Agenda

- Welcome & Update
- Project Background & Purpose
- Overview of All Alternatives
- Ways to Stay Engaged
- Break-out Stations
  - Churchill Ave Viaduct
  - Churchill Ave Closure (including traffic)
  - New Alternatives (Churchill Partial Underpass and Meadow/Charleston Underpass)
  - South Palo Alto Tunnel (Passenger & Freight/At-grade Freight)
  - Meadow/Charleston Hybrid, Trench, Viaduct
  - City Staff & Other Crossings
  - Noise/Vibration
  - Creeks/Drainage
  - Right of Way / Property Acquisition
- Station Report Out
Welcome & Major Update Since November 2019 Community Meeting

- The Extended Community Advisory Panel (XCAP) continues to meet.

- City Council modified the list of current alternatives including adding two new ideas: the Meadow/Charleston Underpass and the Churchill Partial Underpass (based on XCAP recommendation). These new ideas are still being studied.

- Continued to receive responses to comment cards about this Connecting Palo Alto effort.

- Traffic analysis for Churchill Closure alternative was released and discussed at the XCAP.

- City Council continues the parallel discussion about the feasibility of greater levels of local funding in the form of a business tax.
Feedback from Last Community Meeting

- Over 100 people filled out a Comment Card, either at the meeting or online.
- Approximately 44% of Churchill-specific respondents felt they had enough information for the City Council to decide on Churchill; 55% of Meadow/Charleston-specific respondents felt they had enough information for City Council to decide on Meadow/Charleston.
- General comments ranged from questions about shoofly tracks to more specific traffic analysis questions.
- Staff compiled the questions and included them in the follow up analysis related to the alternatives.
The City is guiding a community-based process to address impacts caused from Caltrain electrification and the increased service impacts on Palo Alto grade crossings.

Expanded Community Advisory Panel (XCAP) work continues and will inform the City Council’s decision as one form of input.

Timing is for the City Council to decide in Spring 2020 on preferred alternatives.

Goal is to gain community feedback all along the way throughout this process.

Today’s community meeting is a continuation of our Community Conversations phase and community engagement will continue through Spring 2020.
Community Conversations

• New or Updated materials developed:
  – Website
  – Blog series
  – Matrix
  – Factsheets
  – One-page brochure
  – Transportation newsletter – please sign up
Connecting Palo Alto Phases

Understanding the Options
- Engineering analysis
- Neighbors and other stakeholders provide input
- Ensure clarity in describing issues

Community Conversations
- Community-wide awareness and engagement
- Stakeholders advocate for/against options
- Integrate with regional initiatives

Decision-making
- Regional/funding viability assessed
- Local funding strategy defined
- XCAP Recommendation
- City Council decision

We are here
Reviewed New Ideas submitted from the public. Narrowed ideas to 3 to present to City Council in January 2020. City Council agreed to move forward with analysis on 2 of the 3 new ideas.

Heard presentations from Caltrain and a Property Impacts Attorney as general education for the XCAP and the public.

Did a deeper dive into traffic analysis for Churchill.

Created 7 smaller working groups to dive deeper into the topics to help with their decision-making.

In upcoming meetings, XCAP will begin to deliberate on the alternatives.
Estimated Timeline: Nov. 2019 – Spring 2020

- XCAP Meetings, Technical Review, and Regular Updates to City Council
- Rail Community Conversations
- May: Council Decision on Preferred Alternative
- 2/27: Town Hall #2 For Meadow/Charleston
- 2/20: Town Hall #1
- 3/12: Town Hall #3
- 3/19: Word on the Street
- 4/30: Deadline: XCAP sends recommendation to Council
- 4/16: Word on the Street
- 1/13-1/27 BT Polling
- City Council Meetings about Business Tax (3/2, 4/20)
- 3/9-3/23 BT Polling #2
- City Council Meetings about Business Tax (6/1, 6/22)
Estimated Timeline: Spring 2020 through the end of construction

- **Spring & Summer 2026**: Award and Construct project(s) depending on funding; start construction
- **Early 2025**: If necessary; Acquire any property, including permanent and temporary construction easements
- **Spring 2024**: Begin Final Design
- **May 2020**: Council: Estimated City Council decision on grade separations
- **Consultant writing Project Study Report**
- **Nov 2020**: Begin Environmental Process
- **Early 2026**: Obtain Agency Permits/Approvals
- **May 2023**: Approve Agency Agreements for construction management
- **May 2023**: Certify Environmental Document; Approve Project
- **Dec 2032**: Finish Construction (depending on alternative chosen and funding)
Background: What is an at-grade crossing?

Also known as a “railroad crossing”... a location where a roadway and sidewalk cross railroad tracks at grade (same level as the street).

Drop-down gates and red flashing lights are used to stop traffic when a train approaches.

At-Grade Crossing – Charleston Road and Caltrain Tracks
Near Miss: Vehicle Stopped on Tracks
Why is the City undertaking this effort?

