

Expanded Community Advisory Panel (XCAP)

THIS PACKET INCLUDES:

A compilation of emails (public comments, etc) submitted to the XCAP email box, XCAP@CityofPaloAlto.org, between **September 30 and October 7, 2020 at 12:00 pm approximately.**



Note: This PDF contains bookmarks separating each email in this compilation. If you'd like to see the bookmarks but your internet browser doesn't show them, download this PDF from your browser, then re-open it in a PDF reader (such as Adobe Reader, Foxit, etc) and make sure your bookmarks panel is open.

From: [Robert](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: CalTrain Track Options & Costs
Date: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 1:22:05 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Please get additional project evaluations regarding the estimated costs for lowering the tracks into a trench below street level.

Reasons:

1. Noise impact reduction nearby.
2. Street traffic impact is reduced.
3. Safer for pedestrians and cyclists.
3. Visual impact reduced.
4. Earthquake impact, both on the city and on CalTrain, is reduced.

Thank you,

Robert Branden

From: [Irene Lloyd](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: Connect Palo Alto
Date: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 8:34:09 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

To "bury" the trains in the tunnel is still the best option...second best is trench.

There is definitely a conflict of interest as AECOM also behind the high-speed rail so they seem to inflate cost of projects they do not like. Therefore, residents of City of Palo Alto are not their primary concern.

City should get a new estimate for a trench. We need to do the right thing the first time around and put the trench option back "on track"!

Please remember we would all have to live with a bad decision should it be made. Doing it cheap is just that, cheap-- it has no quality and doesn't last.

Sincerely

Irene Lloyd
Resident

From: [Irene Lloyd](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: Connect Palo Alto
Date: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 1:43:03 PM

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Sincerely

Irene Lloyd
Resident

From: [Roland Lebrun](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: Cost of 1-mile Fresno trench
Date: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 4:10:04 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

<https://www.constructionequipmentguide.com/trains-avoid-traffic-with-9851m-fresno-trench/43627#:~:text=in%20Fresno%20County,-.The%20total%20cost%20of%20the%20projects%20is%20%24985.1%20million.,Stanislaus%20Street%20in%20downtown%20Fresno.>

	<h3>Trains Avoid Traffic With \$985.1M Fresno Trench Construction Equipment Guide</h3>
<p>The Fresno trench is part of a group of projects that run for 32 mi. between Avenue 19 in Madera County and American Avenue in Fresno County. The total cost of the projects is \$985.1 million.</p>	
<p>www.constructionequipmentguide.com</p>	

From: [D.M](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: Test XCAP Receive
Date: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 3:23:36 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Please ignore and have a wonderful day. Thank you!

From: [Gary Lindgren](#)
To: [Nadia Naik](#); [Cari Templeton](#); [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: Dynamic Matrix
Date: Friday, October 2, 2020 3:17:59 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Nadia, Cari, and XCAP,

The Dynamic Matrix column for the Underpass option really requires separate columns for Charleston and Meadow. They both look the same from the start, but AECOM produced two separate animals and look and feel very different. The design for Charleston looks very good other than the right turn onto Alma when going east. However the Meadow design initially had only 3 out of 8 possible turns, but then changed to 6 out of 8 possible turns without really changing anything. The Meadow design should be redone with the idea to require all 8 possible turns. This is not to say that this new design should be accepted out right, but should be evaluated and compared on property impacts.

Daylight Plane: The city code defines the daylight plane as starting at the property line (Caltrain fence) then go vertically 10 feet and then go up at a 45° angle.

Take Care,
Gary

Gary Lindgren
585 Lincoln Ave
Palo Alto CA 94301

650-326-0655

[Check Out Latest Seismometer Reading](#)
[@garyelindgren](#)

[Listen to Radio Around the World](#)

Be Like Costco... do something in a different way
Don't trust Atoms...they make up everything

A part of good science is to see what everyone else can see but think what no one else has ever said.
The difference between being very smart and very foolish is often very small.

So many problems occur when people fail to be obedient when they are supposed to be obedient, and fail to be creative when they are supposed to be creative.

The secret to doing good research is always to be a little underemployed. You waste years by not being able to waste hours.

It is sometimes easier to make the world a better place than to prove you have made the world a better place.

