



# City of Palo Alto

(ID # 5690)

## Planning & Transportation Commission Staff Report

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**Report Type:**

**Meeting Date: 4/29/2015**

**Summary Title: Concept Plan Line Approvals for the Charleston/Arastradero Corridor Project**

**Title: Review of the Charleston/Arastradero Corridor Project and Recommendation to the City Council for Approval of Concept Plan Line Alignment**

**From: Holly Boyd, Senior Engineer**

**Lead Department: Public Works Engineering**

### **Recommendation**

Staff requests the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) to review the Concept Plan Line for the Charleston-Arastradero and forward to the City Council for conceptual approval.

### **Project Background**

The Charleston-Arastradero Corridor is a heavily used, 2.3 mile roadway servicing 11 schools, several parks, shopping centers, commercial uses, a library, day care centers, non-profits, and two community centers. The corridor extends from East Charleston Road at Fabian Way to Arastradero Road at Miranda Avenue. In 2003 Council directed staff to prepare a Charleston-Arastradero Corridor Plan to address school commute and other travel safety concerns for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers, as well as to enhance residential amenities along the corridor, without inducing traffic to shift onto nearby residential streets and maintaining the ability to handle existing and projected traffic.

In 2004 Council approved a plan for a trial demonstration to reduce the four lane road to two lanes. In 2006, Phase 1 of the plan was implemented on Charleston Road from Fabian Way to El Camino Real together with improvements at the Gunn High School/Arastradero Road intersection. Phase 2 of the improvements was implemented in 2010 on Arastradero Road between El Camino Real and Gunn High School. These trials were approved by Council for permanent retention in 2008 and 2012, respectively. Since that time, the project has secured \$1.45 million in grant funding for the permanent build out of the approved project. The City Council included the Charleston/Arastradero Corridor in its Infrastructure Funding Plan, allocating the remaining \$7.5 million needed to fully fund the project through its construction.

The trial projects were implemented by using pavement striping and markings without the use of hardscape improvements. This last phase of the project will complete hardscape elements and incorporate further improvements to address safety and operational issues.

## **Planning and Transportation Purview**

The role of the PTC in this matter is to review staff's recommendations and community input on the proposed transportation improvements and forward a recommendation to Council.

## **Discussion**

Approval of Concept Plan Lines is the first step in the design phase of a project. A Concept Plan Line identifies the approximate location of civil improvements along with improvement types, but excludes focused design details such as detailed hardscape and landscape measures. The Concept Plan Line identifies the locations of extensive civil improvements that influence the amount of review required for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance. Development of a Concept Plan Line normally takes up to three (3) to four (4) community meetings to help shape the location and types of improvements that each plan recommends. Four public community meetings were held for this project between 2013 and 2014. Each community meeting was well attended and had over 40 residents at each meeting. The meetings presented various options and concepts to the public and gathered feedback to fine-tune the plan line. The Charleston/Arastradero Conceptual Plan Line as shown in Attachment A was presented at the last community meeting in March. Comments received at this meeting suggest that the plan line addresses most of the concerns within the corridor expressed at previous meetings. Areas of continued concerns include excessive delay during peak commute periods, illegal maneuvers by impatient drivers as well as student bicyclists, and difficulty in making left turns from side streets onto the corridor during peak commute periods.

Listed below are highlights of the preferred Concept Plan Line at specific intersections/areas along the corridor:

- **Gunn High School**  
Adjusted "pork chop" islands for increased safety, new 13 foot wide multi-use pathway on eastbound side of street from Gunn High School to existing trail to Los Altos (Hetch-Hetchy trail), green bike lane surface treatment approaching intersection in westbound direction, and a bicycle cross-walk from the multi-use trail to Gunn High School.
- **Terman Middle School**  
In the eastbound direction, added a dedicated right turn lane into Terman Middle School, added green bike lane between the through lane and right turn lane to improve visibility of bicyclists, provided a bike ramp to the sidewalk ahead of the intersection to allow school-bound bicyclists travelling east to avoid weaving with vehicles at the intersection, provided a bus bay at the far end of the intersection, increased size of corner sidewalk for bikes and pedestrians waiting to cross. To accommodate these improvements, the plan line proposes elimination of one eastbound through lane (space

to be used as the new right turn lane) as well as removal of 18 parking spaces on westbound Arastradero between George Avenue and Willmar Drive. A parking survey conducted by volunteers at twenty various times between February 6<sup>th</sup> and March 2<sup>nd</sup> indicated that cars were parked on the section of the road designated for parking removal only three times with the maximum number of spaces occupied during the survey being five.

