			AM 5a-9a	Midday 9a-3p	PM 3p-7p	Night 7p-11p	Late 11p-5a		Morning 5a-9a	Base 9a-6p	Night 6p-10p	Late 10p-5a		Morning 5a-9a	Base 9a-6p	Night 6p-10p	Late 10p-5a
101	Express	2 trips each direction															
102	Express	7 trips each direction															
103	Express	4 trips each direction															
104	Express	2 trips each direction															
120	Express	6 trips each direction															
121	Express	9 trips each direction															
122	Express	1 trip each direction															
140	Express	3 trips each direction															
168	Express	7 trips each direction															
180	Express	530a-10p	30	30	30	30-60											
181	Express	530a-12mid	15-30	15	15	20-40	60	7a-12mid	20-40	20	20-40	40	730a-12mid	40-60	20	20-40	40
182	Express	1 trip each direction															
185	Express	3 trips each direction															
200	Local	2 NB pm trips						2 NB pm trips					2 NB pm trips				
201	Community	630a-9p	10	15	10	30											
304	Limited	4 trips each direction															
321	Limited	1 trip each direction															
323	Core	630a-1030p	15	15	15	30		8am-10pm	15	15	15		9am-6pm		20		
328	Limited	2 trips each direction															
330	Limited	4 trips each direction															
522	Core	5a-1030p	15	15	15	30		8a-1030p	20	15	20		9a-630p		15		
<b>Light Rail</b>																	
900	Light Rail	6a-1030p	15	15	15	15		8a-10p	15	15	15		8a-10p	15	15	15	
901	Light Rail	430a-130a	15/30	15	15	15-30	30-60	5a-130a	15/30	15	15-30	30-60	5a-1a	15/30	15	15-30	30-60
902	Light Rail	5a-12mid	15/30	30	15	15-30	30-60	6a-12mid	30	30	30	30-60	6a-12mid	30	30	30	30-60

Legend

 = No service

Headway 15/30 = short and long trips indicated with a slash

Headway 15-30 = headways gradually change from 15 to 30 mins

## **Appendix D: Interview Questions**

### **#1 Interview Questions: Homeless People**

1. Where did you live in the last 30 days?
2. When did you become homeless?
3. Have you ever served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, Military Reserve, or National Guard?
4. How do you get around?
5. Where do you go? Do you visit any friends/family? Do you go to any homeless services often? How do you get there?
6. Where are the “official” and “unofficial” homeless encampments/ locations in San Jose?
7. Do you work? Do you take a bus to work? How far from a shelter to your work place?
8. How do you like the San Jose public transit system? Do you walk to a bus stop more than 10 minutes?
9. Do you have a VTA flyer about the bus schedule? Does the bus arrive on time?
10. Are you satisfied with the public transit service in San Jose?
11. What are the challenge/ obstacles for you accessing the public transit system?
12. Is there any destination which is important to you or any other homeless person, but you can’t arrive there by public transit?
13. Do you want to share any story about taking a bus?
14. Do you know there are some homeless people that use Route 22 as a shelter during the night?
15. Do you have an eco pass card? If yes, how did you apply it? If not, why don’t you apply for it?
16. Do you have anything else you want to share with me?

### **#2 Interview Questions: Route 22 Bus driver**

1. How often do you drive the night bus?
2. Do you know a lot of homeless people that take the bus as a night shelter? How many people?
3. When did homeless people start taking route 22 as a shelter? How many years?
4. What do you think of the situation?
5. Do you think sleeping on bus is safer than being in a shelter?
6. What’s the difference of taking bus as shelter in winter and summer? Are there many more homeless people taking Route 22 in winter rather than summer?
7. What’s the VTA’s attitude towards homeless persons taking Route 22 as a shelter?

8. Does homeless people tend to use eco pass card or cash?
9. Is there any VTA program/strategy/discount for homeless people? How effective of these programs?
10. What do you think of the challenge/ obstacles for homeless passengerd accessing the public transit system?
11. Do you have some homeless stories to share with me?

### **#3 Interview Questions: Homeless Response Team, Homeless service provider**

1. Could you introduce your team?
2. Where are the “official” and “unofficial” homeless encampments/ hot spots in San Jose?
3. In your opinion, what are the important destinations for homeless people? (Besides the shelter...)
4. Is there any program to help the homeless people take public transit in San Jose? How effective are these programs?
5. What do you think of the challenge/ obstacles for homeless people accessing the public transit system?
6. Do you know if there are some homeless people that take Route 22 as a shelter at night?
7. Do you have any recommendation of other staff or homeless people to interview?

### **#4 Interview Questions: VTA Transportation Planner**

1. Do you think the Bus Routes/Service Area adequately some typical services sought by homeless persons?
2. What challenge/ obstacles do homeless people face when accessing the public transit system?
3. What solutions do you think that would eliminate the barriers?
4. Do you know if there are some homeless people that take Route 22 as a shelter at night?
5. Is there any VTA program/strategy/discount for homeless people? How effective are these programs?
6. How do you balance the ridership and coverage in transportation planning?