Amos Tversky

From: [Chris](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [Nadia Naik](#); [David Shen](#); [Reckdahl, Keith](#); [Gregory Brail](#); [Phil Burton](#); [Carrasco, Tony](#); [Inyoung Cho](#); [Larry Klein](#); [Cari Templeton](#)
Subject: South Palo Alto Rail Trench
Date: Sunday, October 4, 2020 5:47:32 AM
Attachments: [Rail Trench.doc](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Dear Palo Alto XCAP Member:

Attached please find my proposal for a rail trench which would grade separate Charleston Road and Meadow Drive in south Palo Alto.

The plan is self explanatory. Trains would pass beneath Charleston Road and Meadow Drive in a trench. The surface streets would remain largely intact. The maximum grade of the trench would be 1% so it should encounter little or no resistance from Caltrain/JPB.

Please email me with any questions.

Chris Clementson
West Hollywood, CA

South Palo Alto Rail Trench

Following is a proposal to separate the Caltrain right of way from the intersections of Meadow Drive and Charleston Road in south Palo Alto, California.

Grade separation allows automobile and train traffic to move independently of one another. Once grade separated, automobile traffic will no longer have to stop and wait for crossing trains to pass.

Proposed is a continuous rail trench on the existing Caltrain right of way from approximately San Antonio Road, extending north to approximately El Carmelo Avenue (just south of Matadero creek).

The proposed trench would be comprised of three sections:

- 1) A southern section from San Antonio Road to Charleston Road;
- 2) A center section between Charleston Road and Meadow Drive;
- 3) A northern section from Meadow Drive to approximately El Carmelo Avenue (just south of Matadero creek).

SOUTHERN SECTION

The distance between San Antonio Road and Charleston Road is approximately 3,815 feet. The southern section of the trench would begin at grade near San Antonio Road. It would have a downward slope to the north at a rate of 1%. The trench floor would thus be at a depth of approximately 38 feet below grade when it reaches Charleston Road, where it would pass beneath Charleston Road which would remain at grade.

CENTER SECTION

The center section would be essentially flat, spanning the interval between Charleston Road and Meadow Drive.

NORTHERN SECTION

The distance between Meadow Drive and El Carmelo Avenue is approximately 3,585 feet. The northern section of the trench would begin at grade near El Carmelo Avenue just south of Matadero creek, and would have a downward slope moving south to Meadow Drive at a rate of 1%. The trench floor would thus be at a depth of approximately 35 feet below grade when it reaches Meadow Drive. The trench would pass beneath Meadow Drive which would remain at grade.

In this design, a northbound train would encounter a 1% downward grade beginning just north of San Antonio road within the Palo Alto city limits, which would continue until it reached Charleston Road. The northbound train would pass beneath Charleston Road, then traverse a roughly flat section between Charleston Road and Meadow Drive. The train would pass beneath Meadow Drive and would encounter a 1% upward grade, continuing to the northern end of the trench just south of Matadero creek.

ANALYSIS

BENEFITS

The maximum slope of the rail roadbed would be 1%, the value preferred by Caltrain for freight and passenger trains. A design exception from Caltrain would thus not be required.

Because the trench would end south of Matadero creek, the challenges associated with crossing Matadero creek are eliminated. In addition, the crossings at Oregon, Embarcadero and University which are already grade separated would remain intact, avoiding the very costly and disruptive reconstruction of these crossings.

There would be no need to submerge either the California Avenue or University Avenue stations which would remain at grade, avoiding another major expense.

The ability to turn onto or off of Alma Street and Charleston/Meadow would be preserved.

Per the Hatch Mott MacDonald report prepared for the City of Palo Alto in 2014, no acquisition of existing residential or business properties would be required.

Because automobile and train traffic would no longer intersect, Trains would no longer be required to sound their horns at these crossings.

CHALLENGES

It would be necessary to construct a temporary passing or "shoofly" track during construction to facilitate uninterrupted Caltrain service through Palo Alto.

As with any solution which involves submerging the rail roadbed, the proposed trench would present engineering challenges associated with crossing Barron and Adobe creeks. In addition, some means of keeping the trench dry and passable during rainstorms, and draining accumulated rain water would be required.

Caltrain would likely require the trench to be wide enough to accommodate four parallel tracks.

A rail trench traversing south Palo Alto, California is hereby proposed.

