PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Council Meeting Date: January 14, 2014
Staff Report #: 14-002

Agenda Item #: F-4

REGULAR BUSINESS: **Consider Modifications to the City's Rail Policy Statement**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council modify the City's Rail Position Statement to allow for potential future consideration of a third, at-grade passing track through the City, consistent with the current Caltrain/High Speed Rail (HSR) 3-track Alternative (Middle 3 Track Blended System Overtake Option).

BACKGROUND

On November 13, 2012, the City Council authorized staff to submit a letter of interest to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA) for a Measure A eligible grade separation project in Menlo Park for a planning phase for the Ravenswood Avenue rail crossing. On August 5, 2013, the TA announced solicitations for candidate projects from the Measure A Grade Separation Program. On August 27, 2013, the City Council adopted a resolution of support and authorized submission of an application for Measure A Grade Separation Program funding for a project study report (PSR) for the Ravenswood Avenue rail crossing. The staff report and resolution are included as Attachments A and B, respectively. The application for $750,000 was submitted by the September 13, 2013 deadline.

Upon review of the applications, the TA raised concerns with Menlo Park's position statement on HSR and indicated that the statement appears to be in conflict with the program's requirements. The TA has indicated that at least one alternative analyzed in the study will need to be consistent with the Caltrain Modernization Program (blended system for HSR). At this time, in order to comply with the grant requirements, the 3-track Alternative would need to be included for analysis. However, the City Council's October 2012 adopted position statement states that the City only supports a two-track blended system in Menlo Park, at or below grade. The position statement is included in Attachment C, and was included in the application.

Below please find further details about the TA's requirement:

"Given the possible future selection and construction of this option [Middle 3 Track Blended System Overtake option], the City will include and study one or more design

options that accommodate the overtake [passing track]. In this context, 'accommodate' is understood to have the following minimum threshold of meaning;

- *The grade separation design maximizes the preservation and configuration of existing Right-of-Way (ROW) such that overtake [passing] tracks could be built at a later date with little or no minimal new ROW acquisition.*

- *The grade separation design does not include significant features or elements that would need to be demolished if overtake [passing] tracks were built.*

- *The grade separation design does not force future overtake [passing] tracks to be built in such a way that substantially increases their cost and complexity."*

Staff expressed to the TA that the City intends to include in the PSR, as required by the program guidelines, at least one alternative consistent with the Caltrain Modernization Program. However, the TA noted that the Council's position statement as currently written expressly opposes any configuration other than two tracks, at or below grade. Thus, the position statement indicates that the City would not support construction of any alternative that does not comply with the position statement.

The TA expressed that it was not comfortable with the application and current position statement, since, if an alternative with a third passing track is analyzed, but not considered viable by the Council, the Ravenswood Grade Separation Study could be a futile use of Measure A funds. The TA staff and Board of Directors recommended deferral of the City's application at their November 7, 2013 until the City Council may reconsider the position statement. Meeting minutes from the TA Board of Directors November meeting are included as Attachment D.

ANALYSIS

The TA is requesting that the City revise the position statement to allow for potential future consideration of a third, passing track through the City, consistent with the current 3-track alternative, or forfeit eligibility for the $750,000 Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation PSR application. With such a change, the City would retain the ability to review the alternatives and choose a potential preferred alternative at the Council's direction as the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Study and additional details on the Caltrain/HSR Blended System are developed.

The following section summarizes the information available to-date on the passing track options for the Caltrain/HSR Blended System. The Peninsula Joint Powers Board (JPB) has prepared several studies to evaluate the operations and impacts of the Caltrain/HSR Blended System, including:

1. Caltrain/HSR Blended Operations Analysis, March 2012
2. Caltrain/HSR Blended Grade Crossing and Traffic Analysis, June 2013
3. Caltrain/HSR Service Plan/Operations Considerations Analysis, June 2013

Study 1, the Operations Analysis, introduced preliminary passing track options, noting that a three-track alternative was under consideration, but did not define the extent of the alternative. Four separate four-track alternatives were presented and evaluated; none of these options affected the track configuration in Menlo Park.

Study 2, the Grade Crossing and Traffic Analysis, was developed as a supplement in response to comments received on Study 1 to evaluate the potential effects of gate down time changes and local traffic impacts with the Blended System. It did not include further definition or assessment of the passing track options.

Study 3, the Service Plan/Operations Considerations Analysis from June 2013, also was developed to supplement and respond to comments received on Study 1, includes the most detailed definition of the five different passing track options. While full details of the options have not been fully determined at this time, one of the five options, the 3-track Alternative, would add a third passing track spanning Menlo Park, running from Hayward Park in San Mateo to south of California Avenue in Palo Alto. The option would add a third track within the existing right-of-way on the western or southbound side of the platform, and would likely require a new platform for Caltrain service. The study only assesses operational impacts of the options; further study of the aesthetics, noise, historical, and other environmental impacts of the alternatives will be conducted in the Peninsula Corridor Electrification EIR, anticipated to be released in early 2014. No four-track options, elevated structures, or expansion of the rail right-of-way are currently proposed in Menlo Park. The other options do not include passing tracks in Menlo Park.

In summary, the City Council must revise the rail position statement to allow for potential future consideration of a third, passing track through the City, consistent with the current 3-track alternative. If the policy is not modified, the City will forfeit eligibility for the $750,000 Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation PSR application under San Mateo County Transportation Authority's Call for Grade Separation projects.

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

If funding for this project is awarded, staff resources will be required to support this project, and staff will return to Council requesting to include the project into the Capital Improvement Program. Adding this project will likely impact the timely completion of previously funded projects.

POLICY ISSUES

A review of potential grade separations is consistent with the City's current General Plan. Policy II-A-18 states that, "the City shall conduct a thorough feasibility study of grade separation projects included on the Measure A sales tax expenditure plan, including all impacts of such proposed projects and alternatives to the proposed projects, and shall support only those grade separations that provide sufficient traffic and rail service benefits to offset potential negative impacts to the community. The City

shall evaluate all alternatives to any grade separations and shall attempt to gauge public opinion, possibly through an advisory election, before proceeding with a grade separation project. Any approval of a grade separation project shall include findings specifying why the alternatives are not suitable and the reasons for proceeding with the grade separation project."

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This Council action is not subject to the current California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines. Any approved project will comply with all required environmental review documents to construct a project.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

A. August 27, 2013 Staff Report

B. Resolution 6167 – Supporting the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Analysis Project and Submitting an Application for Measure A Grade Separation Program Funding

C. Menlo Park High Speed Rail Position Statement

D. San Mateo County Transportation Authority Board of Directors, November 7, 2013 Meeting Minutes

Report prepared by:
Nicole Nagaya, P.E.
Senior Transportation Engineer

Jesse T. Quirion
Transportation Manager

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Council Meeting Date: August 27, 2013
Staff Report #: 13-151

Agenda Item #: D-4

CONSENT CALENDAR: **Adopt a Resolution of the City of Menlo Park Supporting the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Analysis Project and Submitting an Application for Measure A Grade Separation Program Funding**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution (Attachment A) in support of the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Analysis Project (Project), and authorize staff to submit a grant application for Measure A Grade Separation Program funding for the Project's planning phase.

BACKGROUND

On June 7, 1988, the voters of San Mateo County approved a ballot measure (Original Measure A) to allow the collection and distribution by the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA) of half-cent transactions and use tax in San Mateo County for 25 years, with the tax revenues to be used for highway and transit improvements pursuant to the Transportation Expenditure Plan presented to the voters.

On November 2, 2004, the voters of San Mateo County approved the continuation of the collection and distribution by the TA of the half-cent transactions and use tax for an additional 25 years to implement the 2004 Transportation Expenditure Plan beginning January 1, 2009 (New Measure A). The measure includes some funding for rail grade separation projects.

On November 13, 2012, the City Council authorized staff to submit a letter of interest to the TA for the Measure A eligible grade separation project in Menlo Park for a planning phase for the Ravenswood Avenue rail crossing. On August 5, 2013, the TA announced solicitations for candidate projects from the Measure A Grade Separation Program. The staff report and letter of interest are included as Attachment B and C.

ANALYSIS

The grant application for the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Analysis Project is being prepared in accordance with the goals and objectives established by Council for this Project. The grant application is required to be submitted by September 13, 2013,

along with an approved resolution of support by the Council. Staff is still finalizing the grant application and will be seeking $500,000 to $750,000 to complete the planning phase for the Project.

The Ravenswood Avenue grade crossing is one of the most critical rail crossings in the Menlo Park corridor. Ravenswood Avenue has an average daily traffic (ADT) volume of 24,100 vehicles per day (vpd). It is classified as an arterial roadway and is a vital link east and west through Menlo Park. The intersection of Alma Avenue is immediately adjacent to the rail crossing and has a high pedestrian volume, especially for pedestrians walking to and from the rail station on the northwest corner of the intersection.

The goal for this Project is to provide Menlo Park the opportunity to evaluate alternatives for grade separation of the rail crossing of Ravenswood. Some of the issues that would be included in the analysis 1) cost difference between grade separation alternatives; 2) better understanding of traffic, pedestrian, and bicycle patterns for the various alternatives; 3) potential impacts associated with the various alternatives such as noise, aesthetics, and station configuration; and 4) evaluation of alternatives not included in the prior studies –a fully depressed train (trench); and selection of a project alternative to complete the planning phase for the Project and ultimately for inclusion in the preliminary engineering and environmental phase of the Project. The Project would have a full community engagement phase to provide an opportunity for the public to provide input at various stages of the analysis.

Based on the requirements of the grant, at least one alternative analyzed in the study will need to be consistent with the blended system for High Speed Rail. The blended system has not been fully determined at this time. However, Menlo Park's current position only supports a two-track blended system in Menlo Park, at or below grade.

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

Staff resources are required to support this project. If funding is approved, staff will return to Council requesting to include project into the Capital Improvement Program. Adding this project will likely impact the timely completion of previously funded projects.

POLICY ISSUES

A review of potential grade separations is consistent with the City's current General Plan. Policy II-A-18 states that, "the City shall conduct a thorough feasibility study of grade separation projects included on the Measure A sales tax expenditure plan, including all impacts of such proposed projects and alternatives to the proposed projects, and shall support only those grade separations that provide sufficient traffic and rail service benefits to offset potential negative impacts to the community. The City shall evaluate all alternatives to any grade separations and shall attempt to gauge public opinion, possibly through an advisory election, before proceeding with a grade separation project. Any approval of a grade separation project shall include findings

specifying why the alternatives are not suitable and the reasons for proceeding with the grade separation project."

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This Council action is not subject to the current California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines. Any approved project will comply with all required environmental review documents to construct a project.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

A. Resolution

B. November 13, 2012 Staff Report

C. November 21, 2012 Grade Separation Letter of Interest

Report prepared by:
Fernando G. Bravo
Engineering Services Manager

Report prepared by:
Jesse Quirion
Transportation Manager

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RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MENLO PARK SUPPORTING THE RAVENSWOOD AVENUE GRADE SEPARATION ANALYSIS PROJECT AND SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR MEASURE A GRADE SEPARATION PROGRAM FUNDING

WHEREAS, the City of Menlo Park (City) is seeking funding to complete the Planning Phase for a cost range of approximately $500,000 to $750,000 in Measure A Grade Separation Program funds to complete the planning phase for the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Project (Project); and

WHEREAS, The Ravenswood Avenue grade crossing is one of the most critical rail crossings in the Menlo Park corridor. Ravenswood Avenue has an average daily traffic (ADT) volume of 24,100 vehicles per day (vpd). It is classified as an arterial roadway and is a vital link east and west through Menlo Park. The intersection of Alma Avenue is immediately adjacent to the rail crossing and has a high pedestrian volume, especially for pedestrians walking to and from the rail station on the northwest corner of the intersection, and

WHEREAS, the additional study would provide Menlo Park the opportunity to evaluate alternatives for grade separation of this rail crossing. Some of the following issues would be included in the analysis 1) cost difference between grade separation alternatives; 2) better understanding of traffic, pedestrian, and bicycle patterns for the various alternatives; 3) potential impacts associated with the various alternatives such as noise, aesthetics, and station configuration; 4) evaluation of alternatives not included in the prior studies –a fully depressed train (trench); and 5) complete the planning phase for the Project selected alternative; and

WHEREAS, the City wishes to sponsor the implementation of the environmental phase for the Project, and

WHEREAS, on June 7, 1988, the voters of San Mateo County approved a ballot measure to allow the collection and distribution by the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA) of a half-cent transactions and use tax in San Mateo County for 25 years, with the tax revenues to be used for highway and transit improvements pursuant to the Transportation Expenditure Plan presented to the voters (Original Measure A); and

WHEREAS, on November 2, 2004, the voters of San Mateo County approved the continuation of the collection and distribution by the TA the half-cent transactions and use tax for an additional 25 years to implement the 2004 Transportation Expenditure Plan beginning January 1, 2009 (New Measure A); and

WHEREAS, on November 13, 2012, the City Council authorized staff to submit a letter of interest to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority for the Measure A eligible grade separation project in Menlo Park; and

WHEREAS, TA issued a Solicitation for Projects for the Measure A Grade Separation Program on August 5, 2013; and

WHEREAS, TA requires a governing board resolution from the City committing the City to the completion of the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Project planning phase for the Project and the City's application for $500,000 to $750,000 in San Mateo County Measure A Grade

Separation Program funds for completing the planning phase for the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Project; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND IS HEREBY FOUND, DETERMINED, AND ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

1. Directs staff to submit an application for San Mateo County Measure A Grade Separation Program funds for an amount ranging from $500,000 to $750,000 for the planning phase for the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Project.

2. Authorizes the City Manager to execute all funding agreements with the San Mateo County Transportation Authority to encumber any Measure A Grade Separation Program funds awarded for this phase of the project.

3. Let it be known the City of Menlo Park commits to the completion of the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Analysis Project if awarded the requested San Mateo County Measure A Grade Separation Program funds

I, Pam Aguilar, Acting City Clerk of Menlo Park, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing Council Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted at a meeting by said Council on the twenty seventh day of August, 2013, by the following votes:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Official Seal of said City on this twenty seventh day of August, 2013.

_____
Pamela Aguilar
Acting City Clerk

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Council Meeting Date: November 13, 2012
Staff Report #:12-174
Agenda Item #: F-2

REGULAR BUSINESS: Consider Submitting a Letter of Interest to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority for Measure A Eligible Grade Separation Projects in Menlo Park

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RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends City Council submit a letter of interest to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority for Measure A eligible grade separation projects in Menlo Park.

BACKGROUND

On September 28, 2012, the SMCTA issued a letter to all eligible grade separation project sponsors in cities within San Mateo County, the County of San Mateo, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board and SamTrans to submit letters of interests for potential projects to be considered. The letter is appended as Attachment A. There are 40 crossings along the Caltrain corridor that will need to be studied to prioritize for grade separation. SMCTA is in the process of establishing the criteria to prioritize fund allocations for preliminary design and initial environmental work under the New Measure A Grade Separation Program. The goal in submitting the letter(s) of interest for the projects are to assist SMCTA in evaluating the priorities of each community to establish the scope of projects in the Caltrain corridor and Dumbarton Rail corridor for the upcoming call for projects. Measure A will have approximately $225 million for grade separation projects over the 25-year life of the measure, which would likely fund four to five projects.