- **Coulombe Avenue**  
Shorten the existing cross-walk by widening the sidewalk at the north-west corner and realigning the cross-walk to be perpendicular to the road, and added an additional cross-walk on the east side of the intersection.
- **Juana Briones Park**  
On eastbound side of street, widened sidewalk to 10 feet between Terman Middle School and Suzanne Drive. On westbound side, incorporate a cycle track/bike lane separated from the travel lanes by on-street parking spaces. During final design, measures will be incorporated to encourage student bicyclists to use Los Palos Avenue to enter Terman Middle School via an entrance at the back of the campus rather than riding on the sidewalk along Arastradero Road.
- **Clema Avenue/Suzanne Drive**  
Widened sidewalk on both sides of the street, added a median island at Suzanne intersection to provide refuge for vehicles turning left from Suzanne Drive to Arastradero Road. During final design, measures to improve visibility of pedestrians using the cross-walk will be incorporated.
- **El Camino Real**  
Added bike lanes in each direction across the intersection by narrowing the travel lanes on both approaches to the intersection as well as the sidewalk at the eastbound approach to the intersection, eliminated “pork chop” island at the southeast corner, added a raised crosswalk across the slip ramp at the southwest corner to slow the high speed right-turning traffic, and provided bicycle lane marking across the wide intersection. Also, the plan line includes an optional bike box at the south-west “pork chop” island to allow bicyclists to make a two-stage left turn from southbound El Camino Real to eastbound Charleston Road. Improvements at this intersection are subject to pending review and concurrence by Caltrans.
- **Wilkie Way**  
Provide left-turn lanes on Charleston Road in both directions
- **Ruthelma Avenue**  
Install a pedestrian activated flashing beacon at existing cross-walk.

- **Alma Street**

On the west side of Alma Street a new concrete median is proposed from before Park Boulevard up to the train tracks. This new median will prevent left turns from and onto Park Boulevard, thus improving the flow of through traffic on Charleston Road. The new median may have a small opening to allow bicycles to cross when it is safe to do so. The project also includes four quadrant gates and other safety improvements at the railroad crossing. These can potentially provide the improvements needed for a future “quiet zone” classification. Further discussion will be held with Caltrain and California Public Utilities Commission to identify appropriate improvements. On the east side of Alma Street, , the two lane approach to the intersection has been extended by approximately 500 feet in order to decrease the length of the vehicles queued up to cross or turn onto Alma Street.
  
- **Carlson Court**

Widened sidewalks at three corners of the intersection to reduce pedestrian crossing distances and to discourage U-turn movements at this intersection. U-turns have been accommodated at Mumford Place and Nelson Drive intersections for westbound and eastbound traffic respectively. The sidewalk along the westbound lanes has been widened between Carlson Court and the multi-use trail adjacent to Hoover Elementary School to accommodate two-way bicycle traffic between Carlson Court and the multi-use trail.
  
- **Hoover Elementary School**

Landscaped median island across the entire length between Carlson Court and Nelson Drive to preclude left-turn and U-turn movements from eastbound Charleston Road. Median openings have been provided to accommodate left-turn movements from Hoover Elementary School driveway and Stevenson House driveway onto eastbound Charleston Road. The signal at Nelson Drive has been modified to have a protected left-turn phase for both eastbound and westbound traffic, and the storage length for the eastbound left-turn/U-turn lane has been lengthened by more than 300 feet. The north side of the intersection has been modified to make it clear for vehicles heading northbound on Nelson Drive that a through-movement at the intersection is provided only for bicyclists.
  
- **Middlefield Road**

Currently, Charleston Road is a two-lane road on both approaches to the Middlefield Road intersection and widens to four lanes for approximately 600 feet at the intersection. The proposed plan line will add dedicated right turn lanes in both directions by eliminating one of the through lanes in the westbound direction. To improve bike safety, curb modifications allow bicyclists to maintain a straight path through the intersection, and force right-turning vehicles to slowly cross the bike lanes as they enter the right-turn lanes. Green bike lanes have also been incorporated to improve visibility of bicyclists in weaving areas.

- Sutherland Drive/Grove Avenue  
 Provided landscaped medians to improve safety of left-turning movements from Charleston Road on to the side streets. The improvements allow for left-turns out of the side streets. Left-turns into the side streets have been accommodated by the use of U-turn maneuvers at a mid-block location near Charleston Court for westbound traffic and at Louis Road for eastbound traffic. A pedestrian crossing with large median refuge area has also been included.
  
- Louis Road  
 Widened intersection to accommodate U-turns for eastbound traffic, and signalized the intersection to improve left-turn movement operation for southbound Louis Road. A dedicated lane has been added on southbound Louis Road to improve safety for bicyclists. The median refuge for bicyclists has also been enlarged.
  
