



Judicial Council of California

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August 25, 2025

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Power Santa Clara Valley Project; Attn. V. Nez
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Re: Power Santa Clara Valley Project DEIR

The Judicial Council of California (“Judicial Council”) has recently had the opportunity to review the Draft Environmental Impact Report (“DEIR”) for the Power Santa Clara Valley Project (“Project”). The Project affects Judicial Council owned properties where four major court facilities are located within the Project construction impact area in downtown San Jose. Court facilities impacted by this project are as follow:

- Family Justice Center Courthouse 201 N. First Street, San Jose, CA 95113
- Historic Courthouse 161 N. First St., San Jose, CA 95113
- Downtown Superior Court 191 N. First St., San Jose, CA 95113
- Sixth District Court of Appeals , 333 W. Santa Clara St, (various suites), San Jose, CA 95113

Upon review of the DEIR, the Judicial Council has some concerns regarding the impacts to our facilities from the construction activities of the Project. The Judicial Council understands that the Project includes the construction of two new high-voltage direct current terminals, the proposed Skyline and Grove HVDC Terminals, and three new transmission lines connecting the proposed HVDC terminals. The Judicial Council has identified four resource areas that may be significantly impacted during construction phase of the project in relation to judicial operations: Transportation, Noise, Utility and Service Systems, and Public Services. Impacts to these four resources will negatively affect the courts’ ability to maintain access to justice and guarantee of uninterrupted judicial proceedings.

The Judicial Council has concerns that the two-year construction period will present unprecedented challenges for continuing court operations. The Judicial Council reviewed the DEIR and has determined that the Project requires coordination with the impacted courts to provide detailed construction phasing plans with advanced notification of major construction activities, backup operational plans for utility disruptions, and coordination with court calendar scheduling to minimize conflicts.

Transportation

Transportation is a concern due to construction occurring within a 2-mile radius of four courthouses. The attached figures (1, 2, and 3) shows the construction area outlined in red in relation to the location of all four courthouses. The Judicial Council is requesting that the DEIR be revised to account for Transportation impacts to the court facilities, including guaranteed pedestrian access routes to all court facilities, ADA-compliant alternative access during construction phases, clear wayfinding and signage throughout construction periods, and safe drop-off zones for vulnerable court users. Transportation and parking constraints will significantly impact court users in downtown San Jose where parking is already severely limited. The Project must include a comprehensive parking impact assessment with concrete mitigation plans, alternative parking arrangements for court users during construction, preservation of public transit access routes, and maintenance of rideshare and taxi drop-off areas near court entrances.

Noise

The DEIR also outlines Noise and vibration having a temporary daytime and nighttime impact in surrounding areas. The report indicates there will be a noise characterization and reduction plan, which shall be submitted to the City, County and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) for review and approval. The report also notates that contractors shall conduct a site survey 50 feet of existing structures for vibration impacts to surrounding structures. Both the Downtown Superior Court and Historic Courthouse are across the street from part of the construction area and so extending the survey to 100 feet will better indicate how construction may impact court proceedings. The Judicial Council is also requesting that it be included as part of the review and approval process for the noise plan and vibration survey. Courts require quiet environments for proceedings, witness testimony, and attorney-client conferences. The Historic Courthouse, Family Justice Center Courthouse, and Downtown Superior Court are within a quarter mile of the project. The use of heavy construction equipment near these courthouses demands construction time restrictions during court hours from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, continuous noise level monitoring near courthouses with intervention protocols, advanced notice of high-noise activities, and physical sound barriers around construction zones adjacent to court facilities. Figure 3 shows the locations of the three court facilities closest to the construction zone, all of which are expected to be affected by noise and vibrations resulting from ongoing construction activities.

Utility and Service Systems

The Judicial Council is concerned that underground work may disrupt utilities critical to court operations, including power, internet, telecommunications, HVAC systems, and water services. Courts cannot function without reliable utilities. If there is any risk of utility disruption, the Judicial Council requests the Project include provisions for backup power systems during utility work, as well as internet and telecommunications continuity plans, HVAC system protection during construction, and guaranteed water and sewer service continuity. The Judicial Council requests notice or a schedule of construction activities that could cause system outages. It is preferred that these activities occur outside of court hours in order to not interfere with court proceedings.

Public Services

This Project must recognize that courts provide essential public services that cannot be interrupted without serious consequences to the delivery of and access to justice. The Judicial Council is requesting revisions to the DEIR to account for requirements for courthouse operation continuity measures. The Judicial Council also requests a construction plan, which includes consultation with the Judicial Council during construction planning phases and establishes advanced coordination requirements for major construction activities. This plan must recognize that courts provide essential public services that cannot be interrupted without serious consequences for the administration of justice.