Increase Public Safety (vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian)
- Eliminate pedestrian, bicyclist and motor vehicle conflicts with the railroad
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle access

Improve Traffic Circulation/Mobility
- Reduce traffic delays caused by gate down times
- Improve traffic flow across railroad crossing

California’s most dangerous grade crossings:
- #4 CHARLESTON ROAD
- #5 MEADOW DRIVE
- #15 CHURCHILL AVENUE
Alternatives Under Consideration

**Meadow / Charleston Trench**
- Lower the railroad below the roadways at Meadow and Charleston

**Meadow / Charleston Hybrid**
- Partially lower the roads and partially elevate the tracks at Meadow and Charleston

**Meadow / Charleston Viaduct**
- Raise the railroad above the roadways at Meadow and Charleston on structure

**South Palo Alto Tunnel – Passenger & Freight**
- Tunnel south of Oregon Expressway under Meadow and Charleston

**South Palo Alto Tunnel with At-Grade Freight**
- Tunnel south of Oregon Expressway under Meadow and Charleston with at grade freight

**Meadow / Charleston Underpass**
- Lower roadway under tracks and keep the railroad at the existing grade

**Churchill Ave. Vicinity Viaduct**
- Raise the railroad above the roadways in the vicinity of Churchill on structure

**Churchill Ave. Closure**
- At-grade crossing to be fully closed at Churchill Ave. with a grade separation for Bike/Ped connectivity. Will also consider all street mitigation options including Embarcadero.

**Churchill Ave. Partial Underpass**
- Partially closes Churchill, but preserves access to Alma
Meadow / Charleston Viaduct

View all animations online at: https://connectingpaloalto.com/renderings-plans-and-animations/
Meadow / Charleston Hybrid

View all animations online at: https://connectingpaloalto.com/renderings-plans-and-animations/
Meadow / Charleston Trench

View all animations online at: https://connectingpaloalto.com/renderings-plans-and-animations/
View all animations online at: https://connectingpaloalto.com/renderings-plans-and-animations/
South Palo Alto Tunnel with At-Grade Freight

View all animations online at: https://connectingpaloalto.com/renderings-plans-and-animations/
Churchill Ave. Vicinity Viaduct

View all animations online at: https://connectingpaloalto.com/renderings-plans-and-animations/
Churchill Ave. Closure

**Ped/Bike Undercrossing**
- Option 1: crosses under the railroad tracks only
- Option 2: crosses under both the railroad tracks and Alma St

**Embarcadero/Alma Street Improvements**
- Construct ped/bike overcrossing over Embarcadero Rd and widen Alma Street bridge
- Add right turn from eastbound Embarcadero Rd and left turn from southbound Alma St
- Install new signal at Embarcadero Rd/ Kingsley Ave/High St
- Provide full connectivity to/from High Street (Option A) or keep the movement as it is today (Option B)

**Intersection Improvements**
- El Camino Real/Embarcadero Rd: optimize signal timing and add turn lanes
- Alma St/Oregon Expressway: signalize both on/off ramps
- El Camino Real/Oregon Expressway-Page Mill Rd: optimize signal timing and add turn lanes
These options are part of the Churchill Closure alternative.
Embarcadero/Alma (3D Rendering. Looking West)

Palo Alto High School

Ped/Bike Bridge over Embarcadero

Left Turn Pocket from SB Alma St

Alma St Bridge Widening

Rt Turn Pocket from EB Embarcadero

Signalized Intersection

Kingsley Ave

Embarcadero

Town & Country

Alma St

Lincoln Ave

High St

This option is part of the Churchill Closure alternative.
Recommended Improvement for El Camino Real/Embarcadero Road

- Install additional westbound left turn lane and northbound right turn lane
- Optimize signal timings
Churchill Ave. Partial Underpass – New Idea – Analysis Still in Progress

NEW!

Draft.
Still in progress.
- Churchill Ave (Viaduct, Closure including traffic)
- Meadow/Charleston (Trench, Viaduct, Hybrid)
- South Palo Alto Tunnel (Passenger & Freight, At-grade Freight)
- New Ideas (Meadow/Charleston Underpass, Churchill Ave Partial Underpass)
- City Staff and Other Crossings
- Right of Way / Property Acquisition
- Noise/Vibration
- Creeks/Drainage
Visit our website at: [ConnectingPaloAlto.com](http://ConnectingPaloAlto.com)

Contact us at: [transportation@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:transportation@cityofpaloalto.org)
(650) 329-2520

Sign up for the City’s newsletter on Rail and Transportation
[www.cityofpaloalto.org/newslettersignup](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/newslettersignup)

Follow the City’s blog series on the rail discussion
[medium.com/paloalto connect](https://medium.com/paloalto connect)
Upcoming Engagement Opportunities

- **February 20**: General presentation and topics, including update from the November 2019 community discussion.
  Mitchell Park Community Center
  3700 Middlefield Rd, Palo Alto

- **February 27**: General presentation plus focus on Meadow/Charleston Rail Grade Separation Alternatives.
  Palo Alto
  Elks Lodge
  4249 El Camino Real, Palo Alto

- **March 12**: General presentation plus focus on Churchill Rail Grade Separation Alternatives.
  Palo Alto High School
  50 Embarcadero Rd, Palo Alto
Thank you