The SMCTA approved the New Measure A Program on the December 3, 2009 Implementation Plan, but deferred decision on how to implement programing of the funds in the Grade Separation Program. This was done to coordinate the Grade Separation Program with the High Speed Rail Project.

A background summary of previous Council sessions for the Menlo Park potential Caltrain grade separation projects is appended in Attachment B of this staff report.

ANALYSIS

Currently, two tracks pass through Menlo Park and Council recently approved a current position statement that indicated support for two tracks at-grade for the future Caltrain blended system with the High Speed Rail Project. Currently, Caltrain is analyzing a blended system with 4-track passing sections in some areas, but not in Menlo Park. However, a 3-track passing section that includes Menlo Park is being studied. The

second consideration is the station platform configuration. Either outboard or center-boarding platforms must be assumed in order to establish an accurate layout of the station area.

An outboard station consists of platforms on both sides of the tracks, requiring trains to use a specific track when entering the station. This is the current configuration of the Menlo Park station. In a four-track configuration, passengers could only board from the two outside tracks. The inside tracks would only be used to allow express trains to pass local trains.

The center-boarding platform consists of a center platform with tracks on either side, allowing trains to use the tracks on either side of the platform to pick up passengers. In a four-track configuration two center-boarding platforms would be utilized, one serving northbound trains and one serving southbound. The center-boarding platform allows greater flexibility for use of the rail lines, but would require a larger area for the station. In the previous BKF study, the configuration of the platform was assumed to be outboard. A change from an outboard to a center-boarding platform could reduce the amount of the previous study that can be utilized and/or refined.

The 2003/04 Menlo Park Grade Separation Study has not been updated and Council has never finalized a preferred grade separation alternative. The City's 2003/04 preliminary study evaluated four basic alternatives each assuming 4-tracks at-grade for adjacent jurisdictions:

1. A "Trench" Alternative – keeps the roads at present grade and depressing the railroad track approximately 30-feet in the ground. This alternative is shown in "Figure 1 –Underground Track Alternative," page 5 of the June 2003 BKF Report. This option creates a trench through the City with high fences, depressed station platforms 30 – feet in the ground. In addition to the visual impacts, this option was considered not feasible at the time because of the San Francisquito Creek crossing at El Camino and the 1% grade limitation to get under Ravenswood and Atherton, gravity utility crossings conflicts, drainage and flooding, and high cost.

2. An "Overpass" Alternative – keeping the tracks at their present grade and reconstructing the roadways on 30-feet high structures. This alternative is shown in "Figure 2 – Millbrae Avenue Grade Separation in Millbrae," page 5 of the June 2003 BKF Report. Visually this option would resemble a freeway interchange, and the street connections parallel to the tracks would be extremely difficult. Finally, this option was also not recommended, because of the large foot print for grade transitions and impacts to Ravenswood and El Camino.

3. An "Underpass" Alternative – Keeping the tracks at-grade and depressing the roadway 20-feet below the grade of the tracks (This alternative is also referred to as the Depressed Street & Elevated Tracks Alternative.). This alternative was evaluated in both the June 2003 BKF report as shown in "Figure 3 – Jefferson Underpass in Redwood City," page 5; and the September 2004 Supplemental Study further described in Appendix B of the report, Alternative 1. This project requires retaining walls up to 20 –feet high, it would limit access to adjacent

properties, and there would be no track changes between crossings. A more detailed study is needed to determine which parallel side streets should connect and how this affects the traffic circulation and adjacent properties.

4. A "Split" Alternative – partially lowering the road crossings and partially raising the tracks to create a 20 – feet differential between the track elevation and the roadways. This alternative was evaluated in both the June 2003 BKF report as shown in "Figure 4 – Split Alternative, Holly Grade Separation in San Carlos," page 6; and the September 2004 Supplemental Study further described in Appendix B of the report, Alternative 2. This option would require construction along the entire corridor (long embankments), train noise may travel further with the raised tracks, but it would provide a better opportunity to connect side streets and reduce the impacts to adjacent properties. This option was considered feasible, but would also require a more detail analysis to determine which parallel side streets should connect and how this affects traffic circulation and adjacent properties.

The previous study focused on 4-tracks alternatives, but a 2-track system currently supported by the City Council would reduce impacts. Construction methods could also help to reduce impacts. Caltrain and HSR also conducted a conceptual analysis of the track grade through the peninsula. They provided an aerial structure, trench, and tunnel alternative. They did not come to any conclusion with their study as the project turned its focus to the blended system currently under review by Caltrain. This study allowed more flexibility in that the alternatives could extend between jurisdictions.

SMCTA Measure A Letter of Interest

Letters of interest regarding the City's priorities for grade separation projects need to be submitted to SMCTA to better frame the competitive process in preparing for the call for projects request in the future. Menlo Park is in a unique position, because our community has grade separation projects for the Caltrain corridor, and the Dumbarton Rail corridor. SMTCA has not determined if the call for projects will include projects in the Caltrain or Dumbarton Rail corridor. The letter of interest does not commit the City to a specific future project. If the City chooses to proceed forward with a grade separation project, a new study of the alternatives for grade separations would need to be conducted in order for the City to select a preferred alternative.

SMCTA is requesting that Menlo Park rank the grade separation projects in order of priority, giving Menlo Park the flexibility to include projects from both corridors. The following projects are candidates for grade separation by corridor; in priority order based on traffic volumes:

Caltrain Corridor:

1. Ravenswood Avenue (ADT 24,100 vehicles per day (vpd))

2. Oak Grove Avenue (ADT 9,700 vpd)

3. Glenwood Avenue (ADT 5,900 vpd)

4. Encinal Avenue (ADT 5,300 vpd)

Dumbarton Rail Corridor:

5. Willow Road SR 84 (ADT 37,500 vpd)

6. Marsh Road (ADT 27,000 vpd)

7. Chilco Street (ADT 6,900 vpd)

SMCTA is asking eligible sponsors to provide the following information for the nominated projects by order of priority in a letter of interest:

1. A prioritized list of at-grade railroad crossings within your jurisdiction that would be a candidate for elimination, if there is more than one such crossing;

2. A proposed time frame for completion of the project(s), and the specific rationale for such time frame;

3. Discussion of safety and local traffic congestion concerns in the proposed project area;

4. Discussion of how the project(s) could support economic development and transit-oriented development in the proposed project area;

5. Discussion of other funding sources that can be secured to leverage Measure A funds for the project;

6. Demonstration of support from the city council and the community through a deliberative planning process.

Based on Council direction, staff will complete the requested information the projects selected to be included in the letter of interest to the SMCTA. Letters are due November 21, 2012, so there is a very short turnaround time. When the call for projects is realized, staff will bring the specific intersection(s) grade separation project candidate(s) for Council approval prior to submittal.

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

Staffs resources are required to support this project during the CEQA analysis and preliminary design phase to assure Menlo Park's best interests are represented. If funding is approved, staff will return to Council with a CIP Project, and it will likely impact the timely completion of previously funded projects.

POLICY ISSUES

A review of potential grade separations is consistent with the City's current General Plan. Policy II-A-18 states that, "the City shall conduct a thorough feasibility study of

grade separation projects included on the Measure A sales tax expenditure plan, including all impacts of such proposed projects and alternatives to the proposed projects, and shall support only those grade separations that provide sufficient traffic and rail service benefits to offset potential negative impacts to the community. The City shall evaluate all alternatives to any grade separations and shall attempt to gauge public opinion, possibly through an advisory election, before proceeding with a grade separation project. Any approval of a grade separation project shall include findings specifying why the alternatives are not suitable and the reasons for proceeding with the grade separation project."

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This Council action is not subject to the current California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines. Any approved project will comply with all required environmental review documents to construct a project.

Signature on file	*Signature on file*
Fernando Bravo	Chip Taylor
Engineering Services Manager	Director of Public Works

PUBLIC NOTICE: Public Notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

A. Transportation Authority Call for Projects Letter September 28, 2012
B. Background Summary of Previous Council Sessions on Grade Separation
C. Staff Report #03-101 June 10, 2003
D. Staff Report #04-207 October 19, 2004
E. Staff Report #07-200 November 27, 2007
F. Staff Report #08-014 January 29, 2008

Links: BKF Grade Separation & New Station Feasibility Study 2003
BKF Grade Separation Feasibility Study Supplement 2004

SAN MATEO COUNTY
Transportation Authority

September 28, 2012

City/County Manager
City/County Public Works Directors

The San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA) is soliciting Letters of Interest from eligible grade separation project sponsors for potential project candidates under the New Measure A *Grade Separation* program.

The Letters of Interest would assist the TA in preparing a Call for Projects (CFP) that would be used to prioritize projects for fund allocations for preliminary design and initial environmental work. But before doing so, we would like to solicit information from eligible sponsors to better frame the competitive process since the amount of funding is limited.

Eligible sponsors include the cities within San Mateo County, the County of San Mateo, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board and SamTrans.

In 2004, the voters of San Mateo County reauthorized the Measure A program and approved the half-cent sales tax for another 25 years (2009 – 2033). A provision of the Expenditure Plan provides that 15 percent of the sales tax revenues be allocated to eliminate at-grade rail crossings through the Grade Separation program. It is estimated that the sales tax will generate $225 million (in 2004$) over the 25-year life of the measure.

A description of the *Grade Separation* program from the 2004 Expenditure Plan is enclosed as Exhibit "A".

At its December 3, 2009 meeting, the TA Board had approved the New Measure A Program Implementation Plan but deferred decision on how to implement programming of funds in the *Grade Separation* program. This was done to better coordinate grade separation needs with the California High Speed Rail project. The State recently appropriated funding for the Caltrain Early Investment Program to implement the Caltrain Advanced Signal System (CBOSS/PTC) project and improvements that allow the operation of electrified Caltrain service. The Caltrain Early Investment Program projects would prepare the corridor for a future blended system that supports Caltrain and high-speed rail service.

In light of this latest development, the TA considers it prudent to begin some planning and environmental work on possible grade separation projects in the Caltrain corridor to further support the future blended system.

SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
1250 San Carlos Ave. – P.O. Box 3006
San Carlos, CA 94070-1306 (650)508-6219

We are asking eligible sponsors to provide the following information by November 21, 2012 in a Letter of Interest:

1. A prioritized list of at-grade railroad crossings within your jurisdiction that would be a candidate for elimination, if there is more than one such crossing;
2. A proposed time frame for completion of the project(s), and the specific rationale for such time frame;
3. Discussion of safety and local traffic congestion concerns in the proposed project area;
4. Discussion of how the project(s) could support economic development and transit-oriented development in the proposed project area;
5. Discussion of other funding sources that can be secured to leverage Measure A funds for the project;
6. Demonstration of support from the city council and the community through a deliberative planning process

Please email the letter to chungc@samtrans.com. Information collected from these letters would better assist the TA in structuring the project selection process.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please feel free to call me at 650-508-6228 or Celia Chung, Interim Manager, Programming & Monitoring, at 650-508-6466.

Sincerely,

April Chan
Executive Officer, Planning & Development

SAN MATEO COUNTY
Transportation
Authority

2004 Transportation Expenditure Plan

- Developed with extensive public input
- Approved by the San Mateo County Transportation Authority, San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, each of the 20 cities within San Mateo County and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission

Estimated annual distribution percentage (based on 2004) and dollars to each City and the County are shown below:

	Allocation Percentage	Estimated Funding
Atherton	1.886	$ 6,365,250
Belmont	3.543	$ 11,957,625
Brisbane	0.818	$ 2,760,750
Burlingame	4.206	$ 14,195,250
Colma	0.299	$ 1,009,125
Daly City	10.413	$ 35,143,875
East Palo Alto	3.215	$ 10,850,625
Foster City	3.364	$ 11,353,500
Half Moon Bay	1.596	$ 5,386,500
Hillsborough	3.000	$ 10,125,000
Menlo Park	4.851	$ 16,372,125
Millbrae	2.917	$ 9,844,875
Pacifica	5.174	$ 17,462,250
Portola Valley	1.488	$ 5,022,000
Redwood City	9.612	$ 32,440,500
San Bruno	5.034	$ 16,989,750
San Carlos	4.271	$ 14,414,625
San Mateo	11.797	$ 39,814,875
South San Francisco	7.649	$ 25,815,375
Woodside	1.683	$ 5,680,125
County of San Mateo	13.184	$ 44,496,000
County Total	**100.000**	**$337,500,000**

D. Grade Separations

Project: *1. Rail Grade Separations*

Cost: $350 million. Sales tax contribution estimated at $225 million, State $125 million.

Sponsors: SamTrans, San Mateo County, Cities and Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board

Description: This project provides funding for the construction or upgrade of overpasses and underpasses (grade separations) along the Caltrain and Dumbarton rail lines. The Candidate Projects are listed below. Funds will not be adequate to construct or upgrade all Candidate Projects. The TA will determine Candidate Project selection and prioritization in conjunction with the project sponsors, based upon the California Public Utilities Commission formula and the desire of the City involved.

CANDIDATE GRADE SEPARATION PROJECTS

City	Street	City	Street
South San Francisco	Linden Avenue	San Mateo	25th Avenue
San Bruno	Scott Street	Redwood City	Whipple Avenue
San Bruno	San Bruno Avenue	Redwood City	Brewster Avenue
San Bruno	San Mateo Avenue	Redwood City	Broadway
San Bruno	Angus Avenue	Redwood City	Maple Street
Millbrae	Center Street	Redwood City	Main Street
Burlingame	Broadway	Redwood City	Chestnut Street
Burlingame	Oak Grove Avenue	Redwood City	Middlefield Road
Burlingame	North Lane	Redwood City	2nd Avenue
Burlingame	South Lane	Redwood City	5th Avenue
Burlingame	Howard Avenue	Atherton	Fair Oaks Lane
Burlingame	Bayswater Avenue	Atherton	Watkins Avenue
Burlingame	Peninsula Avenue	Menlo Park	Encinal Avenue
San Mateo	Villa Terrace	Menlo Park	Glenwood Avenue
San Mateo	Bellevue Avenue	Menlo Park	Oak Grove Avenue
San Mateo	1st Avenue	Menlo Park	Ravenswood
San Mateo	2nd Avenue	Menlo Park	Marsh Road
San Mateo	3rd Avenue	Menlo Park	Chilco Street
San Mateo	4th Avenue	Menlo Park	Willow Road SR 84
San Mateo	5th Avenue	East Palo Alto	University Avenue
San Mateo	9th Avenue		

CANDIDATE UPGRADE OF EXISTING GRADE SEPARATION PROJECTS

San Mateo	Poplar Avenue	San Mateo	Mt. Diablo Ave.
San Mateo	Santa Inez Avenue	San Mateo	Tilton Avenue
		Menlo Park	Highway 101

E. Pedestrian and Bicycle

Project: *1. Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities*

Cost: $70 million. Sales tax contribution estimated at $45 million. State $25 million.

