

Agenda Item No.	Board Meeting Date	Open/Closed Session	Information/Action Item	Issue Date
14	05/13/13	Open	Information	05/06/13

Subject: Assessment of 9th & K Street Station Platform

## ISSUE

Assessment of 9th & K Street station passenger use patterns.

## RECOMMENDED ACTION

None.

## FISCAL IMPACT

None.

## DISCUSSION

At the March 25, 2013 meeting of the RT Board of Directors, Director Steve Hansen requested a report on the impact of the 9th & K/St. Rose of Lima Park light rail station, which is located on the 800 block of K Street in Downtown Sacramento.

The 9th & K Street station is actually one of three different platforms of the same station. The 9th & K Street platform is currently served by Blue Line trains heading east on K Street destined for the Watt/I-80 light rail station. The other two platforms are at 8th & K Street, where northbound Gold and Green Line trains stop, and at 7th & K Street, where all southbound trains stop. The two Blue Line stations are also identified in RT materials as the St. Rose of Lima Park station. Photos and maps of the 9th & K Street platform and the nearby area have been included as Attachment 1.

### **Passenger Impacts**

Individually, the 9th & K platform averages 1,165 boardings and 965 alightings per weekday. A recent passenger count also found that 74 persons used the mini-high platform and ramp to board or alight from a train on that one day. Combined, the three St. Rose station platforms make up the most centrally located station in RT's transit system, with respect to Sacramento's central business district. Combined, they are also RT's second most heavily used station, accounting collectively for an average of 3,200 boardings and approximately 3,400 alightings per weekday. These ridership levels are surpassed only by the 16th Street station, the highest ridership station in the system and a major transfer point.

The catchment area for the 9th & K platform is approximately the area north of Capitol Mall and west of 10th Street. This area includes the Downtown Plaza Mall, Sacramento City Hall, Sacramento County administrative offices, the County Jail, the County Courthouse, the Federal

Approved:

Presented:

Final 05/08/13

General Manager/CEO

RoseMary Covington, AGM of Planning and Transit System Development

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Courthouse, the Sacramento Public Library, the Amtrak station, and numerous other major destinations. If the 9th & K platform is eliminated, persons using the Blue Line to access these locations will have to walk to either the 8th & Capitol station or the 12th & K station.

## Passenger Transferring

In addition to passenger activity related to nearby destinations, the St. Rose station is particularly important because of its function as a transfer point between the Blue Line, Gold Line, and Green Line. The 9th & K platform is essential to connections from Gold Line trains from Amtrak and Green Line trains from the River District. The three St. Rose platforms function interdependently of each other. From the standpoint of a passenger trying to make a connection between two lines, the current arrangement, while challenging, works well for the customer and reduces walking distance.

As an example, passengers coming from Amtrak or the River District to a Watt/I-80-bound train currently disembark at the 7th & K platform and walk to the 9th & K platform. This distance is a minimum of approximately 400 feet, although for customers using the mini-high platform, the distance is approximately 1,200 feet. One alternative to the 9th & K platform would probably be for patrons to disembark at the 7th & Capitol station (located north of Capitol Mall), cross Capitol Mall, and catch a northbound Blue Line train at the 8th & Capitol station. This option would increase the walk distance to approximately 800 feet and would also increase the likelihood of the passenger missing his or her normal train and having to take the next train. The other alternative would be to disembark at the 7th & K platform and walk to the 12th & K station, a distance of at least 1,600 feet and almost 2,400 feet for mini-high users.

Another example is the case of persons transferring from Watt/I-80-bound trains to a Route 11 bus destined for North or South Natomas. Currently, these riders must disembark at the 9th & K platform and walk up 8th Street, cross J and I Streets, to a bus stop on 8th Street north of I Street. The nearest alternatives are the 8th & Capitol station or perhaps the 12th & I station.

Other notable connections that make use of the 9th & K platform include:

- South Sacramento residents transferring from the Blue Line to an eastbound bus such as Route 30 to CSUS currently one block from the 9th & K platform to the large, well sheltered bus stop at the southwest corner of J Street and 8th Street. The nearest alternative station to this bus stop is the 12th & K station, which would require patrons to walk to a much smaller bus stop on J Street east of 11th Street with minimal waiting space, minimal shelter and fewer alternative routes.
- South Sacramento residents transferring from the Blue Line to Routes 86 or 88 to South Natomas currently walk around the corner from the 9th & K platform to a bus stop on 9th Street south of K Street. The nearest alternative station would be the 8th & Capitol station which would require patrons to walk across Capitol Mall to reach the bus stop on L Street west of 9th Street.

