

## Expanded Community Advisory Panel (XCAP)

### THIS PACKET INCLUDES:

A compilation of emails (public comments, etc) submitted to the XCAP email box, [XCAP@CityofPaloAlto.org](mailto:XCAP@CityofPaloAlto.org), between **November 10 and November 18, 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:** [Kamhi, Philip](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Cc:** [Adina Levin](#); [Shikada, Ed](#); [Bhatia, Ripon](#); [Egli, Elizabeth](#); [Wilson, Sarah](#); [Star-Lack, Sylvia](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [New post] VTA Policy Advisory Committee – Measure B – All capital funds to BART for 10 years  
**Date:** Thursday, November 12, 2020 10:10:18 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image011.png](#)  
[image012.png](#)  
[image014.png](#)  
**Importance:** High

---

Dear XCAP,

Please see Adina’s email below. As I briefly mentioned at the XCAP meeting yesterday, this is an item of serious concern for grade separation projects. I have shared our concern on this item at the VTA Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting earlier this week, and the Mayor will also be sending a letter on behalf of the City. I’m sending this email to you, as I’d like to welcome the XCAP and any other members of the community to also provide VTA with feedback on this item. Please share this item with anyone that you believe will be interested.

As Adina describes below, the VTA Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) meets today, November 12<sup>th</sup> at 4 PM. Here is how to listen to this item and provide feedback:

Meeting can be accessed via this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84657573204>  
Smart Phone dial in: US: +12133388477,,84657573204# or +16692192599,,84657573204#  
Telephone dial: US: +1 669 219 2599 or +1 669 900 9128 Webinar ID: 846 5757 3204  
Technology limitations may limit the ability to receive verbal public comments during the meeting. We request the public to submit their comments by 9:00 a.m. on November 12, 2020 to [board.secretary@vta.org](mailto:board.secretary@vta.org).  
Instructions for participating in the teleconference will be posted on VTA’s website: <https://bit.ly/vta-pac-agendas>.

Best,

## Philip Kamhi

Chief Transportation Official, Office of Transportation

City of Palo Alto

Phone: 650.329.2520

E-mail: [Philip.kamhi@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Philip.kamhi@cityofpaloalto.org)

[www.cityofpaloalto.org](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org)



Use PaloAlto311 to report items you’d like the City to fix!! Download the [app](#) or click [here](#) to make a service request.

---

**From:** Green Caltrain <[donotreply@wordpress.com](mailto:donotreply@wordpress.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, November 12, 2020 8:24 AM

**To:** Shikada, Ed <[Ed.Shikada@CityofPaloAlto.org](mailto:Ed.Shikada@CityofPaloAlto.org)>

**Subject:** [New post] VTA Policy Advisory Committee – Measure B – All capital funds to BART for 10 years

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

alevin posted: " On Thursday November 12 at 4pm, the VTA Policy Advisory Committee is reviewing a proposed 10 year expenditure outlook for Measure B (Agenda 12a). As you can see in the attached screenshot and the linked agenda, the proposal is to concentrate all of th"

## New post on **Green Caltrain**



### [VTA Policy Advisory Committee – Measure B – All capital funds to BART for 10 years](#)

by [alevin](#)

On Thursday November 12 at 4pm, the VTA Policy Advisory Committee is reviewing a proposed 10 year expenditure outlook for Measure B ([Agenda 12a](#)).

As you can see in the attached screenshot and the [linked agenda](#), the proposal is to concentrate all of the capital funding to a [costly design for BART-Silicon Valley Phase 2](#). Other expenditures that Santa Clara County voters approved as part of Measure B, to increase Caltrain capacity, fund Caltrain grade separations, and fund transit on the 85 corridor are proposed to be on hold until after 2032.

This is a scenario that North and West Santa Clara County leaders had expressed concern about when the Measure B expenditure plan was being crafted, that the funds would go to BART to the exclusion of other priorities. While the ballot measure includes a cap on the amount of spending that can go to the BART project, the sequence of expenditures is within the discretion of the VTA board.