From: lindsayjoye@gmail.com
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: bike turning radius
Date: Monday, October 5, 2020 7:05:19 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

I found one source for bike turning radius:

<http://hamiltonurbanblog.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/UK-Cycle-Infrastructure-Design-turning-radius-p18.jpg>

-Lindsay

From: [Patrice Banal](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [Council, City](#); [Reckdahl, Keith](#); [Nadia Naik](#)
Subject: MISREPRESENTATIONS
Date: Thursday, October 1, 2020 1:10:48 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Good morning,

I am writing regarding the last night's meeting about the Grade Separation Options for southern Palo Alto and two large misrepresentations:

1. **TRENCH analysis flawed.**

I am urging the City Council to pursue an Independent cost estimate for the TRENCH options for Southern Palo Alto.

Based on a cost and construction time compared with similar projects

It is clear that AECOM grossly overstated both components, and this GROSS misrepresentation erroneously made the trench appear as a less compelling option.

I lived in Reno and can tell you Reno built a LONGER trench, with MORE overpasses And water constraints in HALF the time AECOM is estimating AND for 1/3 of the price.

Before speeding ahead and putting the city's limited resources behind a less appealing option, PLEASE, let's get an explanation and an INDEPENDENT estimate for the trench.

There is absolutely no reason to disrupt Southern Palo Alto for 6 years unnecessarily. There is no reason to use push forward as an inferior option like the underpass.

2. **UNDERPASS misrepresentation**

None of the families who would face the devastation of Eminent Domain on Charleston were EVER CONTACTED BY THE CITY.

We met to verify this FACT again.

We did not receive phone calls, emails, texts, doorknob hanging notifications-

Surely-if anyone in our city received notification that their property might be bought out from under them, with no option to decline the seizure **THEY WOULD REMEMBER!**

This is a disheartening misrepresentation and seems unethical in the lack of transparency.

How can one have faith in their city government if they do not perceive communication as a priority?

There have been **NO** conversations, **NO** considerations thus far.

Also, since the idea of compensation came up last night:

WE DO NOT WANT TO BE DISPLACED OR CANCELLED AS PALO ALTO CITIZENS.

- **NONE OF THE AFFECTED FAMILIES WANT TO MOVE.**
- Picking the Underpass will **STRIP US OF OUR FINANCIAL AND SOCIAL**

CONNECTIONS TO OUR HOMES AND COMMUNITY. IT HAS ZERO APPEAL TO US.

- Please DO NOT try to mitigate property seizures under the umbrella of potential financial upside for some of us-I T IS NOT ABOUT A TAX BENEFIT, IT IS ABOUT OUR QUALITY OF LIFE. AND where would you have us move within Palo Alto?
- THERE IS NO NEED FOR COSTLY LITIGATION when the city has a viable solution in the TRENCH.
- PLEASE DO NOT MAKE CHARLESTON RD EMBARCADERO SOUTH THIS WILL BREAK UP A NEIGHBORHOOD AND KILL PROPERTY VALUES FOR ALL HOMES ON THIS CORRIDOR.
- Please Push for an Independent estimate of the trench option and recommend it as the SOLUTION that warrants more
-
- eminent domain: "the right of a government or its agent to expropriate private property for public use, with payment of compensation. "

Thank you for your efforts and thoughtful considerations.
I look forward to your responses.

Patrice Banal Fester

From: [Michael Wessel](#)
To: [Patrice Banal](#); [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [Council, City](#); [Nadia Naik](#); [Reckdahl, Keith](#)
Subject: Re: MISREPRESENTATIONS
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2020 5:35:33 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Dear XCAP and City Council,

I absolutely second what Patrice wrote below!

I find it PREPOSTEROUS that a city representative, Philip Khamhi, being questioned on the issue of property impacts for the Charleston / Meadows underpass option, repeats this misinformation to XCAP, and nobody corrects him or pressures him on this (with the exception of Phil Burton - thanks to that, Mr. Burton!)

Since the houses of our neighbors and ours would be affected by the Charleston Roundabout (eminent domain and partial property acquisitions):

<https://youtu.be/BqyYn8SVgnA?t=7456>

Mr. Khamhi, you might not have the right information - I thought we had communicated this clearly to XCAP and the City Council (repeatedly). Please inform yourself before making incorrect statements in public:

- NONE of our neighbors wants to be forced out of Palo Alto by having their house taken
- none of our neighbors has received any information or "has been notified" by the city

Unlike the city, we actually TALKED to our neighbors that would be effected by the roundabout plan.