Sponsors: Cities and County of San Mateo

Background Summary of Previous Council Sessions

Menlo Park Potential Caltrain Grade Separation

On June 2003, BKF Engineers, Planners and Surveyors (BKF) completed a preliminary grade separation study for the Caltrain railroad tracks and roadways in Menlo Park, appended in a link to this staff report. The study areas included grade separation at Ravenswood Avenue, Oak Grove, Glenwood, and Encinal Avenues. The preliminary study included the assumption of 4-tracks within Menlo Park and the tracks would be at-grade at both the north and south City limits. This preliminary study also included four alternatives consisting of road overpass, road underpass, trench, and split (rail over road) for the grade crossings in Menlo Park. The study included preliminary information regarding the impact of the alternatives within Menlo Park. The four alternatives were to be further evaluated and refined in future studies, and other potential alternatives were to be developed to the same level as the previous four.

The Council directed that the grade separations be nominated in a list of possible future projects to be considered for inclusion for funding under the proposed reauthorization of the San Mateo County Measure A sales tax for transportation improvements. At the time, Council supported the split grade separation, and directed staff to further evaluate the deep underpass, potential to close Encinal and Glenwood, evaluate aesthetic considerations, and continue public outreach. The staff report for this 2003 BKF study session is attached as Attachment C, Staff Report #03-101.

On October 19, 2004, Council received a supplemental grade separation feasibility study report, appended in link to this staff report, evaluating Council's concerns stated above. The supplemental study established that the deep underpass would have greater impacts and be more costly, and the closure of Encinal and Glenwood would not be practical. The prior studies resulted in furthering the City's knowledge of grade separations but due to funding limitations, not all aspects of the grade separations could be studied. Council did not make any recommendations at that point, and the motion included meeting with other cities and possibly state representatives. Several meetings were held with elected officials of Atherton, Palo Alto, Mountain View and Redwood City. At those meetings, it was clear that each city had different issues and conserns with grade separations. The staff report for this 2004 BKF Supplemental study session is attached as Attachment D, Staff Report #04-207.

On November 27, 2007, staff provided a comprehensive update to Council on the Caltrain Grade Separation Footprint Study, including the 2003 and 2004 Menlo Park grade separation studies. At that meeting, staff indicated additional studies were needed, since all previous studies ultimately did not result in the City selecting a preferred alternative, and the City has not taken a formal position on whether or not should pursue grade separations. In order for Menlo Park to be prepared for the next steps in evaluating the various alternatives, an additional study would be needed to address some of the different aspects the previous studies did not evaluate. More particularly, the additional study would provide Menlo Park the opportunity to evaluate some of the following issues not addressed previously include: 1) cost difference between grade separation alternatives; 2) better understanding of traffic patterns for the

various alternatives; 3) potential impacts associated with the various alternatives such as noise, aesthetics, and station configuration; and 4) evaluation of alternatives not included in the prior studies –a fully depressed train (trench) and a fully elevated train. These issues were also discussed at a Menlo Park and Town of Atherton City Council joint study session on January 29, 2008. The staff reports for these study sessions are attached as Attachment E – Staff Report #07-200, and Attachment F - Staff Report #08-014.

Since 2003, Caltrain has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the California High Speed Rail Authority for funding Early Investment Projects, such as the electrification of the Caltrain corridor along the Peninsula as well as Positive Train Control. Caltrain is also currently performing a service plan/operation study as well as traffic analysis of the at-grade intersections with the addition of high speed rail trains during the peak hour with shared tracks. Grade separations in Menlo Park may be a consideration for the at-grade crossings, depending on the impacts and results of the two studies. Caltrain is currently reviewing passing tracks with 4-tracks in some areas or potentially 3-tracks over a larger area, which may affect Menlo Park directly.

Recently, the State appropriated funding for the Caltrain Early Investment Program to implement the Caltrain Advanced Signal System Project to allow the operation of electrified Caltrain service. This project is intended to enhance the Caltrain system and would also be compatible with a future blended system that supports Caltrain and high-speed rail service.

TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

Council Meeting Date: June 10, 2003

Staff Report# 03-101

Study Session Agenda Item # 1

STUDY SESSION: Review Findings and Recommendations of Grade Separation Study Report

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The purpose of this study session is to review the findings and recommendations of the engineering feasibility study of alternatives for grade separating the City of Menlo Park's four public street grade crossings of the Caltrain rail line.

BACKGROUND

On July 10, 2001, the Menlo Park City Council authorized staff to obtain funding from the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA) to fund a study of grade separating the City's street crossings of the Caltrain rail line. Funds for this purpose were subsequently granted by the SMCTA and on July 16, 2002 the City Council authorized the feasibility study. The purpose of the grade separation feasibility study is to determine if there are more desirable ways of grade separating the streets from the tracks than were evident in 1990 when the City last performed a grade separation feasibility study.

The feasibility study was led by BKF Engineers/Surveyors/Planners. The engineering analysis is now completed. This study session is an opportunity for the Council to consider the technical work and findings in depth. At the Council's discretion, it can make decisions regarding any further actions with regard to grade separations at a future Council meeting with this matter agendized as a "regular business" item. The Council may wish to consider supporting grade separations as a regional project for the 2004 ballot to reauthorize Measure A. Approval of a Measure A reauthorization project list is agendized under regular business later this evening.

ANALYSIS

The Engineers Report on the project accompanies this staff report. Key findings and implications of the engineers analysis are summarized below.

The Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB)'s long range plan would operate the Caltrain service in a manner that will require a 4-track grade-separated system between San Jose and San Francisco. Even if the JPB's interest was solely expansion to a 4-track system, California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) regulations require that crossings involving four tracks be grade separated.

The above circumstances hold two important implications for Menlo Park. One is that grade separations are eventually likely to be built in Menlo Park without any requirement of substantial City funding toward their construction and without City government taking the lead to initiate the project development. The second is that the City has the choice of proactively planning the form of the future rail system through the center of the City, or

attempting to influence the design at such time as the Menlo Park segment becomes a priority for the JPB. The City also has the choice of opposing development of grade separations and/or any additional rail tracks through Menlo Park.

Theoretically, there are six ways to grade separate the roadway crossings of the tracks:

1) Leave the roads at grade and depress the tracks below the roadways;
2) Leave the tracks at grade and elevate the roadways over the tracks;
3) Leave the tracks at grade and depress the roadways beneath the tracks;
4) Partially elevate the tracks and partially depress the roadways;
5) Partially depress the tracks and partially elevate the roadways;
6) Leave the roadways at grade and elevate the tracks above the roadways.

Of these, option "4" of partially elevating the tracks and partially depressing the roadways appears the most feasible from considerations of community benefits and impacts, constructability, right-of-way requirements and costs. A brief evaluation of the other options is below.

Evaluation of Other Options

A key consideration is that vertical clearance requirements are different, depending on whether the rails pass above the roadways or the roadways pass above the rails. When the roadways pass beneath, the vertical separation necessary between the running surface of the road and the top of the rails is 20 feet. Where the rails pass beneath the roadways, the necessary vertical separation between the surface of the road and the top of rails is about 30 feet. This differential makes it much more difficult to maintain linkages to nearby roadways and driveways and to avoid acquisition of private property due to severance of access or in order to maintain access to other affected properties.

Depressing the rails completely below grade (Option 1) is not feasible because of constraints at the San Francisquito Creek crossing (and potentially at the Atherton limit also). Option 5, a variant of Option 1 involving a partially depressed railway, would be far more costly than other alternatives because of the extent of excavated material, the extent of construction of retaining walls, the need to provide extensive drainage systems and the more extensive need to relocate utilities. Furthermore, it would not achieve the appealing results commonly expected because the walls of the trench structures would project above ground and be topped by high fences, creating a continuous (except at the street crossings) physical and visual barrier across the community.

Option 2, roadway overpasses with the road left at grade, is not feasible because the extreme height (and consequent length) of the structures necessary would create extensive severance of access to roads as well as public and private property, resulting in the need for extensive acquisition of private property. All four of the long, high structures would be visually intrusive – as high as a 3-story commercial building – and would have forms difficult to soften with landscape. In addition, the overcrossing at Ravenswood would not reach grade until west of El Camino Real, necessitating undesirable retaining walls between the street and the sidewalks on the El Camino and Menlo Avenue frontages near their intersection with Ravenswood.

Option 3, leaving the rails at grade and depressing the roadways beneath them, is essentially a refinement of the rejected 1990 plans and exhibits the same fundamental

difficulty. Because of the necessary depth of the undercrossing and consequent length of the approach slopes to it, there would be extensive severance of access to roads and public and private facilities. This would necessitate extensive acquisition of property to compensate for loss of access or to restore access for other properties and facilities.

Option 6, leaving the roads at grade and fully elevating the rails, is significantly more costly than Option 4 and exaggerates the least desirable features of that plan. Its greater height and mass would be a greater visual obstruction and a form more difficult to soften with architectural treatments and with landscape. Its greater height would also increase the sense of invasion of privacy and concern for broadcast of undesirable train noise. Its construction would also involve transport of considerably more materials than Option 4.

Implementation of Preferred Plan

As previously noted, the preferred alternative is Option 4, which would partially elevate the tracks and partially depress the roadways. This option, or any concept that involves changing the grade of the rails, would involve construction of all four grade separations as a single project. A construction period of about two years would be required.

Construction sequence for the preferred alternative would be as follows:

1) Temporary tracks to maintain rail operations during the construction period would be built at grade, west of the existing rail line.
2) Temporary road crossings would be constructed alongside the existing crossings.
3) New structures would be constructed on the existing road alignments and the rail gradient would be altered along the existing main line (while rail operations continue on the temporary tracks).
4) When the new structures and the alterations to the mainline rail grade are complete, traffic will be shifted to the new structures on the original roadway alignments (with impaired vertical clearance), the gaps in the mainline that provided the temporary roadway crossings will be filled in, rail operations will be shifted back to the now grade-separated mainline, and the temporary construction tracks will be removed.
5) One at a time, the grade separation structures will be finished out to full vertical clearance.

The grade separation project would involve acquisition of private property for right-of–way in two relatively inconsequential strips. One would be an approximately 10 foot wide strip within the City's Plan Lines for the extension of Garwood Way through to Dairy Lane, which is an essentially undevelopable area of land. The other is an approximately 10 foot strip paralleling the tracks along the current east fence line of the Menlo Station complex, essentially the strip between the parking area and the fence line. The need for these right-of-way acquisitions is to provide land to achieve the JPB's objective of a four-track mainline; it is not a consequence of which grade separation project option is chosen.

Developing the four track mainline and the temporary tracks to maintain rail operations during its construction will necessitate some temporary, minor construction easements on private property. However, construction needs pose a significant issue within the train

station area. The former depot and rail freight buildings (now occupied by the Chamber of Commerce and the model railroaders respectively) are historic structures. If the structures can be relocated and preserved within the station complex, consequences of right-of-way needs in the station area would be minimized. However, if the buildings must be maintained in their exact locations, there would be significant consequences in the construction period and thereafter. In that case, the temporary tracks to maintain rail operations during construction would have to be in Merrill Street in the block between Santa Cruz and Oak Grove Avenues. This block would have to be closed to motor vehicle traffic for most of the construction period, with obvious impacts on local circulation and for businesses that depend on Merrill Street for access. Also, because the mainline tracks would need to be offset to the east to leave the depot building undisturbed on its present location, Alma Street would be significantly narrowed permanently in the block between Ravenswood and Oak Grove, and would be only wide enough to sustain one-way traffic in that block. This is an issue in the case of all grade separation alternatives that would change the elevation of the tracks, not just the preferred Option 4.

Construction of the widened rail line and the temporary surface trackage would potentially involve significant loss of mature trees in the corridor. Modern technology makes it possible to transplant or to uproot, store and replant large trees with a high rate of survival. This technology could allow some existing trees to be preserved and thereby, to develop a project landscaped with a mature tree canopy immediately upon completion.

Grade separations would eliminate the principal source of disturbing rail-related noise concerns in this area; the sounding of train horns and crossing warning bells. Raising the grade of the rails (as in the preferred alternative) would change (broaden) the area over which the sounds of engine noises and of the passage of steel wheels on steel rails projects. However, acoustic studies indicate the changes would not be at levels that would be disturbing or even noticeable to the normal person. Ultimately, electrification may eliminate engine noise. Including noise mitigation in the project (such as extending retaining walls above the train undercarriage level) could potentially limit the propagation of wheel-on-track sounds.

Elevating the grade of the rails poses issues of privacy intrusion and view interruptions for persons living close to the tracks. The poses a trade-off since those most directly impacted by the privacy/view issue are the same people who benefit most through the elimination of train horn and crossing warning bell noise.

Preliminary findings of the work were presented to the public at a public meeting on December 10, 2002. In advance of that session, which had an attendance estimated in excess of 150 individuals, all households and non-residential addresses in Menlo Park were mailed invitations to the meeting. On April 10, 2003 a special joint session of the Planning and Transportation Commissions was held to review the study findings.

Next steps

The study has, at this point, fully carried out the Council's charge of providing engineering feasibility information as to how grade separation of the City street crossings of the tracks could be carried out and what the consequences might be. If the Council wishes to take further action, it could agendize this matter at a subsequent meeting and consider the following steps, many of which are not mutually exclusive:

- Direct staff to continue with a public outreach process in order to disseminate information about the potential project and to gauge public opinion in a manner responsive to Policy II-A-18 of the General Plan (see Policy Issues below).

- Direct the Planning and Transportation Commissions to: consider the study findings in the update of the General Plan; incorporate the study recommendations in the General Plan update or initiate an amendment to the current General Plan to incorporate the study recommendations, in advance of the General Plan update process.

- Direct staff to seek funding for further engineering, planning and urban design of the project from the JPB and SMCTA and, upon obtaining funds, to proceed with such studies.

- Request that the JPB prepare a "Project Report" (more detailed railroad design engineering) in coordination with the planning/urban design studies that the City might lead.

- Request that SMCTA include (or not include) funding for the Menlo Park grade separations as a "Caltrain project" in the Measure A reauthorization. (This particular action could be taken at the "regular business" item on Measure A Extension that is included on tonight's agenda.)

- Take no further action at this time.

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

Since the JPB's plans now envision a four-track system on the entire route from San Jose to San Francisco and since PUC regulations require that crossings involving four tracks be grade separated, the grade separation project has essentially become a Caltrain improvement issue. The City's reasonable expectation in the matter is that the cost to implement grade separation of the Caltrain line through Menlo Park, and to plan and design it, would be fully funded through reauthorization of the San Mateo County Measure A sales tax plus state and possibly federal funds, without significant contribution by the City. If the City desires to undertake further engineering and urban design studies of the concepts, these could likely be funded (including City staff time to coordinate the project) through current or future Measure A regional monies specially allocated to the City for this purpose (as distinct from Measure A monies allocated to the City for its discretionary use).