Lastly, the Judicial Council welcomes continued dialogue about how this project aligns with renewable energy benefits for government facilities, state and judicial branch sustainability goals, and green construction practices near sensitive court environments.

Thank you for the opportunity to review. Should you have any questions, or wish to discuss, please contact me at alexandra.cervantes@jud.ca.gov or (916) 643-6924.

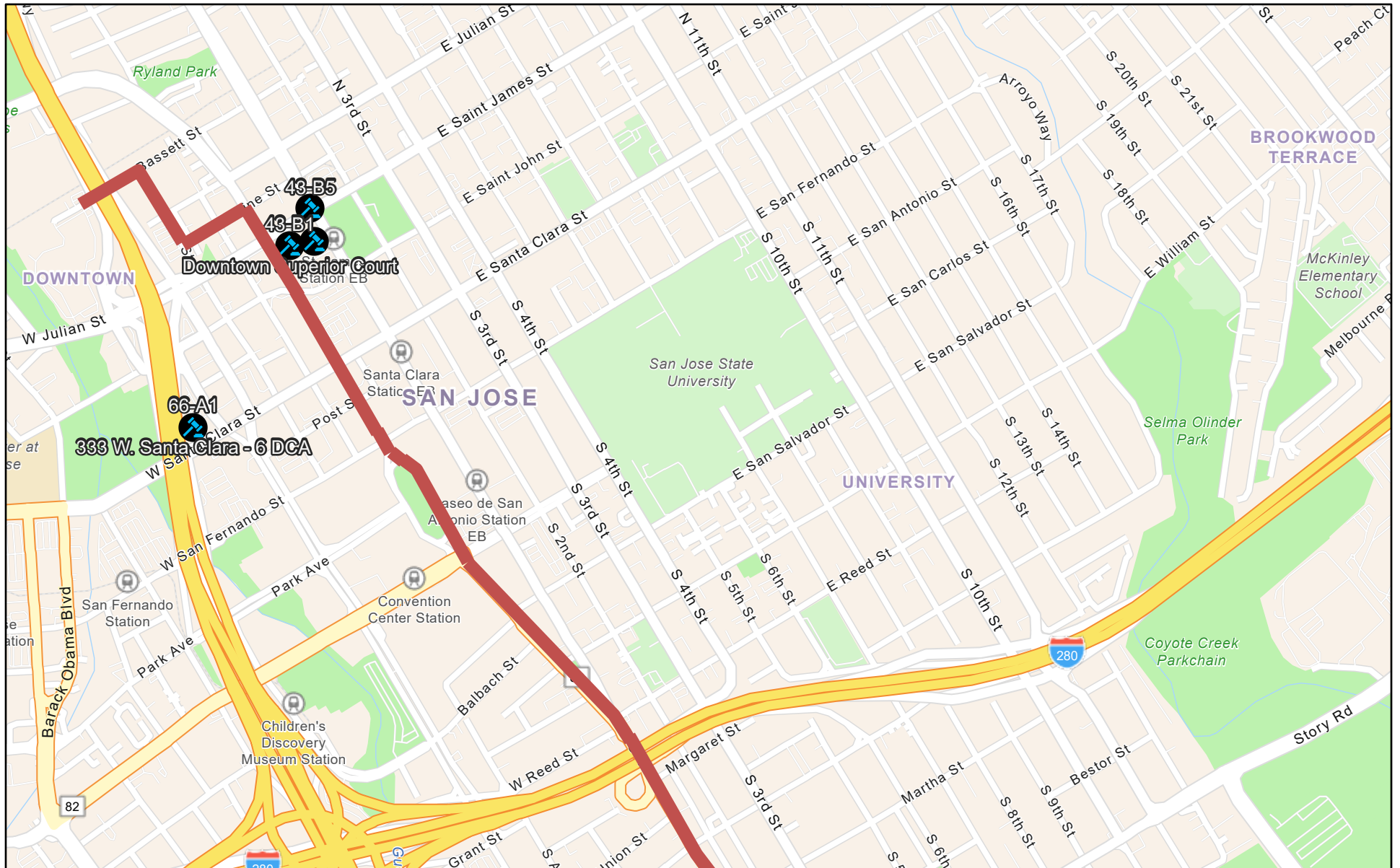
Sincerely,

Alexandra Cervantes

Alexandra Cervantes
Senior Facilities Analyst

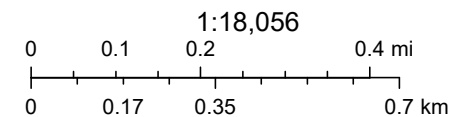
cc: Jagan Singh, Deputy Director, Facilities Services, Judicial Council
Mary Bustamante, Manager, Facilities Services, Judicial Council
Jennifer Chappelle, Manager, Risk Management, Facilities Services, Judicial Council
Hilda Iorga, Facilities Supervisor, Facilities Services, Judicial Council
Yassen Roussev, Supervisor, Sustainability, Judicial Council

