



# City of Palo Alto

## City Council Rail Committee Staff Report

(ID # 9521)

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**Report Type: Next Steps and Future Agendas**

**Meeting Date: 8/15/2018**

**Summary Title: Community Outreach Update**

**Title: Community Outreach Update**

**From: City Manager**

**Lead Department: City Manager**

### **Recommended Motion**

Information Only

### **Background**

The Council approved a Community Outreach Plan on June 19, 2018 developed by AECOM | Apex Strategies, that included plans for a Community Advisory Panel, stakeholder and community meetings, outreach materials, a website and surveys among other community engagement work. This report provides an update to the Rail Committee on the selection of the Community Advisory Panel (CAP) and plans for the first Community Meeting scheduled for August 23.

### **Discussion**

#### *Community Advisory Panel*

Following the Council's review of the community outreach plan, City staff developed an application form and solicited interested citizens to apply to be on the Community Advisory Panel (CAP) (Attachment A). We received 44 applications, and the City Manager or his designee met with applicants that appeared to best fit the criteria defined in the application. The criteria included being able to connect with other community members/neighbors to help inform the process; amplify both decisions and concerns along the way, and to advise on what grade separation alternatives are best for Palo Alto. In the selection process staff and the project team were also looking for members who represent a diversity of thought and neighborhood/geographic representation. As outlined in the application, the ideal candidates for CAP membership would have personal experience, knowledge, and skills that contribute to collaborative problem solving. Community members with specific subject matter expertise were also encouraged to apply. The City Manager made the selection of 12 citizens for the CAP in consideration of the above; a list of CAP members can be seen in Attachment B.

The CAP will meet up to six times during the six-month process. Meetings will be held

from 4pm to 6pm and include the following dates: August 15, September 17, October 10, November 7, January 9 (others tbd).

### *Community Meetings*

Three Community Meetings will be held throughout this phase of the process. The Community Meetings will assess desired improvements to address existing constraints; review project ideas; and review solution scenarios once they are determined. These community meetings are expected to be held in the evenings on weeknights. All meetings will cover all grade separation ideas under consideration and will not be focused on specific neighborhoods.

The first **Community Meeting** is scheduled for **August 23, 2018 - 6pm to 8pm - Mitchell Park Community Center - El Palo Alto Room** - Community Meeting Flier Attachment C. The Community Meeting will include an introduction to the project, and a review of what has been used to screen the universe of alternative to date. During the meeting, participants will have the opportunity to learn about the Project's purpose, as well as discuss the various remaining ideas. The Project Team will show a video of existing grade crossing issues such as long gate downtown, traffic back-ups and un-safe behaviors. The ideas still under consideration will be explained at the meeting, and the Project Team plans to use a survey during the session with participants logging in responses via cell phone that would be immediately available for view. It is also hoped that the first responders would participate in the meeting to help inform the public to their view of the various ideas as first responders.

### **Attachments:**

- ATT 1 - FINAL Community Advisory Panel (CAP) Membership Application
- ATT 2 - CAP Grade Separation List
- ATT 3 - August 23 2018 - Connecting Palo Alto Community Meeting Flyer

### About the Community Advisory Panel (CAP)

Connecting Palo Alto is a community based process to address long-standing challenges associated with at-grade crossings on the Caltrain corridor that runs through the community. As part of the community outreach and engagement process, the City's project team is convening a **Community Advisory Panel (CAP)** of up to a dozen community members to advise the team on project ideas and outreach opportunities. The CAP's responsibilities will be to connect with other community members/neighbors to help inform the process; amplify both decisions and concerns along the way, and to advise on what grade separation alternatives are best for Palo Alto. The project team is looking for members who represent a diversity of thought and neighborhood/geographic representation. The group is anticipated to begin meeting in August, and would meet up to six times during the six-month process. Meetings will be held in the late afternoon/early evening and include these tentative dates: August 15, September 19, October 10, November 7 (others tbd).