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- The current plans for the proposed Downtown Sacramento Streetcar envision the 9th & K station to be its most heavily used stop. The catchment area for the 9th & K platform for the proposed streetcar would be approximately the area south of J Street between 5th and 10th Streets which includes numerous state office buildings near the Capitol. The nearest alternative stations would be the 7th & I station or 12th & K station.

## Downtown Arena

The most recent publicly released plans for a Downtown Entertainment and Sports Complex envision an arena being built on the northeast corner of 5th and L Streets on the site of the current Downtown Plaza Mall. Based on the recent recommendation by the Relocation Committee of the National Basketball Association that the Sacramento Kings remain in Sacramento, this outcome appears increasingly likely. The 9th & K platform would be the preferred stop for patrons destined for the arena from South Sacramento on the Blue Line and for patrons leaving the area after an event bound for North Sacramento on the Blue Line.

The nearest alternative stations are the 8th & Capitol station and the 12th & K station. Diverting patrons to the 8th & Capitol station is somewhat undesirable for several reasons, the first two stemming from the fact that the surrounding area is primarily state office buildings. First, the capacity and configuration of the station could present issues, and there is a lack of nearby establishments with basic amenities to properly accommodate large groups of event attendees, especially families with children. Second, because the nearby uses are primarily state offices, the foot traffic to this station would not be likely to generate any additional economic activity. Third, increasing foot traffic across L Street and Capitol Mall is likely to compound traffic issues that will likely already exist from motorists leaving downtown via these streets.

## Relocation Alternatives

Without constructing new track there are two basic alternative locations for the 9th and K station platform, both of which were given a preliminary evaluation by RT staff: (1) 8th Street between K and L Streets, and (2) K Street east of 9th Street. Relocation to 8th Street between K and L Streets is the same or better from a passenger standpoint; however, there are several technical challenges that would make this option difficult and expensive. The slope of 8th Street at this location would likely result in major reconstruction costs. In order to accommodate trains turning from northbound 8th Street onto eastbound K Street, the platform would also have to be located in such a way that four-car trains stopped at the platform would obstruct L Street where it intersects 8th Street. Relocating the station farther east on K Street is problematic because it places the platform too close to the 11th & K station and too far away from the other St. Rose platforms on 7th and 8th Streets.

## Relocation Costs

In 2010, the City of Sacramento requested and paid for the relocation of the 7th & K station platform from K Street to 7th Street at a cost of approximately \$1.25 million, excluding soft costs (e.g., environmental clearance, design, permitting, utility relocations, construction administration,

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and contingency). Based on those costs, staff estimates the relocation of the 9th & K platform to cost at least \$2 million, depending on the extent of utility relocation. It is important to note, however, that this is a comparison to a seemingly similar project, not a detailed estimate. If RT pursues this project, a more detailed analysis would be necessary.

**Other Relocation Options**

Informal conceptual discussions have taken place regarding relocation of the entire Blue Line from K Street to a different east-west street such as H Street. No formal plans, studies, or timelines have been prepared for such a project, and the costs would be significant; however, this would accomplish the closure and removal of the 9th & K platform without most of the disruptions to passenger travel patterns discussed above.

**Next Steps**

If closure or relocation of the 9th & K platform is something the RT Board wants to pursue, next steps would need to include a more detailed analysis. There would also likely be demand for significant public engagement for a project of this nature.