Figure 1



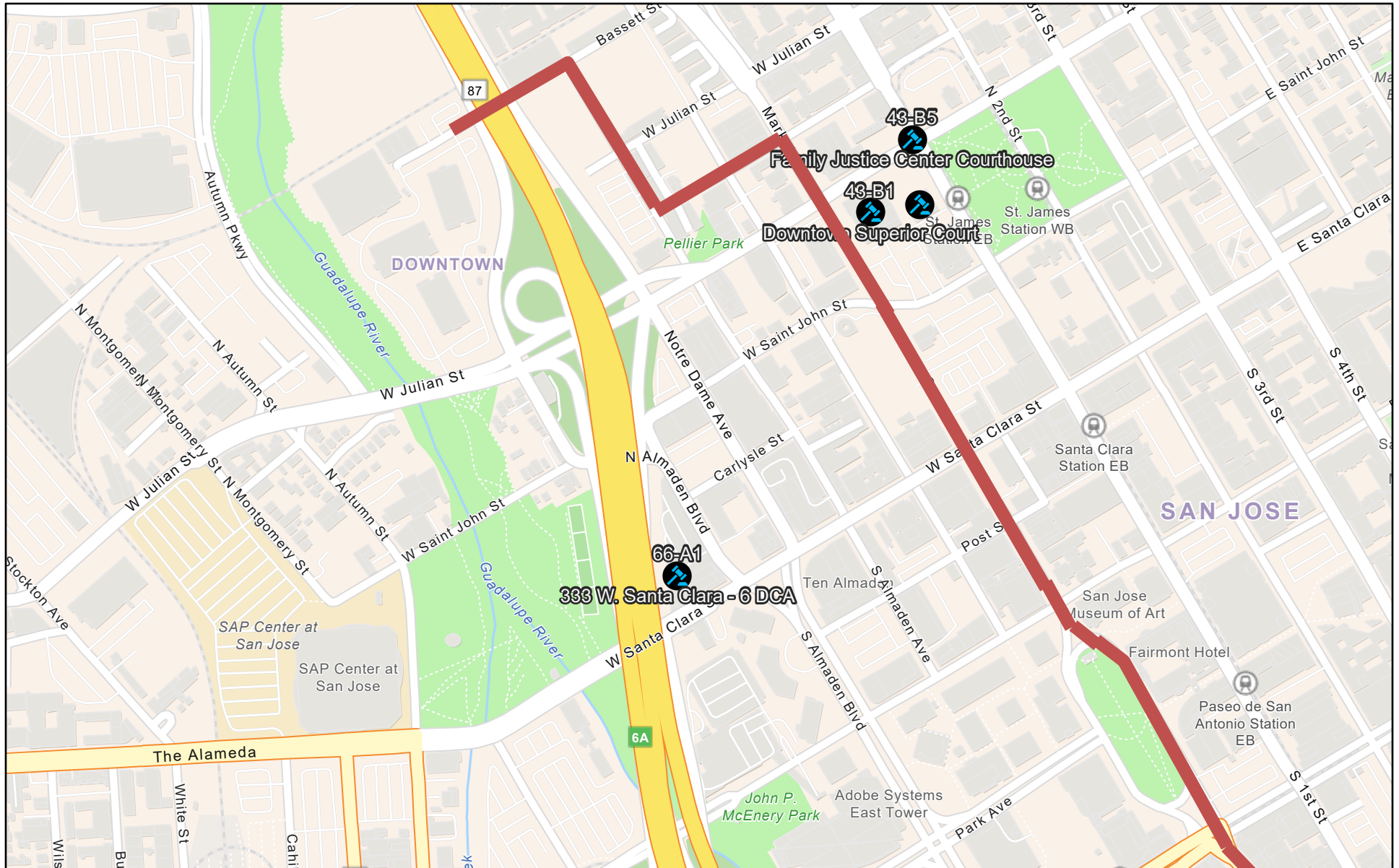
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Courthouse



