



Community Advisory Panel (CAP) Meeting #3 Summary

Meeting name

CAP Meeting #3

Subject

Connecting Palo Alto
Palo Alto Grade Separation Study

Meeting date and time

October 10, 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)
Ety Mercurio, Project Manager (AECOM)
Nayan Amin (TJKM)
Paul Peninger (AECOM)
Eileen Goodwin (Apex Strategies)

Project Team in Attendance

Jarrett Mullen (PA)
Chantal Gaines (PA)
Ruta Jariwala (TJKM)

CAP Member Attendees

Phil Burton
Tony Carrasco
Inyoung Cho
Megan Kanne
Pat Lau
Nadia Naik
David Shen

Not Able to Attend

Mandar Borkar
Gregory Brail
Kari Hodgeson
Christine Logan
Parag Patkar

Ref	Action
01	Send PDF of finalized flyer to the CAP for distribution to their networks
02	Print extra copies of the flyer for in person distribution at Caltrain Stations, schools etc.
03	Add discussion of the following to the Rail Committee agenda: 1) University and Embarcadero, 2) the short tunnel with freight rail at the surface
04	Add the following to the project website: 1) Bike Plan and status of bike projects, 2) link to website with 2010 study and vision map related to extensions of Lytton and Hamilton to El Camino Real for reference
05	Add the following information to the FAQs: 1) when people will get cost estimates and 3D animations, 2) details about the viaduct
06	Develop a graphic about the screening history of alternatives and Council actions both history and going forward.
07	Revise mailer per edits suggested below, sketched at the meeting and received through the email after the meeting.
08	Re-order and add to the Work Plan per suggestions below.
09	Develop cost estimates for Charleston and Meadow prior to November community Meeting.
10	City staff will work to get a letter out to Caltrain prior to the next Rail Committee.
11	Traffic team and City Staff to finalize traffic scope and intersections with the input from the CAP at the meeting summarized below as well as discussions and emails post meeting.
12	Look into simultaneous physical closure of Palo Alto and Churchill.
13	City to consider direct contract with street light data.
14	Update the Financial PowerPoint with the edits and suggestions documented below. Bring the revised version back to the November CAP Meeting for further review and discussion.

Agenda

The Meeting agenda included:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Community Conversations
 - Emails to website
 - CWG Community Interactions
- Review of Proposed Mailing

- Work Plan /Schedule
- Traffic Scope Update
- Financial Discussion
- Alternatives Update and Community Meeting prep
- Land Use Context
- Summary of Action Items/Next Meeting—November 7th, 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

November 7th, 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
Introductions	
What about the minutes? Do we need to approve them?	The meeting summaries are posted directly to the website when they are finalized and the CAP does not need to formally approve them.
Community Conversations	
Desire to connect with Mid-Town group. This has been hard to schedule. I am also interested in school outreach to the middle school and High School Can we get a flyer to help promote the project?	Once the mailer is finalized, e-copies will be made available to CAP members for distribution. (01)
People want the City to lobby for the 2% grade—we need to show progress on that. Also, we should look at whether the electrical wires can be lowered as that would make a big difference.	The team has a meeting with Caltrain staff to discuss a variety of topics, including maximum grades and vertical clearances.
There was a well-attended meeting with three CAP representatives at Robles Park since the last CAP meeting. Lots of interesting discussion.	Thank you for holding that meeting and debriefing us.
The doctors and students related to Stanford hospital have no idea this effort is happening. I have met with some of the school reps. We need to update them as well.	Stanford and the School District are on the TAC, which we are reconvening. We can look at ways to reach out more to those populations. We will also be reaching out to the Safe Routes to School staff. The Citywide mailer will help too.
I think PTAs are another good population to talk to. I am on a PTA and can help make connections.	We can reach out to them as well. The City meets with many school reps on a regular basis about a variety of topics.
CAP members could hand out flyers at the Caltrain Stations to increase awareness.	Great idea. Once the flyer is printed we can make copies available for distribution. (02)

Comment/Questions

Responses

My neighborhood is very curious about Caltrain electrification. How do I get more information to them? I could host a meeting at my home.

