

## Frequently Asked Questions

Connecting Palo Alto

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

Q21: What was the decision process for eliminating the Churchill hybrid and shallow trench (reverse hybrid) ideas?

A21: The Churchill hybrid and reverse hybrid ideas were presented to the Rail Commission on 6/13/18 and the City Council on 6/19/18. One of the criteria for selecting a preferred solution is to minimize right-of-way acquisition. The potential right-of-way impacts were deemed to be severe and thus Council motioned to eliminate the Churchill hybrid and the reverse hybrid from consideration. For additional information, see links below to the City Council and Rail Committee agenda and minutes.

<https://cityofpaloalto.org/gov/agendas/council/default.asp>

<https://cityofpaloalto.org/gov/agendas/hsrs.asp>

Q22: For the Meadow/Charleston trench idea, what are the impacts to Barron and Adobe Creeks?

A22: Impacts to the creek are severe for the trench idea and the City is in contact with Santa Clara Valley Water District to determine if there are any possible mitigations. Lowering or covering of the creeks would require regulatory approval from numerous agencies, such as California State Department of Fish and wildlife, San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Q23: What was the decision process for eliminating the Citywide Viaduct idea?

A23: The narrowing of the alternatives is done through the City Council via the City Council's Rail Committee, and based on a set of adopted evaluation criteria, such as cost, property takings and construction impacts among others. This particular alternative was removed as a possible alternative at the City Council's May 29<sup>th</sup> Special Council meeting. The meeting minutes can be found online ([Meeting Minutes, May 29<sup>th</sup>](#)) and the staff report related to the meeting can also be found [online](#). This citywide viaduct idea was eliminated due to serious constructability constraints.

Q24: How will bike and pedestrian facilities be incorporated into the ideas under consideration?

A24: Incorporating bike and pedestrian facilities will be unique to each location and will consider the City's Bicycle + Pedestrian Transportation Plan and Safe Routes to School as well and the evaluation criteria to provide clear, safe routes for pedestrians and bikes. Specifically, bike and pedestrian facilities will be discussed at the Community Meetings in [November](#) and [January](#).

- Q25: When will cost estimates and 3D animations be presented for the ideas still under consideration?
- A25: The information will be provided at the Community Meetings in [November](#) and [January](#).
- Q26: When will we discuss underpass / overpass for bike and pedestrians at Churchill?
- A26: The pedestrian and bicycle underpass for Churchill will be discussed at the Community Meeting in [January](#). The City has begun discussions with Safe Routes to School community champions about this crossing as well.
- Q27: When will we discuss the implications to Embarcadero and University Ave grade separations as a result of alternatives being considered for Churchill Ave and Palo Alto Ave?
- A27: The City of Palo Alto is evaluating a range of options for improving the existing rail/street crossing at Palo Alto Avenue. Based on the analysis completed to date, it has become increasingly clear that factors, such as engineering constraints, land use plans and urban design, and access needs, affecting design options as part of the Downtown University Avenue vicinity require a more comprehensive planning effort. Such an effort needs to be separated from the current citywide grade separation planning project.
- Q28: Under what conditions would Caltrain accept a grade variance from 1% to 2%, and what would the approval process be?
- A28: The City, in order to be most responsive to this question from the CAP and the Public, met with Caltrain to discuss this issue. The City then sent a letter to Caltrain on October 25, 2018 asking this question to find out how they will review exceptions. We are awaiting Caltrain's response and will provide an update when one is available.
- Q29: Under what conditions would Caltrain accept a variance to the existing vertical clearance for poles and wires, and what would the approval process be?
- A29: The City, in order to be most responsive to this question from the CAP and the Public, met with Caltrain to discuss this issue. The City then sent a letter to Caltrain on October 25, 2018 asking this question to find out how they will review exceptions. We are awaiting Caltrain's response and will provide an update when one is available.
- Q30: How are grade separation design criteria and constraints likely to change in the future?
- A30: The City, in order to be most responsive to this question from the CAP and the Public, met with Caltrain to discuss this issue. The City then sent a letter to Caltrain on October 25, 2018 asking this question. We are awaiting Caltrain's response and will provide an update when one is available.

- Q31: What should the City of Palo Alto assume regarding freight on the Caltrain right of way in the future?
- A31: The City, in order to be most responsive to this question from the CAP and the Public, met with Caltrain to discuss this issue. The City then sent a letter to Caltrain on October 25, 2018 asking this question. We are awaiting Caltrain's response and will provide an update when one is available.
- Q32: What level of funding support is needed to grade separate because of the PCEP can or could be expected from Caltrain?
- A32: The City, in order to be most responsive to this question from the CAP and the Public, met with Caltrain to discuss this issue. The City then sent a letter to Caltrain on October 25, 2018 asking this question. We are awaiting Caltrain's response and will provide an update when one is available.
- Q33: The cost of maintenance for grade separation alternatives vary greatly, what should the City of Palo Alto assume regarding who will pay for the cost of maintenance?
- A33: The City, in order to be most responsive to this question from the CAP and the Public, met with Caltrain to discuss this issue. The City then sent a letter to Caltrain on October 25, 2018 asking this question. We are awaiting Caltrain's response and will provide an update when one is available.