The dedication of staff time to the grade separation matter will impact the availability of staff to address other community transportation issues.

POLICY ISSUES

General Plan policy 11-A-18 states that the City shall conduct a thorough feasibility study of the grade separation projects included in the Measure A sales tax expenditure plan, including all impacts of such proposed projects and alternatives to the proposed projects, and shall support only those grade separations that provide sufficient traffic and rail

service benefits to offset potential negative impacts to the community. The City shall evaluate all alternatives to any grade separations and shall attempt to gauge public opinion, possibly through an advisory election, before proceeding with a grade separation project. Any approval of a grade separation project shall include findings specifying why the alternatives are not suitable and the reasons for proceeding with the grade separation project.

Given that it is the JPB's intent to develop a four-track operation and that PUC code requires grade separation of crossings involving four tracks, the City may wish to revisit this policy and determine if the demonstration of need has been fulfilled.

Other General Plan policies relating to bicyclist and pedestrian access, public transit, roadway circulation, public safety and emergency services do not directly address the subject of grade separations but can be interpreted in a manner supportive of the grade separation concept.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Grade separation of existing grade crossings and expansion of trackage on commuter rail operations are both activities that are statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act. No action currently contemplated by the City in relation to the recommended project would require environmental review. Ultimately, if the JPB and the City were to adopt plans that specifically committed to relocating the historic structures that are in the station complex in order to preserve them, specific documentation related to historic preservation would be required. At the present stage of project development, issues regarding the manner of preservation of the historic buildings are merely being identified and no decisions are being made as to whether the structures will be preserved in place or preserved by being relocated within the station complex.

Dan Smith Jr. Transportation Consultant	Jamal Rahimi Transportation Manager

PUBLIC NOTICE: Public Notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Council Meeting Date: October 19, 2004
Staff Report #: F-1
Agenda #: 04-207

REGULAR BUSINESS: Review of Grade Separation Feasibility Study Findings and Recommendations and Consideration of Further Potential Actions on the Matter

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RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Council consider the findings of the Grade Separation Feasibility Study and take the following actions:

1. Affirm that the "Split" and "Underpass" alternatives are the preferred alternatives for grade separations to be considered for further study work.
2. Request that the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB) prepare a "project study report" for all four Menlo Park crossings (a more detailed railroad engineering study) in coordination with the City's planning/urban design studies.
3. Consider and give staff direction on the Transportation Commission recommendation to include the City of Palo Alto and Town of Atherton in the next level of project development.

BACKGROUND

Over the past decade, rail traffic on the Caltrain system has increased by roughly one-third. Over the next decade, rail traffic is planned to increase by another ten to twenty percent over current levels. The growth in rail traffic has increased the disruption to east-west travel, raised emergency response concerns and heightened complaints about train horn noise. These considerations made a reexamination of grade separation possibilities timely and appropriate.

In 1990, the City conducted a preliminary feasibility study of constructing grade separations between the Caltrain rail alignment and Ravenswood, Oak Grove, Glenwood and Encinal Avenues. In some cases, the 1990 designs have been rendered obsolete by subsequent development. In other cases, the 1990 designs involved awkward treatments for bicyclist and pedestrian movements and awkward connections to surrounding streets and property accesses.

Given the above considerations, it seemed appropriate for the City to pursue an updated design feasibility study for grade separations. Doing the feasibility study does not commit the City to actually constructing any grade separations; it simply provides Menlo Park with an up-to-date understanding of what feasible alternative design configurations would entail.

On July 1, 2001, the City Council authorized staff to apply to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority for funds to conduct a feasibility study of grade separations at Ravenswood, Oak Grove, Glenwood and Encinal Avenues from the Caltrain rail line and, upon receipt of the Transportation Authority funding commitment, to develop a work scope and solicit consultant proposals for conducting the feasibility study. In October 2001, the Transportation Authority authorized an allocation of $188,000 to Menlo Park for the purpose of funding such a study.

On July 16, 2002, the City Council authorized the City Manager to enter into an agreement in the amount of $195,000 with BKF Engineers, Surveyors and Planners to conduct a feasibility study of grade separations at Ravenswood, Oak Grove, Glenwood and Encinal Avenues from the Caltrain rail line.

On June 10, 2003, the City Council held a study session to review the findings and recommendations of the engineering feasibility study of alternatives for grade separating the City of Menlo Park's four public street crossings of Caltrain. The options included in this study were:

- A "Trench" Alternative, which would lower the tracks and keep the roadway at existing grade;
- An "Overpass" Alternative, which would raise the roadway and keep the tracks at existing grade;
- An "Underpass" Alternative, which would lower the roadway and keep the tracks at existing grade; and
- A "Split" Alternative, which would partially lower the roadway and partially raise the tracks.

Following the June 10 study session, acting in regular session on the same date, the Council directed that the grade separations be nominated in a list of possible future projects to be considered for inclusion for funding under the proposed reauthorization of the San Mateo County Measure A sales tax for transportation improvements. Under the current Measure A reauthorization expenditure plan, $225,000,000 has been programmed for grade separation projects throughout San Mateo County. The crossings within the City of Menlo Park are eligible for this funding along with all other at grade railroad crossings on the Caltrain system. Including funding for Menlo Park's grade crossings in Measure A keeps the City's options open if it chooses to pursue grade separations in the future. The reauthorization of Measure A goes to the voters of San Mateo County in November 2004 for approval.

On September 9, 2003, the City Council reviewed and considered the findings of the study in which staff recommended as the preferred design the Split Alternative, which involves partially elevating the grade of the rails and partially depressing the grade of the streets. Upon conclusion of its deliberations, the Council directed staff to do the following:

1. Continue to consider the Underpass Alternative as well as the Split Alternative.
2. Consider the practicality of closing Encinal Avenue and Glenwood Avenue at the railroad tracks to possibly reduce the scale of the project.
3. Evaluate aesthetic considerations to make the project visually unobtrusive.

4. Conduct further public outreach.
5. Prepare more tangible examples and graphic materials for presentation to the public.

ANALYSIS

The purpose of the current agenda item is to provide Council with the opportunity to provide formal direction as to what further actions should be taken with regard to the grade separation matter. If and when high speed rail is implemented, grade separations would likely be required in Menlo Park. The City of Menlo Park's efforts to date in exploring design options and gathering public input would be helpful in influencing the future course of action regarding the grade separation project.

Monies to fund grade separations in Menlo Park are not likely to be available in the near term future unless the reauthorization of Measure A and/or the Statewide High Speed Rail bond issue are approved by the voters. The reauthorization of Measure A will be brought before the voters in November 2004. The State legislature and the High Speed Rail Authority intend to place on the ballot in November 2006 a statewide measure to authorize bonds to fund the project through design and first stages of construction. The earliest that actual construction funding could be available would be 2007 or 2008.

Split vs. Underpass Alternatives

The work to refine the Split Alternative focused on minimizing the extent to which the rails are elevated. Based on this additional work, it appears that it would be practical to limit the raising of the track to about seven feet as compared to the ten-foot rise indicated in the initial reports.

Staff has completed a refined assessment of the Underpass Alternative in which the tracks remain at their present grade and the roads are depressed deep enough to pass beneath the tracks. In so doing, staff has identified several issues associated with this design. Because the underpasses go 20 feet below grade, they involve long sloping approaches and long, high retaining walls, which could be considered to be unappealing in appearance. This is illustrated in Appendix B of the consultant report (Attachment A). The long, deep approaches and retaining walls necessitate either severing the connections to some cross streets and private property accesses or extensive regrading of the cross streets and extensive reconfigurations of private property accesses. In addition, solutions to maintain cross street and private property connections compound problematic pedestrian linkages inherent in the deep underpass alternative.

The analysis contained in Appendix A of the consultant report describes the impacts of Underpass and Split design alternatives on the roadway system and the adjacent properties (Attachment A). Based on the results of this study, it appears that the impact on properties around the existing at grade crossings will be greater with the Underpass Alternative than with the Split Alternative. Some of the negative impacts associated with the Split Alternative are the visual impacts of the elevated tracks and removal of trees because of the embankments required to raise the tracks.

Staff recommends that both the Split and Underpass alternatives be studied further. Various options for street connections are available under each alternative. For example, streets parallel to the tracks such as Alma and Merrill could pass over, connect to, or become dead ends at their connections to Ravenswood Avenue and Oak Grove Avenue. Numerous possibilities exist that will significantly affect street circulation and land uses in the area. A more thorough analysis could better identify the advantages and disadvantages of various street connection options under both the Split and Underpass alternatives.

Closing Encinal and Glenwood Crossings

If the Encinal and Glenwood crossings were closed to limit the scale of the grade separation project, it is estimated that approximately 11,000 vehicle trips per day would be shifted to the crossings at Oak Grove Avenue and Watkins Avenue in Atherton. This would introduce significant additional traffic impacts on the adjoining residential areas. Reducing the number of rail crossings could have adverse consequences for both emergency services and ordinary circulation when a collision, breakdown, major incident or ordinary maintenance event obstructs one of the remaining crossings. Bicyclists and pedestrians who now rely on the Glenwood and Encinal crossings may be forced to make out-of-direction travel to use the remaining crossings or may resort to illegal and unsafe trespass crossings at or near the former street crossings. Based on the above considerations staff recommends that all four crossings be studied for grade separation.

Public Outreach

Staff has conducted focused public outreach regarding the impacts of the project on the residential and commercial properties along Oak Grove Avenue, Glenwood Avenue and Encinal Avenue. Business and commercial centers along the railway were invited to a meeting sponsored by the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce on August 5, 2004 to discuss the conceptual design plans and graphic materials. All the property owners and tenants of the properties along this corridor, along with other interested parties, were also invited to attend a Transportation Commission meeting held on September 8, 2004. At this meeting, a detailed analysis of the Split and Underpass alternatives was presented. The station layout for both alternatives was also presented.

The issues and concerns raised by the members of the community regarding Caltrain grade separation are summarized below. Many residents believe that with elevated tracks their quality of life and property values will be negatively impacted. They attribute the negative impacts to the visual intrusion of the raised tracks into the neighborhoods and added noise due to higher elevation of the tracks. Residents are concerned about the loss of heritage trees along the railroad right-of-way. They are also concerned about the loss of privacy due to raised tracks and exposure of their homes and back yards to the commuters. Some residents are concerned about impact on access to their properties or total loss of their properties. Affected business and property owners are concerned about the impacts to their business and loss of income during construction. They are also concerned about the permanent impacts of the project on their property due to limited or severed access.

Additional Graphic Materials

In response to the Council's request for additional graphics to illustrate the different options, the City retained Callander Associates. The firm developed a layout for the Menlo Park Caltrain Station under both alternative design concepts. The results of this work are presented in Appendix B of the consultant report (Attachment A). In both instances, the plans call for the relocation of the three existing buildings on the Caltrain Station site because of the need to widen passenger platforms. The main depot building would be moved closer to Santa Cruz Avenue to establish a focal point for the station that could be seen from the Downtown area. The model railroad building would be moved to the north next to Oak Grove Avenue, away from the more heavily traveled areas, while the bike shelter would be moved slightly south.

Possible Next Steps

The Transportation Commission recommended the formation of a subcommittee comprised of Transportation Commissioners, Planning Commissioners and City Council Members to open a dialogue with the Town of Atherton and City of Palo Alto. With the Council's approval, staff would approach senior staff of the neighboring jurisdictions to explore their interests and concerns regarding this issue. If there is an interest in neighboring jurisdictions, staff would define a more specific process where information could be shared and common interests could be explored further. Staff would then return to the Council with the results of this effort in order to seek direction from the Council regarding a further course of action in addressing the Transportation Commission's recommendation.

Summary of Questions for Council Discussion

The issues before the Council for its review and consideration are as follows:

- Should the City receive the grade separation report and take no further action at this time?
- Should the City select the Split and Underpass alternatives as the preferred alternatives for grade separation for further study?
- Should the City request the JPB to prepare a "project study report" for all four crossings in Menlo Park?
- Should the City apply for new grant funding to further analyze the impacts of grade separations in Menlo Park and prepare urban design concepts for the Caltrain Station area?
- Should the City involve the City of Palo Alto and Town of Atherton in the next level of project development?

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

The study grant is now fully expended. The City's expectation is that the cost to implement grade separation of the Caltrain line through Menlo Park, including planning and design, would be fully funded by Caltrain. Likely funding sources include the reauthorization of the San Mateo County Measure A sales tax, State and/or Federal funds, and, potentially, statewide high speed rail funds. If the City desires to undertake

further engineering and urban design studies of the concepts, JPB/SMCTA staff informally indicate that they would consider funding additional studies (including City staff time to coordinate the project) through current or future Measure A regional monies.

The dedication of staff time to the grade separation matter will impact the availability of staff to address other community transportation issues.

POLICY ISSUES

The current Menlo Park General Plan acknowledges the possibility of grade separation of the rail crossings, but takes a non-committal stance toward them. Policy II-A-18 states that, "the City shall conduct a thorough feasibility study of the grade separation projects included in the Measure A sales tax expenditure plan, including all impacts of such proposed projects and alternatives to the proposed projects, and shall support only those grade separations that provide sufficient traffic and rail service benefits to offset potential negative impacts to the community. The City shall evaluate all alternatives to any grade separations and shall attempt to gauge public opinion, possibly through an advisory election, before proceeding with a grade separation project. Any approval of a grade separation project shall include findings specifying why the alternatives are not suitable and the reasons for proceeding with the grade separation project."

The current study addresses many of the items raised in Policy II-18-A. Staff feels that additional studies would be consistent with the direction provided by the General Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This project consists of a feasibility study. No action currently contemplated by the City in relation to this study would require environmental review.

Jamal Rahimi Transportation Manager	Kent Steffens Director of Public Works

PUBLIC NOTICE: Public Notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

ATTACHMENT: **Consultant Report**

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Council Meeting Date: November 27, 2007

Staff Report #: 07-200

Agenda Item #: Study Session

STUDY SESSION: Review of the Caltrain Grade Separation Footprint Study and Prior City Studies of Possible Grade Separations with Caltrain Tracks and the Roadways of Ravenswood Avenue, Oak Grove Avenue, Glenwood Avenue, and Encinal Avenue

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The purpose of the study session is to provide information to City Council on the Grade Separation Footprint Study performed by Caltrain, and the previous grade separation study performed by the City in 2003-04. No council action is required.

BACKGROUND

At the request of Council Members Boyle and Robinson, the scope of a potential study session on Caltrain grade separations was placed on the Council's October 16, 2007 meeting agenda for discussion. Council directed staff to conduct a study session to educate Council Members on prior studies conducted by Menlo Park and to invite representatives from Caltrain to present information on its more recent Grade Separation Footprint Study. Council specifically indicated that the study session should be educational and it would not be taking a position on grade separations as part of the study session. It further directed staff to coordinate with the Town of Atherton to schedule a joint session on grade separations in January and to let Atherton know when the Menlo Park study session was scheduled so its council members and staff could attend if interested. Atherton has been informed of the November 27 grade separation study session.