To avoid the outcome of steering all transit capital funds to the BART project, the VTA board could choose to use financing options to advance other projects in parallel. And the VTA board could also choose to [prune the costs of a the valuable but excessively expensive BART Silicon Valley project](#) to leave more funding for other transit priorities.

The meeting is at 4pm today, Thursday November 12, and you can find instructions in the [linked agenda](#) for how give comments by dialing in or sending comments in writing.



---

[alevin](#) | November 12, 2020 at 8:23 am | URL: <https://wp.me/pZ1Wi-W2>

---

[Comment](#) [See all comments](#)

[Unsubscribe](#) to no longer receive posts from Green Caltrain.

Change your email settings at [Manage Subscriptions](#).

**Trouble clicking?** Copy and paste this URL into your browser:

<https://www.greencaltrain.com/2020/11/vta-policy-advisory-committee-measure-b-all-capital-funds-to-bart-for-10-years/>

**From:** [Kamhi, Philip](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Cc:** [Wilson, Sarah](#); [Bhatia, Ripon](#); [Adina Levin](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Measure B FY2022 to FY2032 10-year expenditure outlook comment letter  
**Date:** Thursday, November 12, 2020 2:52:57 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)  
[image007.png](#)  
[Measure B Funding Letter .docx.pdf](#)

---

FYI

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Rice, Danille" <Danille.Rice@cityofpaloalto.org>  
**Date:** November 12, 2020 at 1:40:23 PM PST  
**To:** general.manager@vta.org, board.secretary@vta.org  
**Cc:** "Kamhi, Philip" <Philip.Kamhi@cityofpaloalto.org>, "Wilson, Sarah" <Sarah.Wilson@cityofpaloalto.org>, "Minor, Beth" <Beth.Minor@cityofpaloalto.org>, "Shikada, Ed" <Ed.Shikada@cityofpaloalto.org>, cityclerk@sunnyvale.ca.gov, city.council@mountainview.gov  
**Subject: Measure B FY2022 to FY2032 10-year expenditure outlook comment letter**

Dear Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Board of Directors and Policy Advisory Committee,

On behalf of City Manager Ed Shikada, please find attached letter regarding the City's comments to the Measure B agenda item presented to advisory committees this week which provided the ten-year Measure B funding outlook from FY22 to FY32.

Highest regards,  
Danille

<!--[if !vml]-->

<!--[endif]-->**Danille Rice**  
Executive Assistant to the City Manager  
(650) 329-2105 | [danille.rice@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:danille.rice@cityofpaloalto.org)  
[www.cityofpaloalto.org](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org)



November 12, 2020

Office of the Board Secretary  
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority  
3331 North First Street  
San Jose, California 95134-1906

Dear Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Board of Directors,

On behalf of the City of Palo Alto and my colleagues on the City Council, I am writing to express serious concerns regarding the Measure B agenda item presented this week that if approved would be a major shift in funding away from investing in local streets and roads and grade separation infrastructure needs prioritized by your member cities. Specifically, the 2016 Measure B FY2022 to FY2032 10-year Expenditure Outlook, which provided the ten-year Measure B funding outlook from FY22 to FY32, and includes a “Base Scenario” with no funding for Local Street & Roads, nor for grade separation. In fact, it appears that all of the projects that both North County and West Valley cities had supported during the development of the ballot measure, are removed from the ten-year horizon. This is unacceptable, and I urge the Board of Directors to prioritize your member cities and projects, particularly ongoing projects supporting Caltrain grade separations.

**Budget Proposal Leaves No Funding for Cities Local Streets and Roads Investment**

Local Streets & Roads funding, as defined in Resolution No. 2016.06.17, is “To be returned to cities and the County on a formula basis”. Thus, Palo Alto and all of your member cities are depending on this funding in order to continue with planned work. The Base Scenario directs no funding to cities and the County in the ten years of this scenario. For the City of Palo Alto, which maintains a current Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of 82, the funding is planned for use on a congestion relief project (Connecting Palo Alto – Rail Grade Separation). The proposed halt of this program amounts to a \$1.27 million per year hit to the City of Palo Alto, in a time when all cities are faced with severe economic challenges as a result of the ongoing pandemic.