Caltrain has an outreach department that does community meetings like the one you are requesting. They have a website (<http://www.caltrain.com/projectsplans/CaltrainModernization.html>) and you could contact their team though that.

Southgate is confused about what options are still being considered.

Please encourage your neighbors to check out the PA Grade Sep website and also to attend our upcoming community meetings.

The comments I get back from the community fall into two buckets. The first is related to east-west access and specifically Embarcadero and downtown. I do not think the business community is as engaged as it should be. A couple of CAP members will be presenting to the Chamber. The second bucket relates to the dimensions of the project, specifically, the electrification and the shoofly.

Thank you. Good feedback for the CAP and Team.

I think the election is a big distraction and also that the results could have an impact on this project. What about the schools?

The School conversations will be part of the TAC effort.

The Caltrain Business Plan is important to consider. The City should send a letter to Caltrain regarding the freight issue. We cannot move forward until that is resolved. Maybe we don't need to be in such a rush with the project. I hear from a VTA rep that the Board will be looking holistically and regionally at the grade separations. University and Embarcadero keep coming up in conversations especially from people in the north part of the City. I spoke to the PA Rotary and there was a lot of interest. I will be going back to answer more questions. I think electrification getting under construction will make people notice the corridor and get more interested in this project. People will notice when Caltrain takes down the trees. PTAs are different than staff at the schools.

Thank you for this feedback. Yes, the team acknowledges PTAs and School District staff are different.

FAQ Question Review

We need to have the Rail Committee talk about adding the University and Embarcadero areas into the discussion especially if we end up closing Palo Alto and Churchill.

We can look to add the topic to the Rail Committee agenda/work plan. **(03)**

We need to add more on the website about bikes and peds. We should add the Bike Plan to the website. We need to know the status of the projects, such as: what is on hold and what is moving forward when.

We can add more information about the Bike Plan to the website. **(04)**

We should add to FAQs information about when people will get cost estimates and 3D animations. People ask me a lot about those topics.

Add to FAQs information about when people will get cost estimates and 3D animations. **(05)**

We need more information about the viaduct in the FAQ.

Add more information about the viaduct to FAQ. **(05)**

We need an easy to see (waterfall graphic) about when various grade separations will be before City Council for decisions and also the history of the screening.

Need a graphic about the screening history of alternatives and Council actions both history and going forward. **(06)**

Comment/Questions

Responses

Review of Proposed Mailing

CAP Members made several in person sketch edits and also supplied emails post meeting with additional edits. The Team will consider all edits given at the meeting summarized below and after the meeting to redesign the mailer. **(07)**

Look at adding something about CAP and where to find their rep.

Can we customize the mailer for the parts of the City? Great idea, but no we do not have the budget for that. We can look into adding something about the CAP to the copy.

This mailer has too much text.

There should be a review of the Caltrain schedule information given the Business Plan status perhaps change that copy.

Can the mailer be four sided and open like a book? That would give more opportunity for copy.

We need to add something about University and Embarcadero that is why we need to have the Rail Committee give direction on this topic ASAP. These four areas are not enough. These four locations are the current scope of the consultant team; however, we will agendize this for the next Rail Committee.

Work Plan

Where is freight discussion with the Rail Committee on the Work Plan? The TAC should consider along with the City arborist what to do about El Palo Alto before the team spends money and time on the grade separation designs. The citywide tunnel only within Palo Alto was not what the community spoke about before; they do not want it to start after University. Doing the southern grade separations first will allow us time to work through the more complicated northern issues and clarify downtown. The street light data should be very interesting to review. We need to get direction to add Embarcadero and University. We can switch the order. **(08)** Thank you for flagging all of these items and reasons. The team has surveyed El Palo Alto and is working on that issue. Thank you for clarifying and flagging the tunnel issue.

Is there a possibility of a fourth community meeting? This seems rushed. Yes.

We will need cost estimates for Charleston and Meadow to have a good conversation at our next community meeting. The team will work to get those done for the next community meeting. **(09)**

We need a letter from the City to Caltrain about freight and other topics. City staff will work to get a letter out to Caltrain prior to the next Rail Committee. **(10)**

Rail Committee should discuss the short tunnel with freight rail at the surface at their next meeting. We can add that to the agenda. **(03)**

The University and Embarcadero issues. When and who makes that decision? The City Council will make this decision.