The City obtained funding for a grade separation study from the San Mateo County Transportation Authority in July of 2002. The City retained BKF Engineers of Redwood City to conduct the study and worked with Caltrain staff throughout the process. The City's study evaluated four basic alternatives:

- A "Trench" Alternative, which would lower the tracks and raise the roadways
- An "Overpass" Alternative, which would raise the roadway and keep the tracks at existing grade
- An "Underpass" Alternative, which would lower the roadway and keep the tracks at existing grade
- A "Split" Alternative, which would partially lower the roadway and partially raise the tracks

The Council first considered the findings of the Grade Separation Study at a study session on June 10, 2003 (Staff Report 03-101, Attachment A).

The Grade Separation Study was brought back for Council discussion and action on September 9, 2003 (Staff Report 03-142, Attachment B). At that meeting Council directed staff to continue further studies of the "Split" Alternative and "Underpass" Alternative and to develop graphics that were more easily understood by the public. It also gave direction to consider the practicality of closing Encinal Avenue and Glenwood Avenue at the railroad tracks rather than pursuing grade separations.

Supplemental information on the Grade Separation Study was presented to Council on October 19, 2004 (Staff Report 04-207, Attachment C). At that meeting Council gave direction to convene meetings of neighboring cities to determine if there were common interests among the neighboring jurisdictions of Atherton, Palo Alto, Mountain View, and Redwood City. Several meetings were held with elected officials of these neighboring jurisdictions. Each city had different issues with grade separations depending on the configuration of roadways and existing parcels around potential grade separation locations. No formal recommendations or actions were taken as a result of these group meetings.

ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study session is to educate Council Members and the public about potential options for grade separations in Menlo Park. City staff will present information from prior studies on grade separation alternatives completed in 2004. Representatives from Caltrain will present information from a more recent study that evaluated grade separations throughout San Mateo County.

The original goal of the City's grade separation study was to evaluate various alternatives and for City Council to adopt a preferred method for grade separations in Menlo Park. With this information the City could have actively pursued funding for grade separation design and construction. Another potential reason to establish a preferred alternative was to attempt to influence the State if the California High Speed Rail Project is approved by voters and grade separations are required in Menlo Park. Alternatively, the City Council could have determined from the study document that the impacts with certain alternatives were too severe and therefore the City should take a position to prevent grade separations from being constructed in Menlo Park.

The prior grade separation study ultimately did not result in the City selecting a preferred alternative and the City has not taken a formal position on whether or not it should actively pursue grade separations. The prior study resulted in furthering the City's knowledge of grade separations but due to funding limitations, not all aspects of grade separations could be studied. Most notably, some of the information that was not included in prior studies but may be useful includes:

- A study of the noise impacts of the various alternatives
- Cost estimates for the various alternatives
- A study of the traffic impacts resulting from changes in how roadways are reconfigured as a result of grade separations and whether changes in roadway configuration (other than as shown in the study materials prepared to date) could reduce the impacts

Next steps would be to conduct a joint City Council meeting regarding grade separations with the Town of Atherton as directed by Council. Additional funding for further studies in Menlo Park may be available from the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA). These sources would be reviewed if further studies are pursued following the joint meeting with Atherton.

In accordance with discussion by Council Members when the scope of this study session was being developed, staff will briefly discuss peripheral topics that were not covered by the earlier grade separation report. These include:

- Potential impacts of grade separation to a future bike/pedestrian tunnel alignment between Ravenswood Avenue and the San Francisquito Creek
- "Top Down" construction methods as a way to potentially reduce construction impacts of an underpass alternative
- Quiet Zones – opportunities and challenges
- A tunneling option – information from the California High Speed Rail Environmental Impact Report

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

The City's Fiscal Year 2007-08 adopted budget does not include funding for further studies of grade separations in Menlo Park. If the Council chooses to continue evaluating grade separation alternatives or develop new policies around grade separations in 2007-08, staff resources would need to be shifted from other approved transportation division projects. Additional work on grade separations could be considered for Fiscal Year 2008-09 through the annual project priority process.

POLICY ISSUES

A review of potential grade separations is consistent with the City's current General Plan. Policy II-A-18 states that, "the City shall conduct a thorough feasibility study of grade separation projects included on the Measure A sales tax expenditure plan, including all impacts of such proposed projects and alternatives to the proposed projects, and shall support only those grade separations that provide sufficient traffic and rail service benefits to offset potential negative impacts to the community. The City shall evaluate all alternatives to any grade separations and shall attempt to gauge public opinion, possibly through an advisory election, before proceeding with a grade separation project. Any approval of a grade separation project shall include findings specifying why the alternatives are not suitable and the reasons for proceeding with the grade separation project."

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

As a feasibility study, review under the California Environmental Quality Act is not required at this time.

_____
Kent Steffens
Director of Public Works

PUBLIC NOTICE: Public Notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

ATTACHMENT:
A. Staff report 03-101 dated June 10, 2003 with Grade Separation Study Report
B. Staff report 03-142 dated September 9, 2003
C. Staff report 04-207 dated October 19, 2004 with Grade Separation Feasibility Study Supplement

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Council Meeting Date: January 29, 2008
Staff Report #: 08-014

Agenda Item #: C1

STUDY SESSION: Discussion of Potential Caltrain Grade Separation Alternatives with the Town of Atherton

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The purpose of the study session is discuss potential Caltrain grade separation alternatives with members of the Atherton City Council so that issues of common interest can be explored. No City Council action is required.

BACKGROUND

At the request of Council Members John Boyle and Heyward Robinson, the scope of a possible study session on Caltrain grade separations was placed on the City Council's October 16, 2007 meeting agenda for discussion. At that meeting, Council directed staff to conduct a study session to educate Council Members on prior studies conducted by Menlo Park and to invite representatives from Caltrain to present information on its more recent Grade Separation Footprint Study. The Council further directed staff to let Atherton know when the Menlo Park study session was scheduled so its council members and staff could attend if interested and to coordinate with the Town of Atherton to schedule a joint session on grade separations in January.

The Menlo Park study session on Caltrain grade separations was held on November 27, 2007. Staff Report 07-200 from that meeting is included as Attachment A (without the report attachments). It provides additional background on the prior grade separation study conducted by the City of Menlo Park and the alternatives that were considered.

ANALYSIS

The original goal of the City's grade-separation study was to evaluate alternatives and for the City Council to select a preferred method for grade separations in Menlo Park. With this information, the City could have actively pursued funding for grade-separation design and construction. Alternatively, the City Council could have determined from the study that the impacts of certain alternatives were too severe and therefore the City should take a position to oppose grade separations being constructed in Menlo Park. Another reason to choose a preferred alternative would have been to attempt to influence the State if the California High Speed Rail Project is approved by voters and grade separations are required in Menlo Park. The prior grade-separation study ultimately did not, however, result in the City selecting a preferred alternative, and the City has not taken a formal position on whether it should actively pursue grade separations.

Because of the close proximity of existing at-grade crossings in Menlo Park and the Town of Atherton, grade-separation alternatives that involve either raising or lowering the elevation of the railroad tracks will affect the elevation of the tracks in the adjacent jurisdiction as well. For example, if Menlo Park preferred raising the tracks to accomplish grade separations, the tracks would also have to be elevated through much of Atherton. This does not, however, appear to be the case in the jurisdictions north of Atherton and south of Menlo Park. Menlo Park could either raise or lower the tracks at Ravenswood Avenue and still meet the existing grade of the San Francisquito Creek rail crossing and, therefore, not affect Palo Alto. Atherton could either raise or lower the elevation at its Fair Oaks Lane crossing and still meet the elevation at the next crossing to the north — Fifth Avenue in unincorporated San Mateo County (which is already grade-separated). For alternatives that leave the railroad tracks at their current elevation, each crossing can be treated independently and even constructed at different times.

The purpose of this joint study session is to explore common interests between Menlo Park and the Town of Atherton as each jurisdiction evaluates the alternatives for railroad grade separations. Staff will present background on prior grade-separation studies and provide additional information on the following topics:

- railroad track elevations for a fully lowered-train alternative.
- cost considerations resulting from the impacts to adjacent properties.
- relationship of the California High Speed Train to local grade separations.
- currently planned Caltrain safety improvements.
- need for further grade-separation studies.

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

The City's Fiscal Year 2007-08 adopted budget does not include funding for further studies of grade separations in Menlo Park. If the Council chooses to continue evaluating grade-separation alternatives or develop new policies around grade separations in 2007-08, staff resources would need to be shifted from other approved transportation division projects. Council could instead choose to consider additional work on grade separations in Fiscal Year 2008-09 as part of the annual project priority-setting process now getting underway.

Additional funding for further studies in Menlo Park may be available from the San Mateo County Transportation Authority. These sources would be reviewed if further studies are pursued following the joint meeting with Atherton.

POLICY ISSUES

A review of potential grade separations is consistent with the City's current General Plan. Policy II-A-18 states that, "the City shall conduct a thorough feasibility study of grade separation projects included on the Measure A sales tax expenditure plan, including all impacts of such proposed projects and alternatives to the proposed

projects, and shall support only those grade separations that provide sufficient traffic and rail service benefits to offset potential negative impacts to the community. The City shall evaluate all alternatives to any grade separations and shall attempt to gauge public opinion, possibly through an advisory election, before proceeding with a grade separation project. Any approval of a grade separation project shall include findings specifying why the alternatives are not suitable and the reasons for proceeding with the grade separation project."

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A review under the California Environmental Quality Act is not required at this time.

_____
Kent Steffens
Director of Public Works

PUBLIC NOTICE: Public Notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

ATTACHMENT: A. Staff Report 07-200, dated November 27, 2007, without attachments. (All attachments are available on the City website.)

KIRSTEN KEITH
MAYOR

PETER OHTAKI
MAYOR PRO TEM

RICHARD CLINE
COUNCIL MEMBER

ANDY COHEN
COUNCIL MEMBER

KELLY FERGUSSON
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November 21, 2012

San Mateo County Transportation Authority
Att: Celia Chung
1250 San Carlos Avenue
P.O. Box 3006
San Carlos, CA 94070

Subject: San Mateo County Transportation Authority Grade Separation Letter of Interest

Dear Ms. Chung:

The City of Menlo Park is respectfully submitting this letter of interest for "Grade Separation," Project(s) to be considered in the SMCTA funding allocation for alternatives analysis, preliminary design and initial environmental analysis for the "New Measure A," Grade Separation Program call for projects.

Menlo Park is in a unique position, because our community has grade separation projects for the Caltrain corridor, and the Dumbarton Rail corridor, resulting in eight potential grade separation projects overall. Menlo Park is prioritizing the Caltrain corridor, since the Dumbarton line will not be fully active for a number of years. We appreciate a future discussion of the Dumbarton rail crossings and potential grade separation alternatives would be appropriate when the project has a clearer picture of its scope and timing.

Currently, two tracks pass through Menlo Park on the Caltrain mainline. The City Council supports two tracks at or below grade for the future Caltrain blended system with High Speed Rail. The City has previously completed grade separation studies, which assumed a four-track system, which limited options for grade separation. Given what we now know about the enormous impact of a four-track system, the Council only supports options, which provide for a two-track system. A two-track system:

- Fits well with the blended approach that Caltrain and High Speed Rail have committed to;
- Provides more grade separation options;
- Reduces the infrastructure impact on our community.

Menlo Park has approved a “Statement of Principles” regarding rail within the City and is included Attachment A to this letter. The Statement set out an intent to “protect and enhance the character of Menlo Park and maximize the local benefits and the long-term potential of rail.” Council has also clarified its position in a “Council Position Summary” statement opposing any elevated tracks within Menlo Park and only supports an at or below grade option for rail with two tracks. These approved documents clearly state the desire of Menlo Park for any grade separation project. The “Council Position Summary Statement” is included at Attachment B.

The City Council approved sending a letter of interest to SMCTA prioritizing the intersection of Ravenswood Avenue. This intersection is close to El Camino Real, which is a Priority Development Area, and has high traffic volumes. In order to develop the best alternative for Ravenswood, an alternatives analysis that includes all the crossings in Menlo Park needs to be completed. The alternatives analysis would be the first step in the environmental process to develop the preferred alternative. Ravenswood should be placed as a top priority for inclusion in the “New Measure A Grade Separation Funding Program” due to the high traffic volumes, closely spaced intersections, and heavy interaction of various modes of travel.

The following information answers the specific questions requested to be included in the letter of interest:

1. *A prioritized list of at-grade railroad crossings within your jurisdiction that would be a candidate for elimination, if there is more than one such crossing;*

   As stated earlier in the letter, Menlo Park is only requesting consideration for Ravenswood Avenue at this time. A full alternatives analysis focusing on at or below grade options for the Caltrain corridor including an alternatives analysis of the other crossings in Menlo Park needs to be part of the environmental process in order to evaluate the preferred alternative for Ravenswood Avenue.

2. *A proposed time frame for completion of the project(s), and the specific rationale for such time frame;*

   There is not enough information to propose a time frame for completion of a grade separation project at this time. Should funding become available in the “New Measure A Grade Separation Funding Program,” for the Ravenswood Avenue grade separation, the project could begin construction within the next 4-7 years.

3. *Discussion of safety and local traffic congestion concerns in the proposed project area;*

   This project is within the Menlo Park El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan. The Menlo Park El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan accommodates all travel modes, with an emphasis on pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users. Focusing new

development in an area well served by transit and with a mix of uses in close proximity reduces the reliance on private motor vehicles, helping to minimize traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

The Ravenswood Avenue grade crossing is one of the most critical rail crossings in the Menlo Park corridor. Ravenswood has an average daily traffic (ADT) volume of 24,100 vehicles per day (vpd). It is classified as an arterial roadway and is a vital link east and west through Menlo Park. The intersection of Alma is immediately adjacent to the rail crossing and has a high pedestrian volume, especially for pedestrians walking to and from the rail station on the northwest corner of the intersection.

The Specific Plan proposes safety enhancements at the intersection of Ravenswood Avenue and Alma Street, which is immediately adjacent to the rail crossing on Ravenswood. In particular, the Alma Street Civic Walk and Ravenswood Gateway are proposed to be connected by a safe and upgraded pedestrian crossing. Improvements to this intersection could include: enhanced pavement markings, additional warning lights, new or extended turn limitations, and “quad gates” at the Caltrain tracks. A grade separation would still necessitate improvements to the intersection, but would eliminate the rail crossing component, which currently adds some confusion and distraction for drivers at the intersection.

El Camino Real is in very close proximity to the rail crossing as well. The queue of traffic on Ravenswood waiting for the traffic signal at El Camino Real can at times back up passed the railroad tracks. This situation creates a concern related to safety and a grade separation of this crossing would improve the area with a safer connection area.