Many thanks to Phil Burton by trying to shed some light on this issue and asking for some hard evidence rather than relying on hearsay and assuming that people might want to benefit from the offers that the city will be making to them:

<https://youtu.be/BqyYn8SVgnA?t=7335>

XCAP, do not buy the cities missinformation!

AGAIN:

NOBODY has been notified ABOUT ANYTHING, and NOBODY wants to be forced out of their homes here. There is no affordable housing in Palo Alto, and no compensation that the city would pay will enable the displaced families to stay in Palo Alto.

PLEASE keep that in mind when you are going to vote / make your recommendation tomorrow for the Charleston Meadow options tomorrow.

Do not let the City Council nudge you into something by letting them misrepresent the fact (without questioning it). Again, many thanks to Mr. Burton!

Michael Wessel

Am 01.10.2020 um 13:10 schrieb Patrice Banal:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Patrice Banal** <patbanal@gmail.com>

Date: Thu, Oct 1, 2020 at 1:10 PM

Subject: MISREPRESENTATIONS

To: <xcap@cityofpaloalto.org>, <city.council@cityofpaloalto.org>, Keith Reckdahl <reckdahl@yahoo.com>, <nadianaik@gmail.com>

Good morning,

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1. **TRENCH analysis flawed.**

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- **eminent domain: "the right of a government or its agent to expropriate private property for public use, with payment of compensation. "**

Thank you for your efforts and thoughtful considerations.
I look forward to your responses.

Patrice Banal Fester

From: [carlin otto](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: Correct the summary matrix / spreadsheet
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2020 9:26:00 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Dear XCAP members:

At your last meeting, you reviewed a summary matrix (spreadsheet). The NOISE LEVEL row showed all options equal for noise. Although based on the noise report from your consultant, this is NOT ACCURATE.

The noise report does NOT address noise beyond 2 houses away from the tracks. Your summary matrix needs to represent noise level impacts for ALL RESIDENTS, not only people living just 2 houses away. The viaduct option (20 feet high) will project its noise MUCH farther than the trench option. Even if you put a "noise buffer" along the viaduct, any noise at all will project far and wide, whereas the trench noise is BUFFERED BY THE SOIL.

PLEASE FIX YOUR MATRIX to show that the worst option for noise is the viaduct and the best option is the trench.

Let's be honest and accurate !!!
Carlin Otto
231 Whitclem Court
Palo Alto

From: [Deborah Ju](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [Council, City](#)
Subject: The consultants report is invalid with regard to the Charleston Crossing
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2020 10:49:29 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Dear XCap members. When I spoke at your last meeting, I commented that I didn't understand how the consultant concluded that noise in homes near the tracks would not be worse with a raised viaduct than with a tunnel or trench. I explained that in my house which is approximately 1.5 blocks from the tracks, the train noise is much louder on the 2nd floor than the first floor because the first floor is blocked by other houses and the second story isn't. I now see that the reason the consultants got it wrong is that they could not have visited or searched for any information about our neighborhood. Their report only addresses noise level for the 2 rows of houses closest to the track. In Charleston Meadows, there is an uninterrupted line of houses along the track side of Park street. There are few houses on the other side of the street, however because of the orientation of the long streets going east-west from Park to Wilkie which breaks up the row of houses on that side of Park. The consultants indicated that 2nd story homes would buffer noise beyond the second row of houses from the tracks. Clearly, the consultants' analysis is misinformed. Had they visited the neighborhood, or done any research at all, they would have learned that there is a one-story overlay over much of the neighborhood (as there is in Greenmeadow and other affected neighborhoods). There are very few two-story homes and none located where they will buffer noise for the affected area. Thus, the noise analysis is sloppy, inaccurate and invalid.

The consultants' financial analysis is also unreliable. I have seen information presented to you by others about how other communities were able to build tunnels and trenches much more reasonably. It looks to me like this consultant came in with a predetermined conclusion and wrote a report to justify it, despite our neighborhood's strong, consistent and clearly stated preference for the tunnel or trench options. Therefore I strongly object to the tunnel option being taken off the table. There should be a new independent analysis that includes both the tunnel and trench options.

Large concrete viaducts and overpasses are ugly and not compatible with a residential neighborhood in a green community. Palo Alto would be embarrassed and ashamed by such a structure and future generations will wonder how in the world a City full of smart engineers let this happen.

Sincerely,

Deborah Ju
371 Whitclem Drive
Palo Alto, CA 94306