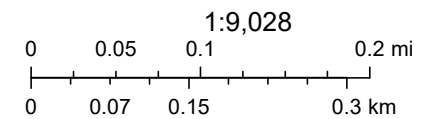
Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Figure 2



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 Courthouse

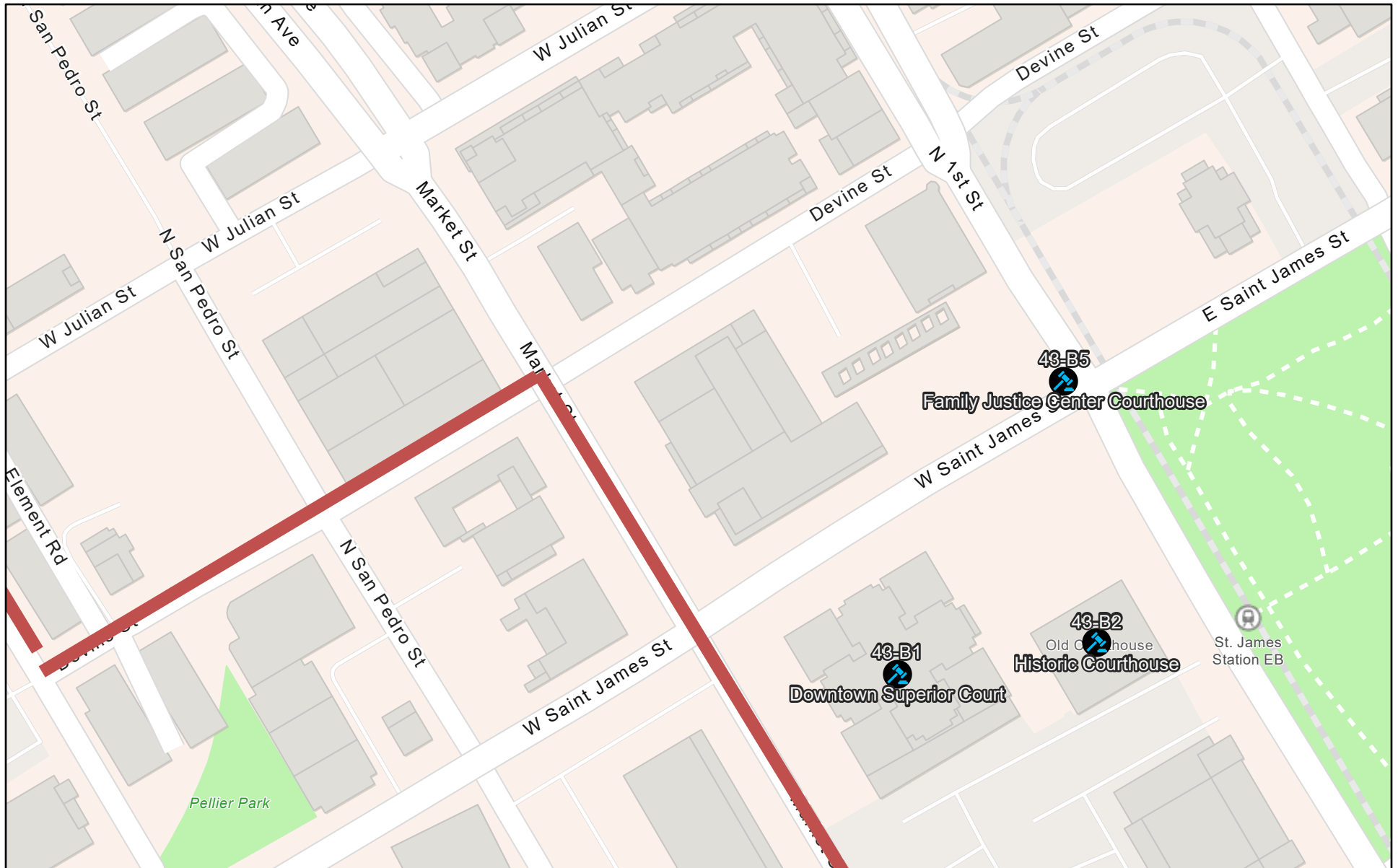


Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

ArcGIS Web AppBuilder

Sources: Esri; U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau; U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Ocean Service (NOS), National Geodetic Survey (NGS) | Regrid | Esri Community Maps

Figure 3



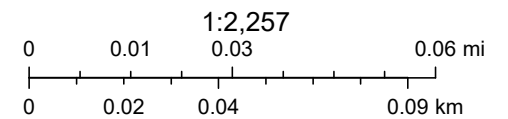
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Construction



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