The following figures are attached describing traffic vehicle circulation, pedestrian, circulation, and bicycle circulation from the ECR/Downtown Specific Plan:

- Figure 8 shows the classification of roadways in the Specific Plan area and surroundings. The vehicular circulation system is consistent with the City’s General Plan.

- Figure 9 illustrates proposed pedestrian improvements in the plan area.

- Figure 10 depicts the location for existing and recommended bicycle facilities. The recommended facilities include those planned in the City’s *Bicycle Development Plan*.

- Figure 11 illustrates the enhanced network of pedestrian and bicycle-friendly linkages between downtown, the station area, the Civic Center, and along and across El Camino Real.

4. *Discussion of how the project(s) could support economic development and transit-oriented development in the proposed project area;*

As indicated earlier, the Ravenswood Avenue grade separation project is located within the Menlo Park El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan, approved by the City Council in June 2012.

The El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan establishes a framework for private and public improvements on El Camino Real, in the Caltrain station area and in downtown Menlo Park for the next several decades. The plan's focus is on the character and extent of enhanced public spaces, the character and intensity of private infill development and circulation and connectivity improvements. It includes a strategy for implementation of public space improvements, such as wider sidewalks and plazas, and other infrastructure improvements. The overall intent of the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan is to preserve and enhance community life, character and vitality through public space improvements, mixed use infill projects sensitive to the small-town character of Menlo Park and improved connectivity. The Specific Plan reflects the outcome of an extensive community outreach and engagement process. The project area is illustrated in Figure 11 showing proposed land uses, public plazas/open space, parks, and development opportunities.

The illustrative plan, as shown in Figure 12, depicts how the plan area could potentially build out over the next several decades in conformance with the overall planning principles and within the land use and development regulations and design guidelines contained in subsequent chapters. It is important to emphasize that the illustrative plan indicates only one potential development concept and that the actual build-out will likely vary from the initial projection. As envisioned, the full build-out of the plan area could result in up to approximately 330,000 square feet of additional retail and commercial development, 680 new residential units and 380 new hotel rooms, resulting in 1,357 new jobs and 1,537 additional residents.

A grade separation at Ravenswood Avenue fits very well with the Specific Plan. The grade separation would allow for better circulation of vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians and transit. Better circulation and the enhanced connectivity to the train station will help promote the mixed use development contemplated in the Specific Plan. The mix of uses including residential promote the vision of the Specific Plan with vitality and sense of community. The mix of uses also will allow for better walkability in the area and the adjacency of the train station further reduces the reliance on automobiles. A grade separation of Ravenswood would provide a safer connection and improved circulation, which could be a catalyst for infill development as contemplated in the Specific Plan.

5. *Discussion of other funding sources that can be secured to leverage Measure A funds for the project;*

   The Ravenswood Avenue Grade separation project could leverage funding from the "New Measure A Grade Separation Funding Program," as local match to other sources of funding from State Public Utilities Commission – California State Aid for Railroads Grade Separations, Traffic Congestion Relief Program, State Transportation Improvement Program, and Federal Funding. Menlo Park would also want to partner with SMCTA to secure other sources of funding.

6. *Demonstration of support from the City Council and the community through a deliberative planning process.*

   Menlo Park has held several study sessions and has also held a joint community engagement study session with the Town of Atherton. The City has also reached out to other local agencies in common interests for grade separation projects to better coordinate regional efforts. As indicated earlier in the letter the City Council approved the submittal of a letter of interest to SMCTA regarding the available grade separation funding. The Ravenswood Avenue grade separation has been an area of interest for the community for a number of years. The City Council is committed to analyzing the at and below grade alternatives to find a grade separation that reduces impacts on the community. It is important to reiterate that the City Council is only supportive of a two-track system within Menlo Park as it further reduces any impacts on the community. While there is more work to be done on this subject in the community, the City is confident that a two-track at or below grade rail system could fit well with the community, the recently approved Specific Plan, while improving safety and increasing circulation.

The City of Menlo Park would like to thank you for the opportunity to respond to the SMCTA letter dated September 28, 2012. We look forward to the opportunity to continue to partner in a solution to address the City of Menlo Park's interests in grade separation alternatives. Please contact Fernando Bravo at 650-330-6742 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Charles Taylor
Director of Public Works

Attachment A: Menlo Park Rail Statement of Principles
Attachment B: Menlo Park City Council Position Summary Statement
Attachment C: List of Figures 7 through Figure 12 from El Camino/Downtown Specific Plan

Cc: Mayor Kirsten Keith, and City Council
Alex D. McIntyre, City Manager

City of Menlo Park
Statement of Principles for Rail

The City of Menlo Park Rail Council Subcommittee works to protect and enhance the character of Menlo Park and the community's economic vitality while supporting the conditions needed to maximize the local benefits and the long-term potential of rail.

- The character of Menlo Park includes:
    - Our connected, walkable, bikeable, safe and accessible neighborhoods, parks, commercial areas and civic center
    - Our vision and specific plan for the downtown and El Camino Real including improved east-west mobility for all modes of travel

- The community's economic vitality includes:
    - The continued success of our small and large businesses
    - The maintenance of our property values
    - Rail agencies responsibly mitigating impacts of rail, including but not limited to, HSR, Caltrain, and freight

- The conditions needed to maximize the long-term potential of the City's rail corridor include:
    - Improvements to east / west connectivity; rail unifies rather than divides
    - Improvements to local transit
    - The negative physical and social impacts of rail are minimized and the positive impacts are enhanced by using context sensitive design solutions
    - Consider all reasonable alternatives including those discussed previously by Menlo Park

Implied "decision criteria" from these principles might include:

- Does the alternative protect or enhance connectivity to additional modes of travel/ accessibility to city locations?
- Does the alternative protect or enhance walk-ability?
- Does the alternative protect or enhance bike-ability?
- Does the alternative protect or enhance the economic vitality of businesses?
- Does the alternative protect or enhance property values?
- Does the alternative align with / support the El Camino Real / Downtown Specific Plan?
- Does the alternative protect or enhance local transit opportunities?
- Does the alternative enhance the level of transit service?

City of Menlo Park
Council Position Summary

The following bullet points clarify the Council's position on high speed rail on the Caltrain corridor through Menlo Park.

- The City opposes any elimination of any part of CEQA for the High Speed Rail Project environmental process.
- No aerial or elevated structures will be utilized on the Caltrain alignment between San Jose and San Francisco unless such an elevated structure is specifically requested by a local agency, for an area within their jurisdiction
- The high speed rail within Menlo Park should be either in a two-track envelope "at-grade" system, or in an open or closed trench or tunnel, and stay within the existing Caltrain right-of-way (with very minor exceptions, and in very limited locations)
- No Environmental Impact Report should go forward which increases it beyond two tracks in Menlo Park, unless underground in a closed trench or tunnel
- City is interested in positive train control and alternative propulsion systems as an early investment project to increase regional mobility and local train service. We are in favor of positive train control and electrification, provided they increase train service at or beyond 2005 levels at the Menlo Park Caltrain Station.
- The City approves of a blended system but opposes passing tracks located in Menlo Park
- The City is interested in quiet zones for the rail corridor in Menlo Park
- Our strategy is to work cooperatively with the blended system planning efforts while preventing an at-grade or elevated 4 track system through Menlo Park.