- Fabian Way  
 In the eastbound direction, a dedicated left-turn lane for vehicles and a separate left-turn lane for bicyclists have been added. A cross-walk has been added across Charleston Road on the east side of the intersection. On southbound Fabian Way, a bike lane has been added between the right turn lane and the through lane. A separate City project will install bike lanes on Charleston Road east of Fabian Way in both directions. In the westbound direction, the right lane will be converted to a right-turn only lane.

Two locations on the corridor where striping is being modified to improve vehicle flow are being studied for possible accelerated implementation. The first location is on westbound Charleston approaching Alma Street where the two lane approach will be extended to allow additional storage capacity. The other location is the intersection of Charleston Road and Fabian Way where the westbound merge will be shifted to the east side of Fabian Way and the left turn pocket will be added in the westbound direction. These lane reconfigurations could happen as early as summer 2015.

In addition, staff presented the proposed improvements at City/School Traffic Safety Committee and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings at Gunn High School, Terman Middle School, Hoover Elementary School, and Fairmeadow Elementary School in February and March. The PTAs all supported the plan line and thought the improvements were beneficial to the students and users of the corridor.

The conceptual plan lines were reviewed by Palo Alto Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PABAC) in November 2014 and February 2015. PABAC members provided their thoughts and comments on the features/treatments/concepts/improvements proposed, and provided input on their individual preferences of certain features. Numerous comments and suggestions from PABAC were provided through the meetings. These comments and the response to the comments are included as Attachment B. An issue of concern to the community

heard at the public meetings is the general growth in traffic as a result of the strong economy, the increase in employment and other factors. The Charleston/Arastradero project does not significantly affect vehicle capacity in the corridor, but will continue and enhance changes that were made in 2012. Those changes reflected the vision for the corridor established in the Comp Plan, the Bicycle Transportation Plan and other City Council actions. The project will include some traffic operations upgrades and also will improve bike and pedestrian facilities, thus providing positive benefits for all modes.

The general growth in traffic is a regional and citywide issue, which we will have to address as a community no matter what we do in this corridor. This effort needs to include increased Caltrain capacity, citywide bicycle facility improvements, expanded commuter and community shuttle service, trip reduction strategies for new and existing employment and efforts such as the Transportation Management Association. The City Council has recently asked staff to work with Stanford on how to get a meaningful shift to alternative modes at the Research Park. In addition, current planning efforts such as the new Comp Plan and Greenhouse Gas Reduction strategies will address longer term efforts to manage vehicle traffic.

Following approval of the Concept Plan Line by City Council, the design team will start work on the design for the entire corridor between Charleston Road at Fabian Way and Arastradero Road at Miranda Avenue in a way that will allow the project to be built in phases.

## **Policy Implications**

Approval of the plan line is consistent with City policies and previous Council direction.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan 2012 (BPTP) lays out the development of the Bicycle Boulevard network and prioritizes corridors for development of these facilities. BPTP objectives that are furthered by the development of the Charleston/Arastradero Corridor Project include:

Objective 1: Double the rate of bicycling for both local and total work commutes by 2020 (to 15% and 5%, respectively).

Objective 2: Convert discretionary vehicle trips into walking and bicycling trips in order to reduce City transportation-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 15% by 2020.

Objective 3: Develop a core network of shared paths, bikeways, and traffic-calmed streets that connects business and residential districts, schools, parks and open spaces to promote healthy, active living.

Objective 4: Plan, construct and maintain 'Complete Streets' that are safe and accessible to all modes and people of all ages and abilities.

Objective 5: Promote efficient, sustainable and creative use of limited public resources through integrated design and planning.

In addition, the Comprehensive Plan goals, policies and programs that support the development of the Charleston/Arastradero Corridor Project include:

Goal T-1: Less Reliance on Single-Occupant Vehicles.

Goal T-3: Facilities, Services and Programs that Encourage and Promote Walking and Bicycling.

Goal T-4: An Efficient Roadway Network for All Users.

Goal T-6: A High Level of Safety for Motorists, Pedestrians, and Bicyclists on Palo Alto Streets

Policy T-14: Improve pedestrian and bicycle access to and between local destinations, including public facilities, schools, parks, open space, employment districts, shopping centers, and multi-modal transit stations.

Policy T-25: When constructing or modifying roadways, plan for usage of the roadway space by all users, including motor vehicles, transit vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Policy T-39: To the extent allowed by law, continue to make safety the first priority of citywide transportation planning. Prioritize pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile safety over vehicle level of service at intersections.

Policy T-40: Continue to prioritize the safety and comfort of school children in street modification projects that affect school travel routes.

Program T-19: Develop, periodically update and implement a bicycle facilities improvement program and a pedestrian facilities improvement program that identify and prioritize critical pedestrian and bicycle links to parks, schools, retail centers and civic facilities.