The CAP ideally would:

- Collaborate with the project team by maintaining an open mind to alternatives, spending the time needed to understand constraints, and help find solutions to problems encountered along the way
- Help build an understanding of the project within the broader community
- Regularly attend CAP meetings
- Come prepared to the CAP meetings by reading project materials ahead when requested
- Provide honest feedback
- Contribute to the successful delivery of the preferred solution by supporting the project(s) after the preferred selection is approved

Specific tasks would include:

- Receive briefings on technical areas
- Connect and outreach to community members
- Receive project updates
- Review and suggest edits to project outreach materials
- Review and suggest strategies regarding funding opportunities and constraints
- Disseminate accurate information, ensure community well informed about alternatives

### Desired Background and Qualifications:

Ideal candidates for CAP membership will have personal experience, knowledge, and skills that contribute to collaborative problem solving. Community members that have an interest in working with the project team to help identify a preferred solution for the at-grade rail crossings are encouraged to apply. Community members with specific subject matter expertise are also encouraged to apply. The City Manager will make the selection of the CAP in consideration of the above.

**Application for Community Advisory Panel (CAP) Membership  
Connecting Palo Alto – At-Grade Rail Crossing Separation**



**Candidate Information:**

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Palo Alto  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please tell us about your background, interests, and expertise. Please explain how you would connect and outreach with community members to help broaden understanding and involvement in the decision process.**

*By signing this membership application, I agree to serve on the Connecting Palo Alto Community Advisory Panel that involves attending six meetings during the process.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICATION MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5:00 p.m. on July 16, 2018**

Please submit your application by postal mail to: City of Palo Alto – Transportation Division - 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94301 or by Email to: [transportation@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:transportation@cityofpaloalto.org)



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**City of Palo Alto  
Citizen Advisory Panel – Grade Separation**

Name
Borkar, Mandar
Brail, Gregory
Burton, Phil
Carrasco, Tony
Cho, Inyoung
Kanne, Megan
Lau, Pat
Logan, Christine
Naik, Nadia
Patkar, Parag
Shen, David
One member pending



# Connecting Palo Alto

Help Design the Future of Palo Alto's Rail Corridor

## Community Meeting

### We want your input!

Join us to help evaluate potential railroad crossing **grade separation** ideas throughout Palo Alto. Specific ideas related to separating the street from the railroad will be presented for Churchill Avenue, Charleston Road and Meadow Drive, and Palo Alto Avenue. There will also be further discussion of the Citywide tunnel and trench ideas.

Your **feedback** and ideas will be used to help identify the universe of grade separation ideas to be considered when shaping the citywide solution. Your opinion matters.

The community meeting will start with a presentation including specific engineering graphics, followed by a brief question and answer session. Participants will be asked to give input in small groups about the potential ideas presented.

**Learn** about this important effort and give us your feedback on existing conditions and issues, as well as your suggestions on the ideas that are presented.

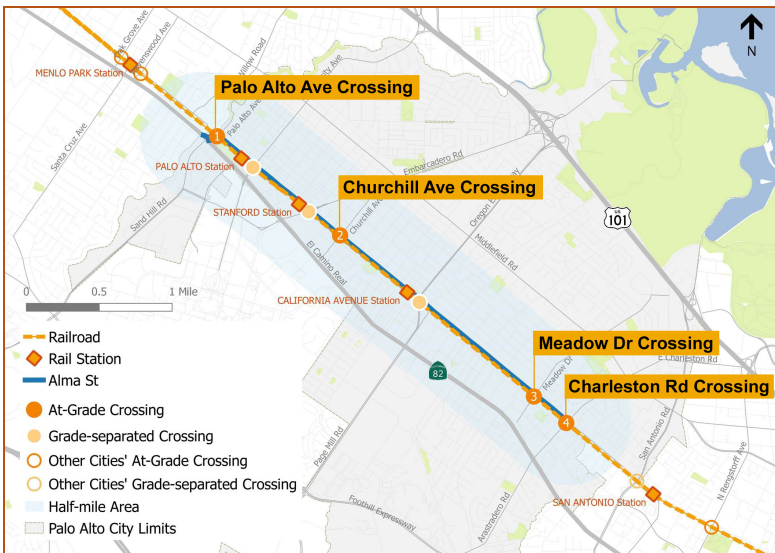


### Community Meeting on Rail Grade Separation

Thursday, August 23

6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Mitchell Park Community Center  
3700 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto



**For more information:**  
Visit [cityofpaloalto.org/ConnectingPaloAlto](http://cityofpaloalto.org/ConnectingPaloAlto)

**Contact the City at:**  
650-329-2520

**Send questions or feedback to:**  
[transportation@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:transportation@cityofpaloalto.org)