Figure 7: ECR/Downtown Specific Plan Vehicular Circulation

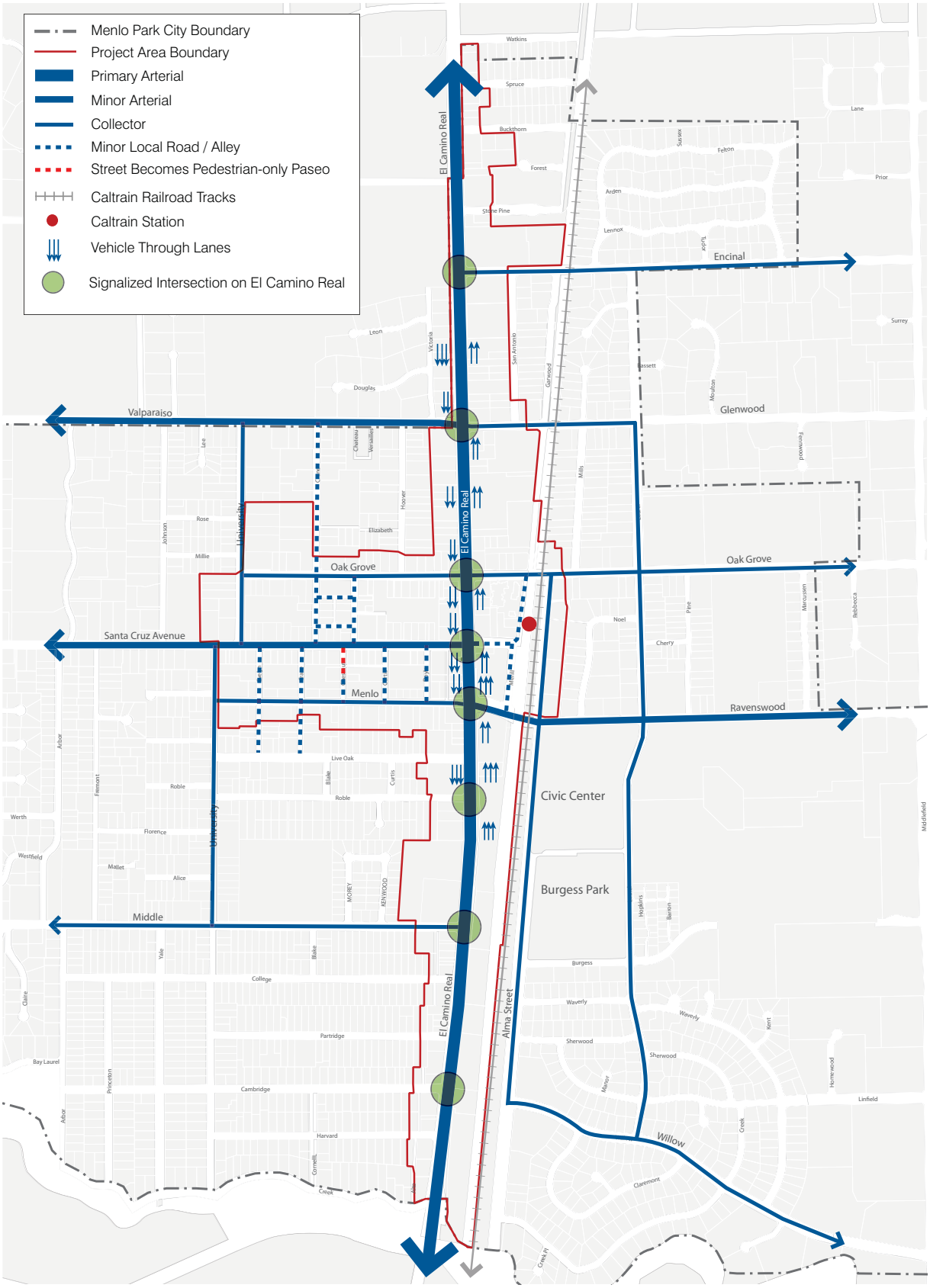

Figure F1. Vehicular Circulation

Figure 8: ECR/Downtown Specific Plan Pedestrian Circulation

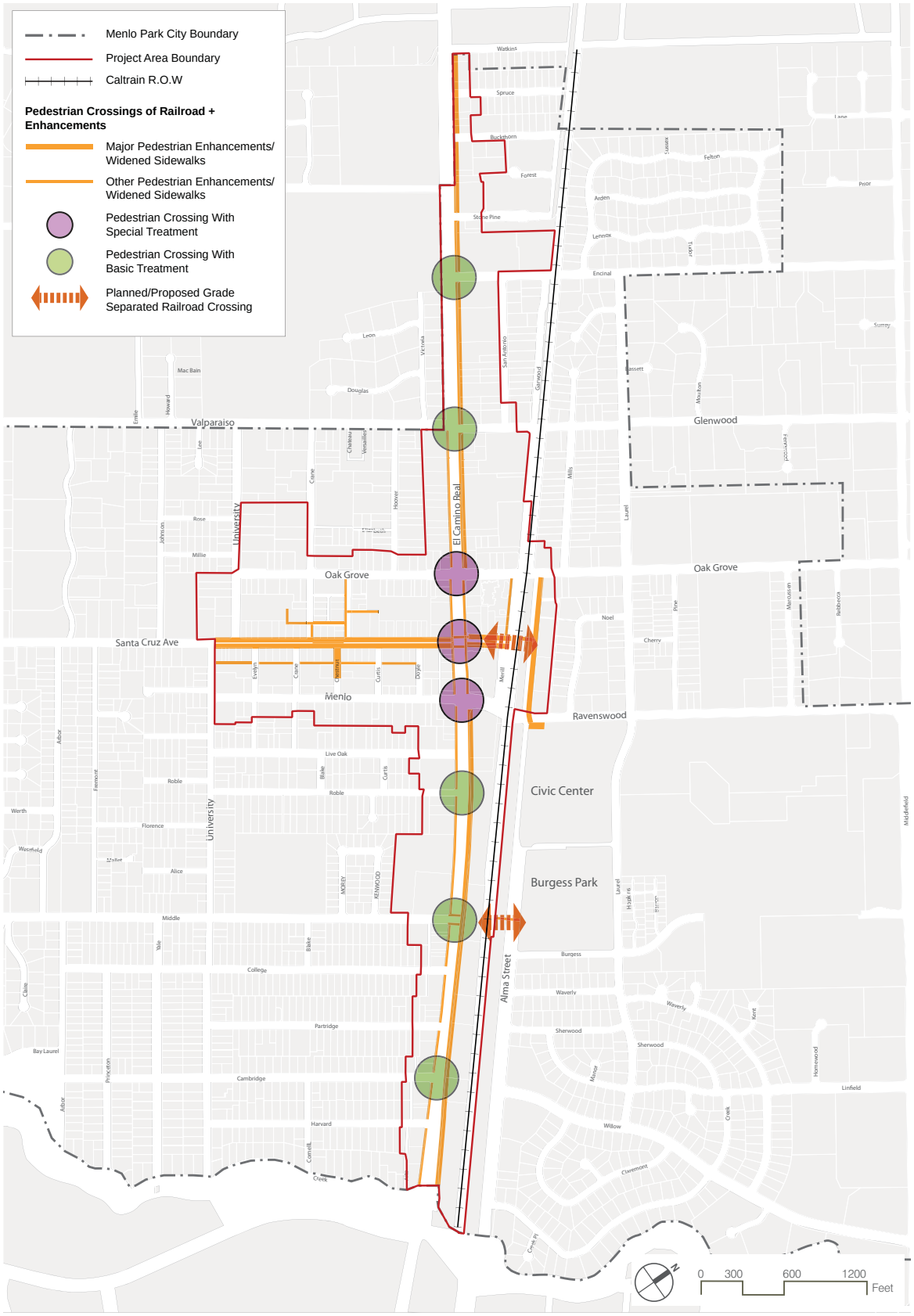

Figure F2. *Pedestrian Improvements*

Figure 9: ECR/Downtown Specific Plan Bicycle Circulation

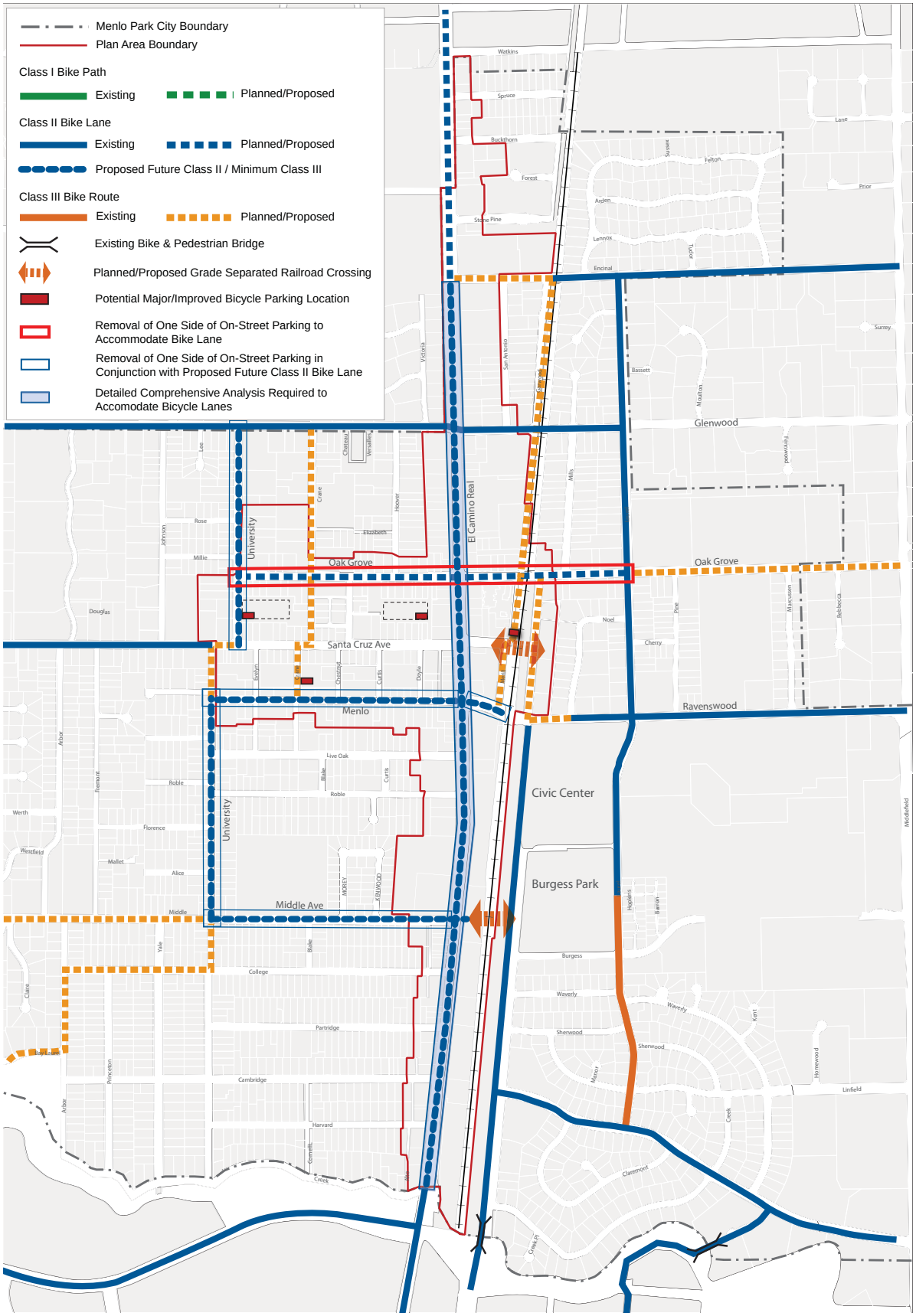

Figure F3. Bicycle Facilities

Figure 10: ECR/Downtown Specific Plan Transit Services

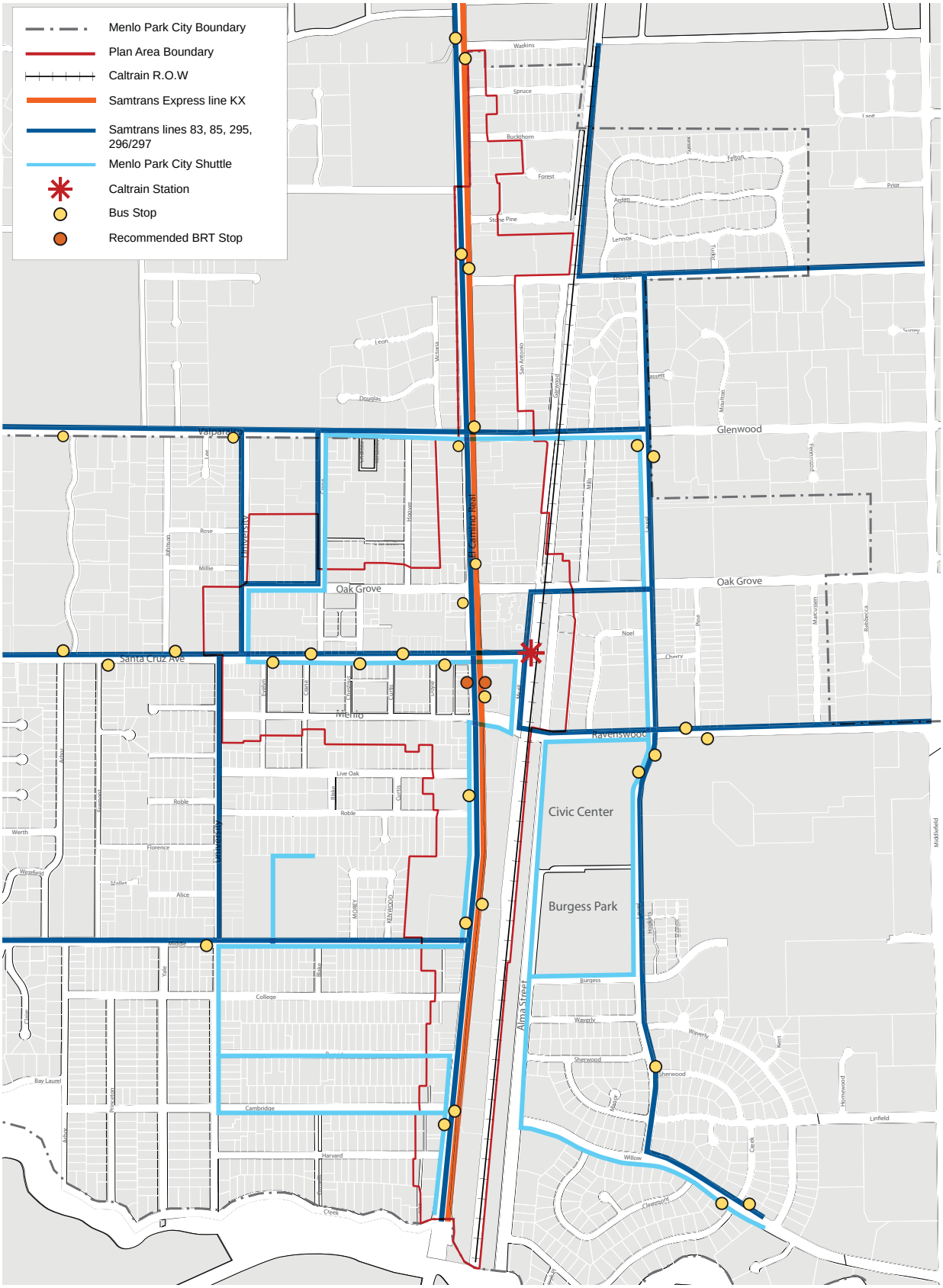

Figure F4. Transit Service

Figure 11: ECR/Downtown Public Space Framework Connectivity

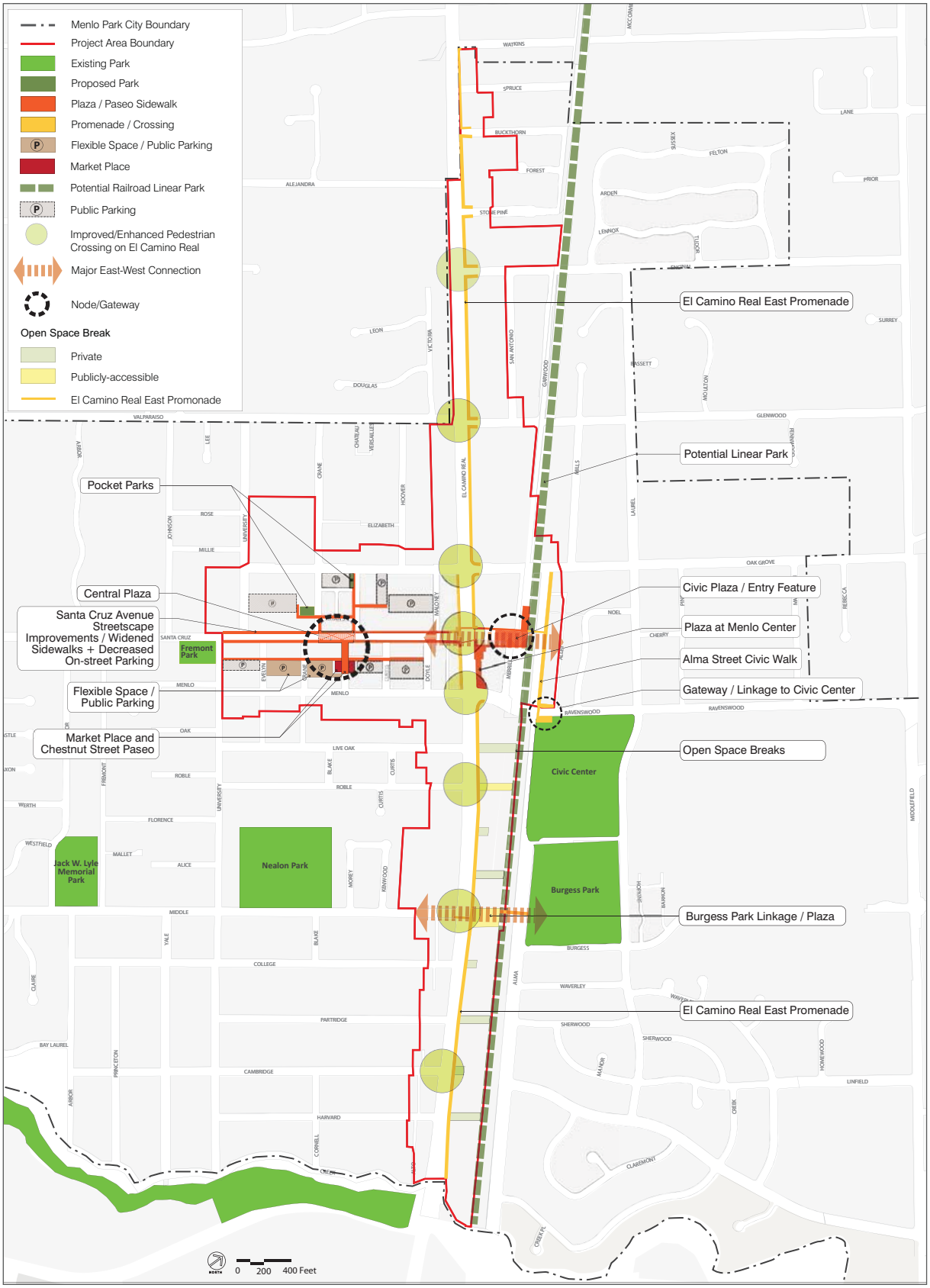

Figure D1. *Public Space Framework*

Figure 12: ECR/Downtown Specific Plan

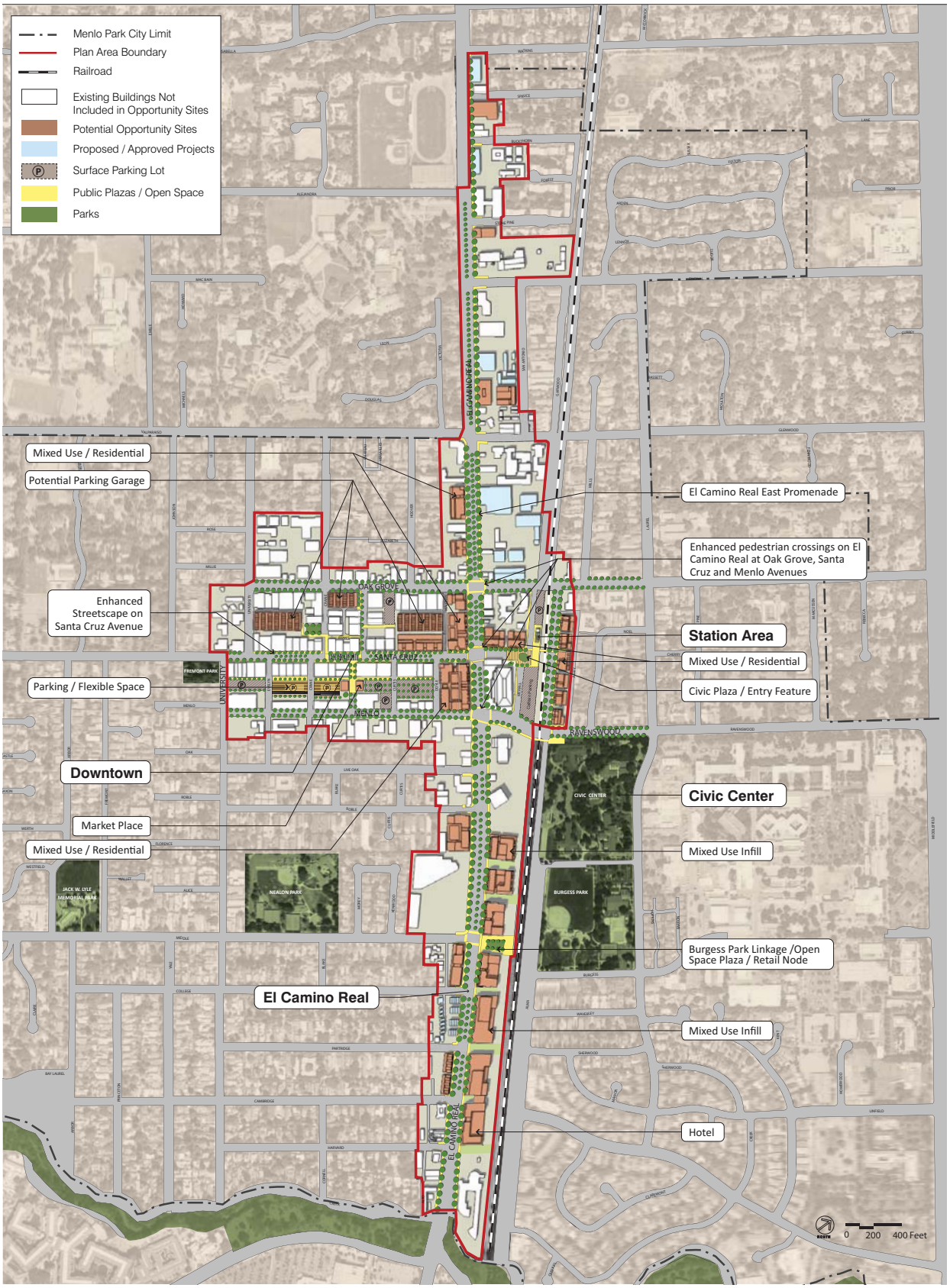

Figure A1. *Illustrative Site Plan*

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RESOLUTION NO. 6167

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MENLO PARK SUPPORTING THE RAVENSWOOD AVENUE GRADE SEPARATION ANALYSIS PROJECT AND SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR MEASURE A GRADE SEPARATION PROGRAM FUNDING