**Budget Proposal Impacts Local Safety and Increases Traffic Congestion**

In addition to the Local Streets & Roads funding elimination, funding for Caltrain Grade Separation projects is also not shown in the ten-year Base Scenario, which indicates elimination of this funding source to local communities like Palo Alto for the next ten years. This is concerning as Palo Alto nears the conclusion of a public input process and is working towards moving into the next phase of grade separation design. These existing at-grade separated locations in Palo Alto are already near or at capacity during peak hours with significant delays due to the gate downtime. This will only increase with Caltrain electrification and the expanded service plan. Increased Caltrain service will also pose significant safety concerns for these at-grade crossings on the railroad corridor. Furthermore, California High Speed Rail is also planning to use the same corridor and as a result will amplify the safety and traffic impacts at these grade crossings for our community and surrounding communities.

# City of Palo Alto

Office of the Mayor and City Council

## **Palo Alto Invested \$2.6 M to Date on Grade Separation Alternatives and Set to Move to Design in Early 2021**

The ongoing community planning effort in the City of Palo Alto has spanned several years with a community panel (the Expanded Community Advisory Panel, or XCAP) which is comprised of members of the public that have been tasked with providing a report on preferred alternatives to the Palo Alto City Council. The City, consultant and this panel have reviewed nearly 50 different possible alternatives for grade separation. It has also included coordination with Caltrain and several community Town Hall meetings, with the most recent Town Hall having over 1,000 unique visitors. The XCAP is currently preparing a final report for the City Council, which will lead us into the next phase of preliminary design. The City has already invested approximately \$2.6 million on this project since July of 2017. You can learn more about this ongoing community process at [ConnectingPaloAlto.com](http://ConnectingPaloAlto.com).

## **Member Cities Rely on VTA Funds to Further Grade Separation Projects**

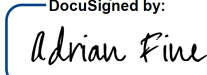
Apart from this community-driven process, the funding plan is being coordinated with Mountain View, and Sunnyvale and together with VTA staff we have been reviewing possible options for sequencing projects in a timeline so that the projects do not overlap in construction and the funding is shared and available to support our combined community's needs. While the three cities seeking this grade separation funding plan have reviewed several funding scenarios, none of these scenarios involved postponing construction for the next ten years, and Mountain View was already initiating preliminary design. As grade separation projects involve long term planning and design efforts, the Measure B funding is essential to keep these projects moving forward in the north county region to address significant regional traffic congestion issues. Any delays to this funding will cause significant delays to these projects and lead to long term traffic and safety impacts in the region.

## **Funding BART Phase II At the Expense of Member Cities is Unacceptable and Urge Reconsideration**

Along with the Local Streets & Roads and the Caltrain Grade Separation programs, Caltrain Corridor Capacity, the SR 85 Corridor, County Expressways, and Highway Interchanges are all outside of the ten-year Base Scenario window. The Transit Operations formula program ends its formula funding receipt in 2023. Instead, BART Phase II is fully funded, and although it was estimated at \$1.5 billion of program tax revenues, the proposed scenario has nearly \$2 billion programmed for the project. Additionally, VTA Resolution No. 2016.06.17 caps the BART Phase II funding at a maximum of 25% of program tax revenues, yet the base scenario has the BART project exceeding this. This 25% cap was an important component to achieving an agreement among cities to support this measure.

Caltrain electrification will severely impact North and West Valley cities with at-grade crossings. Removing crucial support for grade separation projects at this time will delay relief from these impacts for a decade or more. The City of Palo Alto urges you to reconsider this ten-year Base Scenario outlook, and instead of prioritizing BART Phase II, prioritize your member cities and projects, particularly ongoing projects supporting Caltrain grade separations.

Thank you for your consideration of the City of Palo Alto's views and concerns.