Program T-33: Develop comprehensive roadway design standards and criteria for all types of roads. Emphasize bicycle and pedestrian safety and usability in these standards.

Program T-41: The following roadways are designated as residential arterials. Treat these streets with landscaping, medians, and other visual improvements to distinguish them as residential streets, in order to reduce speeds.

- Middlefield Road (between San Francisquito Creek and San Antonio Road)
- University Avenue (between San Francisquito Creek and Middlefield Road)
- Embarcadero Road (between Alma Street and West Bayshore Road)
- Charleston / Arastradero Roads (between Miranda Avenue and Fabian Way)

## **Environmental Review**

The Charleston-Arastradero Corridor Project will be funded from both local and federal sources. Therefore, compliance with both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is required.

For CEQA compliance, the City prepared an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the Project in 2004 and the Project was approved by the City Council. In addition this project was discussed in the 2012 Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan. As stated above under *Project Background*, the largest components of the Project, namely the identified reduction in through traffic lanes from four to two along Arastradero and Charleston Roads, were previously implemented on a trial basis and subsequently made permanent. In addition, the improvements at the entrances to Gunn High School and Hoover Elementary School that are part of the Project were implemented.

Most of the remaining components of the approved Project, all of which are relatively minor in scope, have not been implemented. These improvements include bulb outs, new and improved bicycle facilities, new and upgraded crosswalks, raised pedestrian refuges, modifications to intersection geometry, addition of trees and landscaping, and additional lighting at various locations along the 2.3-mile Corridor. The improvements that constitute the proposed Concept Plan Line represent refinements and modifications to this list of not-yet-implemented components of the approved Project.

Under staff direction, the environmental compliance specialists on the consultant team undertook a preliminary review of the proposed Concept Plan Line improvements in order to compare them to the list of not-yet-implemented components of the approved Project, and also to determine if any of the proposed improvements will result in new and/or significantly greater environmental impacts than those identified in the Project's 2004 IS/MND. Based on this review, it was concluded that implementation of the proposed Concept Plan Line improvements would not result significant environmental impacts that are different from, or substantially greater than, those identified in the 2004 Initial Study/MND; therefore a new environmental document is not required. An Addendum to the Initial Study/MND will be prepared prior to City Council approval of the Concept Plan Line.

Analyses required for NEPA compliance, to be specified by Caltrans on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration, will be undertaken. Under staff direction the consultant team will prepare the necessary analyses for the project. Given the nature and scope of the proposed improvements, both the consultant team and staff anticipate that Caltrans will determine that a Categorical Exclusion under NEPA (analogous to a Categorical Exemption under CEQA) is applicable.

### **Attachments:**

- Attachment A: Concept Plan Lines (PDF)
- Attachment B: Comments and Responses from PABAC / Community Workshop (PDF)



- Attachment C: Public Comments and Responses (PDF)



## Attachment A

### Concept Plan Lines

Part 1 of 2 of Concept Plan Lines

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=47006>

Part 2 of 2 of Concept Plan Lines

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=47008>



**Charleston / Arastradero Corridor Project**

Public comments and responses from 2/15 PABAC Meeting and 3/15 Community Workshop

#	Public Comment	Response
1	Concern of Removal of Left turn out of Young Life Preschool and church and how much traffic is using the driveway	Left turning vehicles from the preschool driveway and from Georgia Avenue face each other in the two-way-left-turn lane, creating unsafe conditions. Traffic counts show 6 and 21 vehicles making these movements respectively during morning, midday, and evening peak travel times combined. The design accommodates left-turn movement for the larger volume of left-turning vehicles from Georgia Avenue.
2	Backup along Alma Street/Caltrain Intersection because of the Caltrain traffic	Safety provisions at the Caltrain crossing will be further evaluated.
3	Safety along the railroad crossing on Charleston with bicyclists and vehicles but still giving bicyclists a head start before vehicles at the intersection	Safety provisions at the Caltrain crossing will be further evaluated.
4	Left turn restrictions along Charleston frontage into residences and the for the Unitarian Universalist Church, requiring a U-turn at various locations	Addition of landscaped medians will resulting in a safer and more aesthetically pleasing corridor but will require many drivers to make U-turns to get to their destination. U-turns are provided at regular intervals in order to accommodate this need.
5	Concern that the Charleston/Middlefield intersection is the most dangerous for bicyclists	New green bike lanes are proposed to be to the left of the dedicated right turn lanes in order to prevent conflicts between right turning vehicles and bikes.
6	Concern about future growth at the Stanford Research Park and impact to the traffic conditions on the corridor	This project will not materially reduce the capacity or degrade the vehicle flow of the roadway. The striping plan installed in the past is considered the existing condition for this project.
7	Concern vehicle travel time has increased along corridor from this project	This project will not materially reduce the capacity or degrade the vehicle flow of the roadway. The striping plan installed in the past is considered the existing condition for this project.
8	Congestion on Arastradero from Terman Middle School to Foothill because of parent	A new dedicated right hand turn lane has been provided to decrease congestion on Arastradero

