



# Community Advisory Panel (CAP) Meeting #4 Summary

**Meeting name**

CAP Meeting #4

**Subject**Connecting Palo Alto  
Palo Alto Grade Separation Study**Meeting date and time**November 7, 2018  
4:00pm-6:00pm**Location**Palo Alto City Hall  
Community Room  
250 Hamilton Ave, Palo Alto**Prepared by**

Eileen Goodwin, Apex Strategies

**Other Speaker Attendees**Ed Shikada, Assistant City Manager (PA)  
Rob de Geus, Deputy City Manager (PA)  
Etty Mercurio, Project Manager (AECOM)  
Millette Litzinger, Dep Project Manager (AECOM)  
John Maher, Engineer, (AECOM)  
Hugh Louch (Alta Planning)  
Eileen Goodwin (Apex Strategies)**Project Team in Attendance**Jarrett Mullen (PA)  
Chantal Gaines (PA)**CAP Member Attendees**Mandar Borkar  
Gregory Brail  
Phil Burton  
Tony Carrasco  
Inyoung Cho  
Kari Hodgeson  
Megan Kanne  
Pat Lau  
Christine Logan  
Nadia Naik  
David Shen**Not Able to Attend**

Parag Patkar

Ref	Action
01	Create traffic one-pager including scope and schedule for distribution to CAP and at Community Meeting
02	City to clarify City decisions regarding current options and future decision points to clear up confusion over actions at last Rail Committee Meeting
03	Distribute Water District letter to CAP
04	Keep CAP posted on design exception conversations with Caltrain
05	City to meet with Superintendent of Schools
06	Ping CAP when FAQ Update on website is complete
07	Add definition of partial closure and clarify decision-making body on that option to FAQ
08	Add FAQ question about difference between first, second and third community meetings
09	Update Community Meeting materials and videos per input captured below
10	Research overhead concrete struts as replacement for underground anchors prior to community meeting
11	Address Loma Verde bike improvement
12	Add backyard and street view perspectives to meeting materials
13	Address noise and soundwalls in presentation and matrix
14	Need to address relative construction duration of options
15	Research whether Caltrain will allow vines on fencing for trench option and update graphics
16	Explain viaduct versus berm difference more completely and noise differences from train noise
17	Add isometric views as "seagull views" are easier for the community to understand
18	Update matrix and send to CAP prior to meeting for vetting
19	CAP to review Council approved evaluation criteria and recommend additional criteria to the Rail Committee and Council
20	Consider adding congestion costs to cost estimates
21	Distribute more finance information to CAP prior to meeting re slide formatting etc.
22	Update the finance information to include what changes and taxes were placed in November 2018 election
23	Send the Work Plan to the CAP
24	Look at adding additional CAP meeting in December

## Agenda

The Meeting agenda included:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Community Conversations—
  - CWG Community Interactions
  - FAQ update
  - Website Update
- Citywide Mailing
- Alternatives Update and Community Meeting prep
  - PowerPoint and video review
  - Matrix Review
  - Traffic Scope Update
  - Financial Update
- Work Plan
- Summary of Action Items/Next Meeting—TBD, 4pm-6pm
- Adjourn

There is a video tape of the meeting presentations and the PowerPoint is archived on the CAP website. They are not re-summarized below.

## Next CAP Meeting

TBD whether there is a December CAP Meeting added.

Next scheduled meeting is January 9, 2018, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
Palo Alto City Hall, Community Room, 250 Hamilton Ave, Palo Alto, CA

## Comments/Questions

Below is a summary of the comments and questions received and the responses provided. Action items from these comments/questions are summarized above.

**Table 1. Summary of Comments/Questions and Responses**

Comment/Questions	Responses
<b>Introductions</b>	
None noted.	
<b>Community Conversations</b>	
AECOM Team and City staff has met with Caltrain, Santa Clara Valley Water District, Technical Advisory Committee and Safe Routes to School.	Will distribute the Water District letter and advise on any updates with Caltrain on Design Exceptions. <b>(03, 04)</b>
Discussion regarding 2% grade, clearances and pole design, need for Embarcadero and Downtown to be discussed, concern over El Palo Alto.	City reviewing Downtown issues.
Interest in traffic data, concern expressed over traffic impacts on Embarcadero, need to know traffic data schedule.	We can create a one-pager regarding traffic process. <b>(01)</b>
Traffic is a concern.	
Follow-up presentation given at Rotary, more presentations scheduled including Palo Alto Hills in December. Confusion in community over what the last Rail Committee action items were. City staff needs to clarify timing of decisions and by what body.	Staff working on agenda for next meeting, City will clarify decision process. <b>(02)</b>

**Comment/Questions**

**Responses**

City Council Study Session with Jerry Hill was lightly attended, Mid-Town residents association is hard to schedule and is looking at March for discussion. Also working with school PTAs, but access is difficult.