Sincerely,  
DocuSigned by:  
  
Adrian Fine  
289E2F8A691E446...  
Mayor



# City of Palo Alto

*Office of the Mayor and City Council*

CC: Palo Alto City Council

Nuria Fernandez, General Manager, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors

VTA Policy Advisory Committee

Mountain View City Council

Sunnyvale City Council

Ed Shikada, City Manager, City of Palo Alto

Philip Kamhi, Chief Transportation Official, City of Palo Alto

**From:** [William Robinson](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** Viaduct thoughts and suggestions Meadow-Chas  
**Date:** Friday, November 13, 2020 11:29:50 AM

---

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

---

Thanks for slugging ahead to make a final report. Perhaps it is not too late to offer an image and a few additional comments regarding my preference for a Viaduct rail separation.

I believe it was Tony Carrasco noting 54 residences would “see” the viaduct. I believe a modern viaduct would attract “seeing” it only for seconds when a train passes. For its 100 year life span a viaduct could become as “ordinary” as an interesting tree in the park.

One idea is to allow the building code for the east side of Park to allow second story homes. They could be well sound proofed. They provide a favor to the homes across the street to the west by blocking their view and reducing sound. Of course such a code change would require alterations to housing covenants of the 1950's.

I took a photograph this morning. We Charleston-Meadows residents are “fenced in” by significant electric and gas transmission equipment over and underground. We residents don't see the underground infrastructure unless it fails, then only during rehabilitation. The electric overhead forest is significant, ugly and “ignored” unless it in a photograph of dear acquaintances.

In the photograph pursuit I paused at Lindero Dr. and merge with Alma. I appreciated the trees blocking my view of not only the tracks but ALL the Fences and Roofs behind the tracks. If the Viaduct were placed as proposed those trees would go but a calm and perhaps decorated Viaduct would shield the Circles neighborhood. In place of the tracks at grade new trees would shield the Viaduct for the west side neighbors. Imagine how big those trees would be in 100 years! Imagine what uses might emerge for the space adjacent to and under the Viaduct!

*'Rob' William Robinson 650-464-8933*

Recently replaced electric transmission poles upgraded on W Meadow compared to shorter ones on E Meadow.

Fixed "ugly" infrastructure we learn to ignore.

Might a viaduct with electric cantenary poles likewise be ignored in time?

Poles on opposite sides of Alma significantly different in height

A rail viaduct structure with sound walls might occupy this view looking "east" on W Meadow near 2nd Avenue.

**From:** [gmahany@aol.com](mailto:gmahany@aol.com)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** more information about the Coaster urban RR and San Diego county transit  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 1:07:51 PM  
**Attachments:** [SanDiegoUnionTribunedorth county trancit district.PDF](#)

---

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

---

Hello XCAP members

I have attached a San Diego Union Tribune article about the improvements planed for the coaster train.

I think the planing and goals set by the North County Transit District are far ahead of anything that our three counties are doing for Caltrain.

gary mahany

## Coaster link to convention center eyed

*Phil Diehl*

**PUBLICATION: San Diego Union-Tribune, The (CA)**

**SECTION: Local**

**DATE: November 15, 2020**

**EDITION: 1**

**Page: B-1**

A study released by the North County Transit District outlines plans to extend Coaster commuter rail service to the San Diego Convention Center within five years, along with other improvements for passenger and freight trains south of the Santa Fe Depot in downtown San Diego.

Transit officials have long discussed extending rail service to the Convention Center, which would have a number of benefits for riders, the environment and the economy.

"It will take people farther into the heart of San Diego," said NCTD Executive Director Matt Tucker on Thursday. "It would really improve commutes and provide easier access to entertainment, the Gaslamp District and Petco Park."

The Santa Fe Depot is the last stop for the Coaster, which NCTD started in 1995 between Oceanside and San Diego. Today, the train has eight stations along its 41-mile route. Ridership was 1.5 million in fiscal 2018.

The Convention Center is only eight-tenths of a mile away from the Santa Fe Depot. However, the **railroad** tracks from downtown San Diego south to National City are only capable of handling freight trains and the maximum speed allowed is 10 mph. The tracks need improved street crossings, better signals and other infrastructure to accommodate passenger trains. Also, the new station will get a "pocket track" for the Coaster trains to pull off the main line so other trains can pass.