**Charleston / Arastradero Corridor Project**

Public comments and responses from 2/15 PABAC Meeting and 3/15 Community Workshop

	drop-offs along the corridor	due to Terman drop offs.
9	Vehicles are parking on bike lanes along westbound Arastradero Road	Parking will be eliminated along some portion of westbound Arastradero and the new striping plan will allow for ample space of parked vehicles.
10	Left turns from Alta Mesa Avenue onto WB Arastradero hard is impossible during peak hours	Adding a signal at Alta Mesa is not feasible due to the proximity to El Camino Real.
11	Add more traffic calming devices at Ruthelma/Charleston intersection and make more pedestrian and bicycle friendly	Push button activated flashing beacon are proposed for this pedestrian crossing.
12	Concern of too much cut through surrounding neighborhoods near Alma to avoid the Alma/Charleston Rd intersection	The westbound approach to Alma Street will be restriped to have two lanes for an additional 500' to decrease congestion.
13	Backup along Alma Street/Caltrain Intersection because of the Caltrain preemption	The westbound approach to Alma Street will be restriped to have two lanes for an additional 500' to decrease congestion.
14	Concern to be able to turn left at Sutherland	Westbound traffic will be able to access Sutherland by using the U-turn pocket provided just west of Sutherland.
16	Concern if it is possible to make a U-turn at Montrose/Louis/Charleston intersection	The intersection was designed to allow for eastbound vehicles to have enough space to make a U-turn.
17	Concern about getting into driveways because medians are added in corridor	Addition of landscaped medians will resulting in a safer and more aesthetically pleasing corridor but will require many drivers to make U-turns to get to their destination. U-turns are provided at regular intervals in order to accommodate this need.

# Attachment C

## Public Comments

### Concept Plan Line Approvals For Charleston/Arastradero Corridor





## Ellner, Robin

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**From:** Boyd, Holly  
**Sent:** Monday, April 20, 2015 11:12 AM  
**To:** Ellner, Robin  
**Cc:** Brunnings, Matt  
**Subject:** FW: Arastradero Corridor Project

For the report

-----Original Message-----

From: Gregory Kovacs [<mailto:gregkovacs@me.com>]  
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2015 8:30 AM  
To: Boyd, Holly  
Cc: Ali Cole  
Subject: Arastradero Corridor Project

Ms. Holly Boyd  
Engineering Services Senior Engineer  
City of Palo Alto

Dear Ms. Boyd,

Unfortunately, we cannot attend the meeting scheduled for 4/29 at 6:00 pm, but I wanted to send one comment in. We live on the King Arthur Court cul de sac. At that point, westbound, the re-stripped Arastradero splits into two lanes. This makes it very difficult to turn left, but more importantly, extremely dangerous to turn right (!) because typically speeding cars aggressively take advantage of the lane split, which occurs basically at the intersection. So, while from the perspective of a person turning right from King Arthur, there is only one oncoming lane, a person rushing along Arastradero can mentally "claim" the new lane on the right and (typically without signaling) head right for it.

In order to see oncoming traffic well enough to avoid a collision, one is forced to creep forward, which then interferes with bicycle traffic.

Why can't the lane split be done away from an intersection, such as maybe 50 feet beyond it?

Like any project of this scope, there will be advantages and disadvantages. I fear that through feedback mechanisms not all can participate in (in our cul de sac, a lot of homes are occupied by retired folks, many non-English speakers), some of the negative consequences to long-term residents might be under-represented.

Thanks,  
Greg Kovacs  
4174 King Arthur Court  
Palo Alto, CA 94306

February 10, 2015,

Dear City of Palo Alto Staff and Commissioners

On February 3, 2015, city Public Works staff and their consultants presented the latest version of their plan lines for the Charleston-Arastradero Corridor project to PABAC, encompassing ideas from earlier community meetings, and incorporating community feedback to the first proposals made in meetings in the fall. PABAC is charged with advising city staff on Bicycling and Pedestrian designs, and we focused on these aspects of the proposal.