Traffic

Replace Embarcadero and High Street count with Emerson and Kingsley.

Public comment: I hope the team considers not only the intersections, but what can be done as mitigations to reduce impacts. I fear that closing Churchill won't look good to the community because the modelling won't consider the bike/ped The Team will look at the issue first without any mitigations and then add back in to the mix the potential projects that are fully funded to see what

Comment/Questions

Responses

link at Churchill or easy fixes that could be done to Embarcadero intersections and that this will influence the decision making.

the impacts could be. If the City wants to also do a run with additional potential mitigations that would be extra work and could be considered.

We need to be able to answer what happens if Palo Alto and Churchill are both closed. Where does the traffic go? We need to do an actual closure of the streets and measure it. People won't believe the model we need to just do that.

Look into simultaneous physical closure of Palo Alto and Churchill. (12)

We should have the City contract directly with Street Light so we can get the data to use elsewhere.

We can look into that. The Team would still need access of course. (13)

How can you use 2017 data? I thought that was all bad.

The October and November counts are good. We will be validating them and balancing them with the 2018 data. We will not use the February 2017 data.

Public comment: I think the traffic should be looked at as a regional approach not just within the city boundaries.

Thank you for your comment. The current scope is City-wide only.

Financial Discussion

After a PowerPoint presentation by the Team Economist, the CAP provided the following edits on the presentation. The CAP will re-review the presentation at the next CAP meeting prior to it being presented at the Community Meeting in November.

The Team will consider all edits given at the meeting summarized below and bring the PowerPoint back to the November CAP meeting for review. (14)

Add yearly to estimate total slides

Handicap the likelihood of getting some of the grants and at what level, not just the maximum allowed.

TIFIA is a loan not a grant that needs to be made very clear.

Make the connection to the previous white paper work more clear as the numbers are not matching up.

Add business license discussion and estimate.

Consider all of Stanford in the Mello Roos map area not just part.

The estimate should not be site specific. Need to establish the goal of money better. Do not use the current slide it shows projects already screened out.

Need to make totals for employee tax for other cities for comparison and develop a number for Palo Alto. That is true of all of these types of potential funding sources; we need to understand Palo Alto specific numbers.

Add San Francisco gross receipts tax.

It would be nice to have a one-pager that goes along with this. That explains the needs, the likely, number per source and then the ability to slide the packages in and out to get them to match up.

I would like us to talk about this as in how much can we raise, not what is a gap—that sounds negative. I would like to see the maximum we can “play with” per source to be able to come up with packages.

The map you show for Mt View is actually the City of Sunnyvale.

Comment/Questions

Responses

Can we find another example besides Transbay due to all of their issues?
Something more positive?

People have said they expect high net worth residents to contribute. Can we show that?

Can we show foundations and other charities too?

The presentation needs to explain P# more completely and handicap that.

Public Comment: Great presentation. We need to add climate change response to Rob's slide about citywide priorities. It would also be good to have that slide prioritized and have costs attached, so the public could see how much a tunnel and trench would limit what would be left over to do libraries, etc.

Public comment: The City has tried to raise money before for specific projects and failed. We need to add that context and also add to each funding source what the approval process is i.e. does it take a city vote. It would be good to show what the City can control and what we are not the final decision makers on.

Alternatives and Community Meeting Preparation

No Further comments. CAP discussed these under other items.

Land Use Context

It would be helpful to also add a link on the website to the map that was developed under another vision effort that showed how Lytton and Hamilton could be extended to El Camino Real. That effort was done in 2010 when High Speed Rail was a big topic. That area might be a good spot for adding housing.

We can add the link to the website. (04)

Public Comment: Staff needs to get the El Palo Alto issue resolved. Is it a go or no go. We need to be able to answer this.

The team has surveyed the El Palo Alto tree and for us to be able to do a hybrid project in that location we need a design exception from Caltrain. We will be meeting on that topic with them very soon.

How will the electric wires go through a historic bridge?

Caltrain will determine how the electric wires will pass through the historic bridge.