Even School District Bond Measure had difficulty energizing TPTAs. We need to have options at Embarcadero in the mix for discussion.

City is working on Embarcadero strategy. AECOM Team met with Safe Routes to School. City will meet with the Superintendent of Schools. **(05)**

Gunn High School has determined that it is not appropriate for the grade separations to be on an agenda for their Sources of Strength and Wellness meeting. Working to get on HOA agenda.

Concern expressed about Churchill traffic impacts, Embarcadero and bike paths. These topics need to be addressed.

**Mailing, FAQs and Website Update**

Please let CAP know when FAQ Update is complete. **(06)**

Will add to action item list.

Need to add a definition of partial closure to FAQ—people are confused on the definition. Also who can determine what is legally feasible should be part of answer. **(07)**

Will add to action item list.

Add question to FAQ that defines what will happen at Community Meeting and how it is different from the last meeting. Stress what is new. **(08)**

Will do.

Public Comment: Mailer is missing goal regarding protecting local streets/neighborhood traffic.

Will keep that in mind for future materials.

Public Comment: Presentation regarding viaduct feasibility and a request to not have Council drop this option without full study and community input.

Viaduct will be part of Community Meeting discussion in November.

**Alternatives and Community Meeting Preparation**

There were many specific edits offered on individual slides and those were captured by the AECOM Team. **(09)** The following comments were general advice and requests given by the CAP and Public in attendance.

Will add to action item list.

Be clear on scale of drawings; the fences look too low.

Poles should be “ugly” so we don’t overpromise.

Change “typical” to “example” sections.

Add more about cross streets and how they will look.

Call it “temporary railroad track” not “shoofly”.

Put in photos of things like “inverted syphons” and define them so community members understand what they are.

Research overhead concrete struts to determine if they can be used in place of anchors prior to meeting. **(10)**

On bicycle and pedestrian slides do not use classifications, show examples with pictures and do not use term “road diet”. No one understands what that is.

Have bicycle and pedestrian information on boards with people staffing that station who know what all the projects are.

**Comment/Questions**

**Responses**

Loma Verde bike improvement needs to be addressed in visuals and narrative. (11)

Need to explain the creek crossings more completely.

Don't show wall in hybrid option.

Need to add backyard and street view to all options as boards and possibly in video. (12)

It would be good to have photos of similar street configurations such as San Carlos for boards.

Need to address relative noise and soundwalls in presentation and matrix. (13, 16)

Need to address relative construction duration of options. (14)

Can vines be on fencing for trench option since trees may not be possible? Make sure Caltrain concurs before presenting that option. (15)

Public Comment: Add isometric views as "seagull views" because these are easier for the community to understand. (17) Add trench emergency access, pump stations etc., so people can see the full project and its elements. Be able to explain pump station characteristics as part of presentation—how far apart, how often do they run, how loud are they etc.. I like Citywide viaduct option the best and would like to repurpose the ground below as a bike path. Do not have Council vote this option off before it is studied more. Need to know costs before choices are made.

Public Comment: Need to better articulate roadway vertical clearance issues in temporary and permanent condition.

Public Comment: I like the idea of the viaduct being moved away from homes. I hope we can show that at the meeting. We need to articulate what the emergency access will be if the clearance on the local street is only 12'. We need to explain whether we can use cheaper drop in bridges to save time and money. We also need more water information from Water District.

Be aware that community will be concerned due to recent bridge collapse. Explain why that wouldn't happen here.

Need to explain earthquake protocols if hybrid or viaduct is chosen. Add bike lanes below viaduct as concept.

**Matrix**

This is a great start. We would like to be able to edit final. (18)

We can send to CAP prior to meeting for edits.

Public Comment: Make the viaduct and hybrid similar for visual impacts, both orange perhaps.

CAP should review Council approved evaluation criteria and add additional criteria for Rail Committee and Council consideration. (19)

Cost estimates should include "congestion costs". (20)

We can look into that. The current estimates are developed using Caltrans methodology.



**Comment/Questions**

**Responses**

**Finance Plan**

Would like to see more information prior to meeting. (21)

We can share additional information prior to meeting.

Add in the recent business taxes and other changes from November 2018 election to make list up to date. (22)

Will do.

**Traffic Update**

Make sure the one pager is at the meeting. (01)

Will do. Nayan and his team will be there at the meeting.

Public Comment: Be clear about Churchill and other traffic when it will be discussed.

We will distribute one-pager with the details.

**Work Plan**

Send current Work Plan to CAP. (23)

Will do.

Can we have another CAP meeting preferably in December to keep working on all of this information? (24)

We can look at adding a meeting. Please hold December 12<sup>th</sup> at 4pm.