Except as noted below, PABAC supports the improvements to the corridor shown in these plans. In particular, the plans show continuous bike lanes along the entire corridor, including across El Camino Real, where the bike lane currently disappears. The new plan at El Camino will improve safety and reduce stress for cyclists and pedestrians with a bike lane and thoughtful redesign of the corners on the South side of Arastradero, and by making space for a full bike lane on the North side. A second important improvement is at Middlefield, where the design replaces a conflict prone curb bike lane with through bike lanes and right turn only lanes, a best practice that avoids conflict. At the meeting several members of the committee asked about stressful, traffic conflict situations they experience with the existing configuration, and in each case we could see that the new plans would alleviate these issues.

There are many other improvements in these plans, including adding buffer space to bike lanes along much of the corridor, and widening some heavily used sidewalks near Terman. PABAC members had some feedback on these and other aspects that we will be sharing with public works staff.

At least 4 PABAC members had concerns about the protected bike lane configuration behind parked cars for two blocks near Coulombe. This is a non-standard treatment, and there was concern that having a short stretch with this configuration would have little benefit and could be problematic. We would recommend not putting the bike lane behind the parked cars.

Overall, we enthusiastically support the improvements to the corridor shown in these plan lines.

Robert Neff  
2015 PABAC chairman.



March 17, 2015

Fairmeadow PTA  
Fairmeadow Elementary School  
500 East Meadow Drive  
Palo Alto, CA 94306  
(650) 856-0845

City of Palo Alto Planning & Transportation Commission & City Council Members:

Fairmeadow PTA continues to support this important school commute route project that will provide safer automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle connections to schools and after-school destinations for children others in our attendance boundary area:

- Eleven public and private elementary, middle, and high schools (including Fairmeadow)
- Preschools
- Five city parks
- Mitchell Park Library
- Three community centers (Mitchell Park, Cubberley, TKCJL)
- Charleston Shopping Center
- Playing fields

**Please approve the Concept Plan Lines and move the permanent installation of the Charleston/Arastradero Plan forward as soon as possible.**

Thank you for your efforts to make Palo Alto's public streets safer for users of every age and ability.

Sincerely,

Jamey Boccio

President  
Fairmeadow PTA

Karrie Chen

Executive Vice President  
Fairmeadow PTA



**PALO ALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**HENRY M. GUNN HIGH SCHOOL** • 780 ARASTRADERO ROAD • PALO ALTO, CA 94306  
Telephone (650) 354-8200 FAX (650) 493-7801

March 30, 2015

Honorable City Council and Planning & Transportation Commissioners,

Henry M. Gunn High School directly abuts Charleston/Arastradero. We draw an average of 836 bicycle commuters each school day during peak bicycling season. Our site is served by several approach streets, including Charleston /Arastradero.

Gunn High School PTSA Traffic Safety Representatives and administrators have participated on the Charleston/Arastradero Stakeholders Group and the City School Traffic Safety Committee, providing comment and support for the Charleston/Arastradero Plan for more than a decade. Gunn PTSA has consistently supported the project and we now ask you to approve the recommended Concept Plan Lines for the permanent hardscape improvements to the street. Paint striping was adequate for a restriping trial of road operations and it provided some safety improvements. It is time to put the hardscape improvements in place that will deliver the lion's share of safety benefits to all users.

We have formally supported the project a number of times over a decade. In February 2005 Henry M. Gunn High School PTSA approved the following resolution and delivered it to City Council: *"We urge the City of Palo Alto to move forward with the Gunn segment of the Charleston Arastradero Plan without further delay because the traffic situation is currently untenable."* We wrote again in 2008 in support of the Phase II trial. We wrote again in 2013 in support of an OBAG grant application for Arastradero Road Corridor Improvements (Gunn HS to El Camino Real) that are consistent with the plan lines before you now.

Consistent with our previous support of the project, via vote at our General Membership meeting on March 24, 2015, we ask you to **approve the Concept Plan Lines** which fine tune the striping plan that exists now on the corridor. These plans provide planted medians, intersection and signal improvements, bulb-outs, multi-use paths, buffered bicycle lanes, a dedicated auto right turn lane into the Terman campus from east bound Arastradero, and built enhancements at the Gunn HS entrance and Arastradero approaches. The project is a key component of the south Palo Alto bike boulevard network, connecting PAUSD corridor schools to residences and after-school destinations.

We look forward to the safety improvements for all road users—people who drive, people who bike, and people who walk on Charleston-Arastradero.

Thank you.

