

The Mercury News

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San Jose big enough for BART — and cost

Mark Joffe's latest anti-transit op-ed claims that BART's Silicon Valley extension cannot be justified because the area it will serve is less dense than Manhattan ("San Jose BART extension's \$9.3 billion cost is far too much," Page A16, Nov. 27).

Downtown San Jose's density is comparable to London and Paris, home to perfectly viable subways. New high-rise residential and commercial developments are further increasing density and demand for mass transit despite Joffe's dubious claim that pandemic-era work-from-home patterns are here to stay. His proposals to terminate the extension short of Diridon would prevent BART from reaching a major regional rail terminal connecting to ACE, Capitol Corridor, Caltrain and future high-speed rail, reducing the usefulness of all systems by orders of magnitude.

If the Cato Institute is truly concerned about wasteful spending, it should oppose urban highway widenings that cost \$31 million per lane mile, ratchet up maintenance bills by \$825,000 per mile of resurfacing, all while fueling congestion because of induced demand.

Eamonn Gormley

San Jose

Suicide net boondoggle is unacceptable

Re. "Golden Gate Bridge suicide net cost rises to \$400 million," Page B6, Dec. 5:

It seems few government agencies ever complete a project anywhere close to on-time and within budget. The list of project failures is endless, with the latest fiasco being the Golden Gate Bridge suicide net.

Originally projected to be completed by the end of 2021 at a cost of \$142 million, its completion is now projected by the end of 2023 (two years late), at a cost of \$398 million (almost triple the original cost projection). And don't be surprised if these dates and amounts change again – they always seem to.

The lapses on this project are particularly egregious since people's lives are at stake. There have already been at least 25 additional (known) suicides since the project was supposed to be

completed, and who knows how many more will leap to their deaths before it's now finally completed by December 2023. This is just so unacceptable.

Joseph Gumina

San Carlos

**City residents must
rise up over tiny homes**

On the same evening (Nov. 29), NOTonNOBLE celebrated their victory, a unanimous vote by the City Council to permanently remove Noble Avenue from tiny home development, the chamber seats were filled with a new group of livid protesters, from District 10, who also had a stealth bomb of a vote dropped on them. And like us, they had only a couple of days to spread the word, organize, make signs, and show up to be seen and heard.

There is great pressure on the council to fast-track what the rest of us know is a failing tiny home agenda. We do not want to see San Jose fast-tracked into destruction. This is exactly the time we should slow down, learn from the results already in, sit down with a larger problem-solving panel and correct our course. All districts will either rise up or be steamrolled.

Sandra Harrison Kay

San Jose

**Lofgren, committee
should be celebrated**

For the last four years, Rep. Zoe Lofgren has served on the little-known Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress. She has been a member of one of the few committees that functioned as the founders intended, with problem-solving and collaboration at its heart. In the committee's four-year existence this group of lawmakers discussed, debated and adopted more than 200 recommendations to improve Congress and democracy, and more than half have already been partially or fully implemented.

I have rarely seen a group of legislators so astutely assess a public policy need, analyze the implications, and chart a course that benefits both the institution and those it serves. The recommendations of the Modernization Committee will strengthen Congress and lead to better service to the American people. Rep. Lofgren is to be commended on her great service to the Congress, her constituents and the nation.

Bradford Fitch

Washington, D.C.