



Plans for a railroad between San Jose (this location) and San Francisco go back to the gold rush, starting with the creation of the Pacific & Atlantic Railroad Company in 1851. The route along the bay was surveyed, but the P&A was unable to raise funds for construction. The San Francisco & San Jose Railroad Company was incorporated in 1859 and then again in 1860 with Timothy Dame as president. Grading and construction south from San Francisco began on July 15, 1861, and the SF&SJ opened for service to Menlo Park on October 17, 1863 and was completed to San Jose on January 16, 1864. In February 1864, the SF&SJ advertised regular passenger service on four trains per day, with the trip scheduled to take two hours and twenty minutes. The Southern Pacific Railroad acquired the SF&SJ in March 1868, which together with the SP's acquisition of the Western Pacific (1869) connected San Francisco with the transcontinental railroad at Sacramento (CP [1869]). The SP upgraded the SF&SJ alignment in 1907 with a second track and a re-alignment of the line between San Francisco and San Bruno to the east of San Bruno Mountain (Bayshore Cutoff; not shown separately on the SWRRH Map). BART follows the original SF&SJ alignment west of San Bruno Mountain.

SP discontinued passenger service in 1977 and the State of California took over financial responsibility in 1980. The SP eventually sold the entire right-of-way to the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board in 1991, which currently operates the Caltrain commuter rail service over the route. The Union Pacific Railroad (SP successor) maintains trackage rights over the line for the little remaining freight traffic.

As is the case in most big cities, the railroad is difficult to access. This northwestward view through razor wire of the SF&SJ (1864) alignment is on the north edge of central San Jose and less than a mile north of the original southern terminus of the SF&SJ, but I could not find information on the location of the depot or the 1864 end-of-track. The railcars parked in the distance are at the southern end of the Caltrain Central Equipment Maintenance and Operations Facility. According to an 1895 topo map, the Caltrain facility is at the former location of the junction of the WP (1869) with the SF&SJ (1864), which by 1895 were known as the SP San Jose Branch and SP Monterey Line, respectively, but this connection has since been re-aligned, maybe in 1907 during the SP's other re-alignment of the work.



A Caltrain train emerges, same location as previous.





Underpass for Julian Street; the previous two photos were taken from the upper left of this photo.