Joy Henry Hinton  
President (2014/2015), Henry M. Gunn High School PTSA



**PALO ALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**HOOVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL · 445 EAST CHARLESTON ROAD · PALO ALTO, CA 94306 · Telephone (650) 320-8106**

March 6, 2015

Dear City Council and Planning & Transportation Commissioners,

Seven years ago at an April 15, 2008 General Membership meeting Hoover Elementary School PTA voted to support the three-lane configuration of Charleston Road. We write to you in support again now after another vote at our March 3, 2015 General Meeting in support of the following statement:

*The Hoover PTA Traffic Safety Representatives have participated on the Charleston/Arastradero Stakeholders Group and the City School Traffic Safety Committee, providing comment and support for the Charleston/Arastradero Plan for more than a decade. Hoover Elementary School PTA has consistently supported the project and we ask you to approve the recommended Concept Plan Lines for the permanent hardscape improvements to the street.*

Hoover Elementary School directly abuts Charleston/Arastradero. We are a PAUSD alternative program, so many of our students are driven to school, but many also walk and bike. Managing traffic safety for our school site is challenging because of our proximity to the residential arterial. Our PTA and principal are concerned about recurring "near misses" at the school site entrance and exit that could be reduced by better controlled automobile turning movements at these locations. Paint striping cannot channel, direct, and protect auto movements in the way that the proposed hardscape medians will at these recognized conflict points.

We are pleased to see the proposal for a dedicated left turn signal to manage U-turn movements at the Nelson/Charleston intersection. The proposed signal will separate the movement of cars and bicyclists through this intersection, keeping bicycle commuters safer. It also will provide drivers with protected gaps to make this turn.

At our meeting, a request was made to staff to work with VTA to study moving the VTA bus stop on the Hoover frontage on WB Charleston. There is some concern that the location of this stop might create motor vehicles delays during school commute times.

The many new safety features for bicyclists and pedestrians as well as the landscaped medians will do much to transform the street from its current expressway-like character to a more residential character that will encourage safer driver behavior. More importantly, it will encourage more students to bicycle and walk to "superblock" schools by providing a safer place for them on this well-used school commute corridor.

We look forward to the coming safety improvements for all road users—people who drive, people who bike, and people who walk on Charleston-Arastradero. We will continue to work with the city and school district on finding ways to encourage Hoover families to minimize their car trips to school.

Thank you.

Hoover Elementary School PTA President

Hoover Elementary School  
445 East Charleston Road  
Palo Alto, CA 94306





*everychild.onevoice.*®

## **JL Stanford Middle School PTA**

March 19, 2015

Dear City Council and Planning & Transportation Commissioners,

JLS Middle School attendance boundaries extend to neighborhoods south of Charleston/Arastradero. *Half* of JLS students bicycle to school. We don't have a current count of students who walk to JLS, but we know that many do. Many students who commute to JLS must travel along or across some portion of this City of Palo Alto School Commute Corridor. The JLS PTA actively encourages alternative commutes, so we consider the safety of this corridor to be a very high priority.

JLS Middle School PTA Traffic Safety representatives and administrators have participated in the Charleston/Arastradero Stakeholders group and the City School Traffic Safety committee, providing comment and support for the Charleston/Arastradero Plan over the past decade as the project has evolved.

**We ask you to approve the recommended Concept Plan Lines** for the permanent hardscape improvements to the street. Paint striping was adequate for a restriping trial of road operations and it provided some safety improvements. We are glad the striping plan was approved in 2012. It is time to put the hardscape improvements in place that will deliver the majority of safety benefits to all users. These plans provide planted medians, intersection and signal improvements, bulb-outs, multi-use paths, buffered bicycle lanes, and other built enhancements. The project is a key component of the south Palo Alto bike boulevard network as envisioned in the City of Palo Alto Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation Plan. It will safely connect PAUSD corridor schools to thousands of community residences and after-school destinations.

We look forward to a safer street environment for all road users—people who drive, people who bike, and people who walk, including JLS students.

Thank you for City of Palo Alto's partnership in creating safer routes to school.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Best". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barbara Best  
President, JL Stanford Middle School PTA

Dear City Council and Planning & Transportation Commissioners,

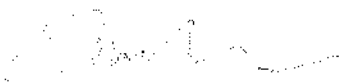
Juana Briones Elementary School's attendance boundaries cross Charleston/Arastradero. Students who commute to Juana Briones from south of Charleston-Arastradero must travel along or across some portion of this City of Palo Alto School Commute Corridor. Most Juana Briones students who live north of Charleston-Arastradero eventually have to commute across the corridor to get to Terman Middle School. Juana Briones PTA actively encourages alternative commutes, so we consider the safety of this corridor to be a very high priority.

Juana Briones PTA Traffic Safety Representatives and administrators have participated on the Charleston/Arastradero Stakeholders Group and the City School Traffic Safety Committee, providing comment and support for the Charleston/Arastradero Plan as the project has evolved over many years.