# 9th & K Street Station

Informational Presentation

May 13, 2013

# Station Location

Downtown  
Plaza Mall



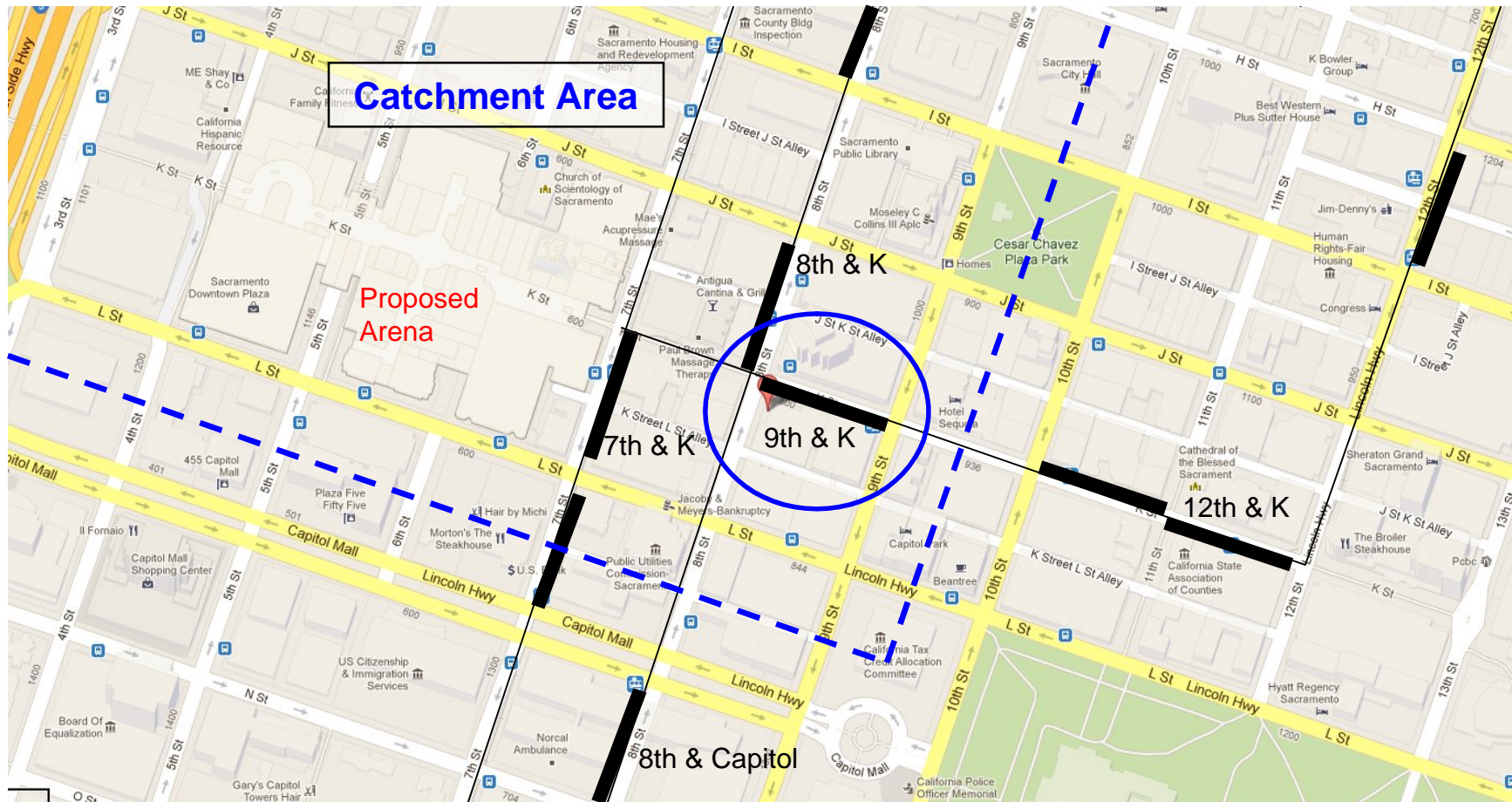
K St

7th St

8th St

9th St

# Surrounding Area



# 9th & K Street Station

View from 9<sup>th</sup> & K Street facing west





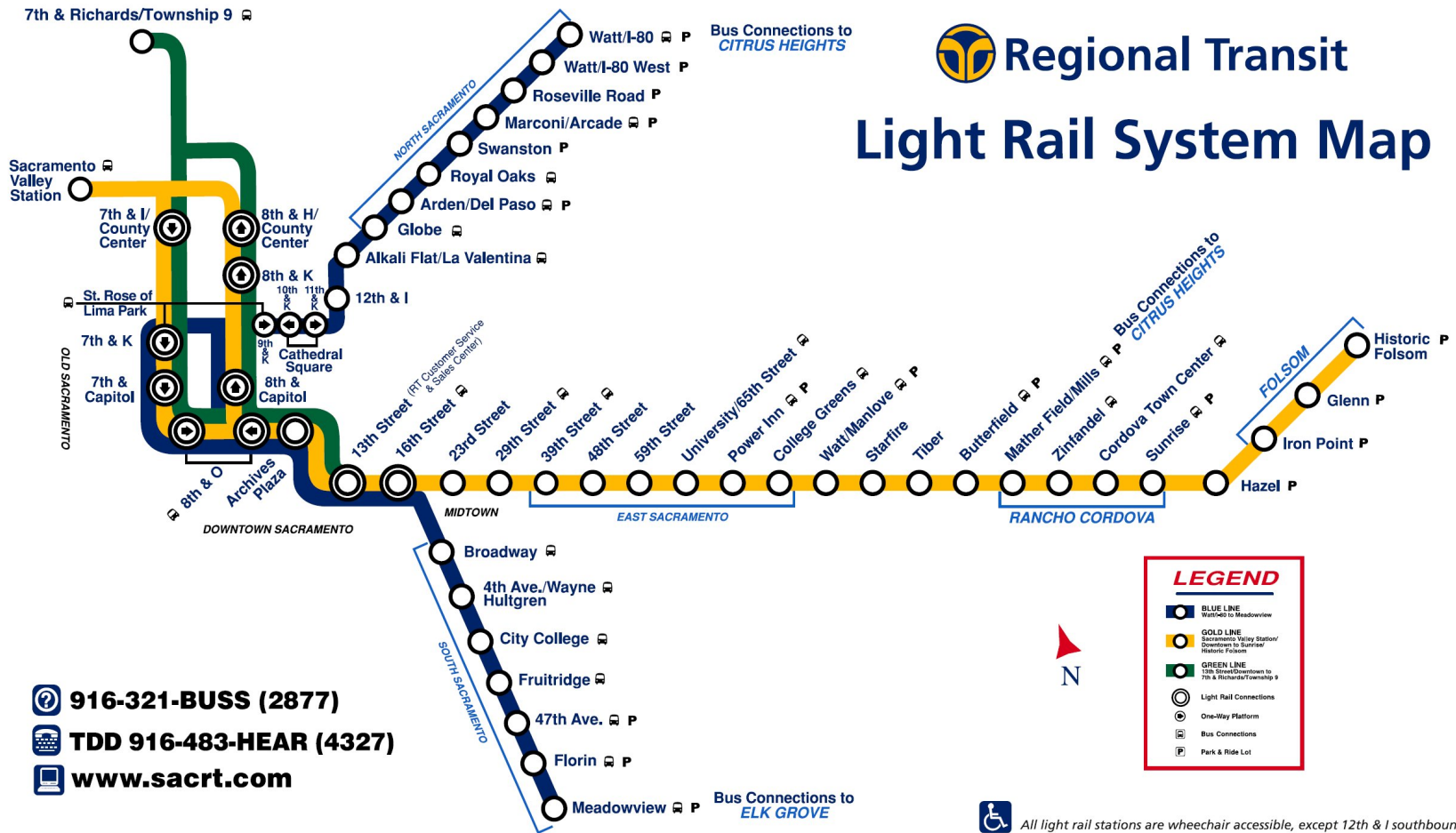
# Potential Alternative Site

8<sup>th</sup> Street south of K Street





# Regional Transit Light Rail System Map



# Summary of Impacts

- Increased walk distance
  - RT's second highest ridership station
  - Large catchment area includes Sacramento County, County Jail, County Courthouse, Federal Courthouse, Downtown Plaza Mall, City of Sacramento
- Disrupts rail-to-rail transferring
  - Passengers coming from Amtrak, River District, Natomas, or Airport will have to walk 1,000 to 1,600 feet to transfer to Watt/I-80 bound trains
  - Passengers likely to miss connecting trains
- Disrupts rail-to-bus transferring
  - Primarily from south area to northbound and eastbound buses
- Impacts proposed Downtown Streetcar
- Impacts proposed Downtown Entertainment and Sports Complex
- Potential relocation sites have major drawbacks or fatal flaws