South of the Convention Center, about three freight trains daily serve the U.S. Navy and nearly 800 businesses at the Port of San Diego. Long-term plans call for as many as eight freight trains daily. The freight trains, each of which pulls as many as 80 cars, typically run at night when passenger and commuter trains are out of service.

The San Diego Pathing Study was completed by the firm DB Engineering & Consulting USA for NCTD and BNSF, the private company that operates freight trains on the coastal rail corridor. The Port of San Diego is one of the biggest West Coast entry points for new foreign cars and bulk building supplies that arrive by sea and travel north by rail.

"The collaboration of this important study by NCTD and its freight partner represents the best example of a win-win in public-private partnerships," said Tony Kranz, chairman of the NCTD board and an Encinitas City Council member.

"We look forward to applying this framework in our capital budget planning," Kranz said in a transit district news release. "We expect these findings will translate into improved passenger and freight services that support our efforts to increase rail service frequencies, improve our rider experience, and improve our economy and overall quality of life."

Completion of the Convention Center train station is part of a package of related "mid-term" improvements expected to cost about \$380 million, according to the consultant's study, most of which is expected in a grant from the California Transportation Commission.

"We are always interested in projects that can help connect our Convention Center to the region for our visitors and for our staff," said Mara Dougherty, director of marketing and communications.

The study also identifies a separate set of long-term improvements for the tracks south of the Santa Fe Depot that will cost an additional \$700 million, including an Amtrak maintenance facility to be built in National City, better rail crossings and signals, and other changes to make trains faster and more efficient.

The long-term plan also includes the "potential" for a passenger station in National City.

"This sounds like a great transportation opportunity for our South Bay region," said National City Mayor Alejandra Sotelo-Solis in an email Friday.

"National City is committed to smart growth and has been working with the Port, Navy, SANDAG, and MTS (the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System) to create solutions and opportunities," she said. "An Amtrak project could definitely fall into those efforts. It is essential to have Amtrak master plan the station as a mobility hub if this plan were to move forward. For the station to be a true mobility hub, it would be important to have Amtrak provide a commitment to start passenger service within 3-5 years from opening the service yard."

San Diego is part of what's called the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) rail corridor, which in a typical year carries \$1 billion in freight and more than 8 million passengers.

This year has been anything but typical, though, and because of COVID-19 travel restrictions, ridership on Amtrak and Coaster trains has been down as much as 90 percent. Since April, the Convention Center has been a 1,495-bed homeless shelter to help slow the spread of the pandemic.

Transit officials say 2021 will be a turnaround year and are planning for a long-term increase in rail service.

The San Diego section of the coastal rail corridor had 62 trains daily before the COVID-19 crisis hit this year. Traffic is expected to increase to 101 trains daily by 2030.

Increasing service will require eliminating structural deficiencies, such as bottlenecks that occur at places like the Del Mar bluffs. Trains must reduce their speed on the bluffs, and there's no room for a second set of tracks that has already been installed along much of the coastal route.

The coastal bluffs also are subject to erosion, and require costly stabilization work to keep them safe. Eventually, NCTD and the San Diego Association of Governments plan to move the tracks to an inland route through tunnels beneath Del Mar. That will take 10 years or longer and cost billions of dollars, but the new route will be safer and faster.

Another bottleneck on the LOSSAN route is just north of San Diego County at San Clemente, where a nine-mile section of single track prevents trains from passing and slows trains throughout the entire corridor. Travel between Capistrano Beach and San Onofre takes 15 minutes, during which no trains can pass on that segment.

The recommended solution is to double-track at least some parts of the segment, so that north- and southbound trains go around each other, which would shorten the bottleneck and increase the capacity of the corridor.

Faster, more frequent commuter rail service is part of SANDAG's 5 Big Moves, a comprehensive plan to invest in regional public transportation networks and to get more people to use mass transit.

philip.diehl@sduniontribune.com

**Caption: PHOTO: North County Transit District plans to extend Coaster passenger rail service south from Santa Fe Depot to the San Diego Convention Center in five years.**

**PHOTOGRAPHER: U-T file photo**

[Back to your search results](#) | [Return to the search page](#) | [Printer Friendly version](#)