**Please approve the recommended Concept Plan Lines** for the permanent hardscape improvements to the street. Paint striping was adequate for a test of road operations but it provided minimal safety improvements. We are glad the striping plan was approved in 2012. It is time to put the hardscape improvements in place that will deliver the lion's share of safety benefits to all users. These plans provide planted medians with pedestrian refuges, intersection and signal improvements, bulb-outs, multi-use paths, buffered bicycle lanes, and other permanent enhancements. The project is a key component of the south Palo Alto bike boulevard network as envisioned in the City of Palo Alto Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation Plan. It will safely connect PAUSD corridor schools to thousands of community residences and after-school destinations.

We look forward to a safer street environment for all road users—people who drive, people who bike, and people who walk, including Juana Briones students.

Thank you for supporting Safe Routes to School.



Heewon Park  
Juana Briones Elementary School PTA President



Palo Alto Council of PTAs
25 Churchill Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94306
www.paloaltopta.org

3/18/2015

Honorable Planning & Transportation Commission & City Council Members,

The Palo Alto Council of PTAs Traffic Safety Committee has worked closely with city staff on the Charleston/Arastradero Plan for more than a decade, regularly reviewing and commenting on its progress. Consistent with our previous support of the project, we respectfully ask you to approve the recommended Concept Plan Lines for CharlestonArastradero that are now before you.

Charleston/Arastradero connects thousands of nearby residences and neighborhoods to important walking/bicycling destinations, including:

- Eleven public and private elementary, middle, and high schools
• Five city parks
• Mitchell Park Library & Community Center
• Cubberley Community Center & playing fields, TKCJL and the Elks Club
• Multiple preschools
• Recreational bicycling destinations in the western hills and Baylands

The trial achieved key goals that are important to our Traffic Safety Committee, including:

1. Reducing the number of high speed vehicles (those traveling greater than 37mph) during the off-peak hours (including after-school commute times) by approximately 50 percent. Speed matters. Studies show that a pedestrian is nearly twice as likely to be killed by a vehicle moving 35mph than a vehicle moving 28 mph.
2. The number of injury accidents for pedestrians and bicyclists on this school commute route decreased during the course of the trial while the number and percentage of students bicycling to corridor schools rose. That is an important improvement for bicycle and pedestrian safety.

We understand that the last remaining gap in the continuous bike lanes through the challenging El Camino intersection will be addressed by these plans with Caltrans collaboration.

Please approve the Concept Plan Lines that fine-tune the striping plan that exists now on the corridor. These plans provide planted medians, intersection and signal improvements, bulb-outs, multi-use paths, buffered bicycle lanes, a dedicated automobile right turn lane into the Terman campus from east bound Arastradero, and other built enhancements. The striping trial was the first phase of a redesign of the road to calm traffic and improve conditions for all road users that has been unanimously approved by city council. Help complete the vision of the Comprehensive Plan (Program T-41) for this residential arterial and City of Palo Alto School Commute Corridor. Please approve the Plan Line Concepts. This project is a key component of the south Palo Alto bike boulevard network, connecting PAUSD corridor schools to residences and after-school destinations.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Susan Usman
Palo Alto Council of PTAs, President

The Palo Alto Council of PTAs works with the district staff, the Board of Education, community partners and the PTAs at the 17 schools to support the students and families of the Palo Alto Unified School District and to improve the education, health and welfare of all children and youth.





Home of the Tigers

**TERMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL PTA**  
**655 ARASTRADERO ROAD**  
**PALO ALTO, CA 94306**

April 15, 2015

Dear City Council and Planning & Transportation Commissioners,

Terman Middle School directly abuts Charleston/Arastradero Roads. With very few exceptions, students who commute to this site must use this City of Palo Alto School Commute Corridor for some portion of their school commute. The Terman Middle School PTA actively encourages alternative commutes, so we consider the safety of this corridor to be a very high priority.

Terman Middle School PTA Traffic Safety Representatives and administrators have participated on the Charleston/Arastradero Stakeholders Group and the City School Traffic Safety Committee, providing comment and support for the Charleston/Arastradero Plan for more than a decade. Paint striping was adequate for a restriping trial of road operations and it provided some safety improvements. It is time to put the hardscape improvements in place that will deliver the lion's share of safety benefits to all users.

We ask you to **approve the Concept Plan Lines** which fine tune the striping plan that exists now on the corridor. These plans provide planted medians, intersection and signal improvements, bulb-outs, multi-use paths, buffered bicycle lanes, a new dedicated auto right turn lane into the Terman Middle School campus from east bound Arastradero, and other built enhancements. The project is a key component of the south Palo Alto bike boulevard network, safely connecting PAUSD corridor schools to community residences and after-school destinations.

We look forward to a safer street environment for all road users—people who drive, people who bike, and people who walk.

Thank you for City of Palo Alto's partnership in creating safer routes to school.

Sincerely,

Donna M. Pioppi, President  
Terman Middle School PTA