WHEREAS, the City of Menlo Park (City) is seeking funding to complete the Planning Phase for a cost range of approximately $500,000 to $750,000 in Measure A Grade Separation Program funds to complete the planning phase for the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Project (Project); and

WHEREAS, The Ravenswood Avenue grade crossing is one of the most critical rail crossings in the Menlo Park corridor. Ravenswood Avenue has an average daily traffic (ADT) volume of 24,100 vehicles per day (vpd). It is classified as an arterial roadway and is a vital link east and west through Menlo Park. The intersection of Alma Avenue is immediately adjacent to the rail crossing and has a high pedestrian volume, especially for pedestrians walking to and from the rail station on the northwest corner of the intersection, and

WHEREAS, the additional study would provide Menlo Park the opportunity to evaluate alternatives for grade separation of this rail crossing. Some of the following issues would be included in the analysis 1) cost difference between grade separation alternatives; 2) better understanding of traffic, pedestrian, and bicycle patterns for the various alternatives; 3) potential impacts associated with the various alternatives such as noise, aesthetics, and station configuration; 4) evaluation of alternatives not included in the prior studies –a fully depressed train (trench); and 5) complete the planning phase for the Project selected alternative; and

WHEREAS, the City wishes to sponsor the implementation of the environmental phase for the Project, and

WHEREAS, on June 7, 1988, the voters of San Mateo County approved a ballot measure to allow the collection and distribution by the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA) of a half-cent transactions and use tax in San Mateo County for 25 years, with the tax revenues to be used for highway and transit improvements pursuant to the Transportation Expenditure Plan presented to the voters (Original Measure A); and

WHEREAS, on November 2, 2004, the voters of San Mateo County approved the continuation of the collection and distribution by the TA the half-cent transactions and use tax for an additional 25 years to implement the 2004 Transportation Expenditure Plan beginning January 1, 2009 (New Measure A); and

WHEREAS, on November 13, 2012, the City Council authorized staff to submit a letter of interest to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority for the Measure A eligible grade separation project in Menlo Park; and

WHEREAS, TA issued a Solicitation for Projects for the Measure A Grade Separation Program on August 5, 2013; and

WHEREAS, TA requires a governing board resolution from the City committing the City to the completion of the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Project planning phase for the Project and the City's application for $500,000 to $750,000 in San Mateo County Measure A Grade Separation Program funds for completing the planning phase for the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Project; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND IS HEREBY FOUND, DETERMINED, AND ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

1. Directs staff to submit an application for San Mateo County Measure A Grade Separation Program funds for an amount ranging from $500,000 to $750,000 for the planning phase for the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Project.
2. Authorizes the City Manager to execute all funding agreements with the San Mateo County Transportation Authority to encumber any Measure A Grade Separation Program funds awarded for this phase of the project.
3. Let it be known the City of Menlo Park commits to the completion of the Ravenswood Avenue Grade Separation Analysis Project if awarded the requested San Mateo County Measure A Grade Separation Program funds

I, Pamela Aguilar, Acting City Clerk of Menlo Park, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing Council Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted at a meeting by said Council on the twenty-seventh day of August, 2013, by the following votes:

AYES: Carlton, Cline, Keith, Ohtaki, Mueller

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Official Seal of said City on this twenty-seventh day of August, 2013.

Pamela Aguilar

Pamela Aguilar
Acting City Clerk

City of Menlo Park
Rail Council Subcommittee Mission Statement

The Rail Council Subcommittee will advocate for ways to reduce the negative impacts and enhance the benefits of Rail in Menlo Park. The Subcommittee will ensure all voices are heard and that thoughtful ideas are generated and alternatives vetted. It will collaborate with other local and regional jurisdictions in support of regional consensus of matters of common interest related to Rail. Additionally, the subcommittee will support Council planning efforts and decision making on Rail-related issues with information, research and other expertise.

City of Menlo Park
Statement of Principles for Rail

The City of Menlo Park Rail Council Subcommittee works to protect and enhance the character of Menlo Park and the community's economic vitality while supporting the conditions needed to maximize the local benefits and the long-term potential of rail.

- The character of Menlo Park includes:
    - Our connected, walkable, bikeable, safe and accessible neighborhoods, parks, commercial areas and civic center
    - Our vision and specific plan for the downtown and El Camino Real including improved east-west mobility for all modes of travel

- The community's economic vitality includes:
    - The continued success of our small and large businesses
    - The maintenance of our property values
    - Rail agencies responsibly mitigating impacts of rail, including but not limited to, HSR, Caltrain, and freight

- The conditions needed to maximize the long-term potential of the City's rail corridor include:
    - Improvements to east / west connectivity; rail unifies rather than divides
    - Improvements to local transit
    - The negative physical and social impacts of rail are minimized and the positive impacts are enhanced by using context sensitive design solutions
    - Consider all reasonable alternatives including those discussed previously by Menlo Park

Implied "decision criteria" from these principles might include:

- Does the alternative protect or enhance connectivity to additional modes of travel/ accessibility to city locations?
- Does the alternative protect or enhance walk-ability?
- Does the alternative protect or enhance bike-ability?
- Does the alternative protect or enhance the economic vitality of businesses?
- Does the alternative protect or enhance property values?
- Does the alternative align with / support the El Camino Real / Downtown Specific Plan?
- Does the alternative protect or enhance local transit opportunities?
- Does the alternative enhance the level of transit service?

City of Menlo Park
Council Position Summary for Discussion

The following bullet points are for discussion to clarify the Council's position on high speed rail on the Caltrain corridor through Menlo Park.

- The City opposes any elimination of any part of CEQA for the High Speed Rail Project environmental process.
- No aerial or elevated structures will be utilized on the Caltrain alignment between San Jose and San Francisco unless such an elevated structure is specifically requested by a local agency, for an area within their jurisdiction
- The high speed rail within Menlo Park should be either in a two-track envelope "at-grade" system, or in an open or closed trench or tunnel, and stay within the existing Caltrain right-of-way (with very minor exceptions, and in very limited locations)
- No Environmental Impact Report should go forward which increases it beyond two tracks in Menlo Park, unless underground in a closed trench or tunnel
- City is interested in positive train control and alternative propulsion systems as an early investment project to increase regional mobility and local train service. We are in favor of positive train control and electrification, provided they increase train service at or beyond 2005 levels at the Menlo Park Caltrain Station.
- The City approves of a blended system but opposes passing tracks located in Menlo Park
- The City is interested in quiet zones for the rail corridor in Menlo Park
- Our strategy is to work cooperatively with the blended system planning efforts while preventing an at-grade or elevated 4 track system through Menlo Park.

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SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (TA)
1250 SAN CARLOS AVENUE, SAN CARLOS, CA 94070

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 7, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT: R. Foust, C. Groom, K. Matsumoto, T. Nagel, N. Patridge

MEMBERS ABSENT: D. Canepa, D. Horsley

STAFF PRESENT: J. Averill, J. Cassman, A. Chan, E. Goode, G. Harrington, C. Harvey, R. Haskin, J. Hurley, M. Martinez, N. McKenna, M. Scanlon, M. Simon, J. Slavit

Chair Carole Groom called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) REPORT
CAC Chair Barbara Arietta provided a report on the meeting of October 1, 2013 (see attached).

Director Karyl Matsumoto arrived at 5:07 p.m.

Public Comment
Rich Hedges, San Mateo, said the Burlingame grade separation is most needed even though Burlingame is not providing matching funds. He said the San Mateo separation at 25th Avenue is also important because the economic development at Bay Meadows would be hampered without a separation.

CONSENT CALENDAR
Director Terry Nagel asked to pull the minutes from the consent calendar.

b. Acceptance of Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for Fiscal Year Ending June 2013 (unaudited)
c. Acceptance of Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for September 2013
d. Approval of 2014 Board of Directors Meeting Calendar

A motion (Foust/Nagel) to approve the Consent Calendar was approved.

Approval of Minutes of October 3, 2013
Director Nagel asked if other transit agencies received money from the Lehman Brothers settlement and if the funding is available to be allocated. Michael Scanlon, Executive Director, said the TA received a total recovery of $10,940,520.10, which amounts to 43 cents on the dollar. The San Mateo County Transit District did not have any money in the Lehman account. The Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB) recovered approximately $566,476, about 43 cents on the dollar. The funds will go back exactly as the appropriations were made for the measure.

A motion (Matsumoto/Foust) to approve the minutes of October 3, 2013 was approved (Nagel abstained).

PUBLIC COMMENT
Rich Hedges, San Mateo, said he supports Mr. Scanlon in his efforts to run the three agencies. He said he saw a misleading report about the agencies, but Mr. Scanlon did a very good job dealing with the questions.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – CAROLE GROOM
None

SAMTRANS LIAISON REPORT – KARYL MATSUMOTO
Director Matsumoto provided additional information from the November 6 Board meeting:

- The Board affirmed their confidence in Mr. Scanlon.
- The Board thanked the County Board of Supervisors because through the county's Measure A, SamTrans will be given $5 million for Fiscal Years 2014-2015 for paratransit service.
- The SamTrans Service Plan found 760 bus stops need to be adjusted, 134 to be eliminated, 72 new ones to be placed, and 100 to be reviewed for accuracy.

JPB REPORT
Mr. Scanlon reported:

- Nuria Fernandez, the new general manager for Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, was introduced.
- Key Caltrain Performance Statistics
  - Monthly Performance Statistics – September 2013 compared to September 2012
    - Total Ridership was 1,395,711, an 8.2 percent increase.
    - Average Weekday Ridership was 54,308, a 6.9 percent increase.
    - Total Farebox Revenue was $6,282,145, a 7.2 percent increase.
    - On-time Performance (OTP) was 90.9 percent, a 5 percent increase.
    - Caltrain Shuttle Ridership was 7,239, a 29.4 percent decrease. There continues to be problems with the counts on the Marguerite Shuttle.
  - Year to Date Performance Statistics – September 2013 compared to September 2012
    - Total Ridership was 4,353,765, a 10.3 percent increase.
    - Average Weekday Ridership was 54,379, a 10.2 percent increase.
    - Total Farebox Revenue was $19,441,212, a 10.1 percent increase.
    - OTP was 90.8 percent, a 0.5 percent decrease.
    - Caltrain Shuttle Ridership was 6,995, a 20 percent decrease.
- Staff is working with TransitAmerica Services, Inc. to improve mechanical issues. OTP is affected by mechanical issues, record ridership, persons needing assistance, bicycles and dwell times. When measured within 10 minutes of the schedule, OTP is at 96 percent, proving delays are predominately caused by overloads and extended dwell times.
- Staff received rave reviews about the Caltrain 150th Anniversary event.
- The Holiday Train will be running the weekend of December 7.
- A Caltrain By the Numbers Annual Report has been produced.

- An emergency preparedness drill was conducted on November 2 and 150 local first responders attended the vehicle familiarization training.
- The Bicycle Advisory Committee is recruiting for four members.
- Extra riders are expected for Stanford football.
- A Sunday schedule will be operated on Thanksgiving Day, and a Saturday schedule will be operated the Friday after Thanksgiving.
- The San Bruno Grade Separation grand opening will be in early spring.
- Staff proposed changes to the Codified Tariff to include a 10 percent discount to groups of 25 or more and residential complexes in the GO Pass Program.
- The Board:
    - Received updates on the 4th and King Study and Caltrain Modernization
    - Authorized reaffirming the Annual Investment Policy and gave authorization to invest monies with the Local Agency Investment Fund
    - Authorized the rejection of all proposals for a Project Delivery Director for the Caltrain Modernization Program
    - Authorized the rejection of the lowest monetary bid from Canada Ticket, Inc. as non-responsive and awarded a contract to Paper Solutions, Inc. to provide typesetting, printing, and delivery of thermal and non-thermal ticket media for a total estimated cost of $142,840 for a two-year term
    - Approved the adoption of the Caltrain Title VI Program
    - Adjourned in the memory of former SamTrans Board member and County Supervisor Bill Schumacher

Public Comment

Greg Conlon, Atherton, said it would cost about $1.5 billion for a 10-mile trench between Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Atherton. He said there are about six or seven intersections in that area, and that there is congestion at those intersections. In the last year, there were five to 10 fatalities in those areas.

Adina Levin, Friends of Caltrain, said Caltrain is looking at the potential for level boarding and this would affect decisions about the purchase of rail cars for electrification. Level boarding would reduce delays, speed up the line, increase reliability and allow for better transfers. She said this will require money to upgrade platforms and would be a good investment to help alleviate dwell time issues.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. Scanlon said:

- The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Highway 101/Willow Interchange was released for public comment. Eleven comments were received ranging from concerns about noise and disruption of traffic during construction to requests to accommodate the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists. The cities of Menlo Park and East Palo Alto commented the project is consistent with their goals and objectives. Comments will be addressed as part of the Final EIR, which is scheduled to be approved by the end of the year.
- Redwood City City Council awarded a contract to URS for preparation of the EIR with the proposed reconstruction of the Highway 101/Woodside Interchange. The TA allocated $3.42 million for the environmental phase of the project.

- The TA allocated $61,000 for the Alpine Road Bicycle Safety Improvement Project. The area has been revamped and a clearly delineated bike lane has been added.
- SamTrans will conduct a study and outreach to start looking at Bus Rapid Transit along El Camino Real. SamTrans will be reaching out to city councils and elected officials, and will hold community events.

FINANCE

Authorize Acceptance of Quarterly Investment Report and Fixed Income Market Review Outlook for the Quarter Ended September 30, 2013

Bill Osher, CSI Investment, said the portfolio continues to cruise at a modest pace in line with low interest rates and is staying very safe. It was experiencing higher interest rates for a short time, a sign that things were getting better and people were hopeful with the economy. The rates fell in September due to the government shutdown. The economy is not growing as fast as it could because of uncertainty coming out of Washington D.C. He said there is underlying strength in the economy and he is hopeful to see improvements in employment and economic growth starting in the middle of next year. At that time, interest rates will start to go up again and the TA will start earning more money on the portfolio.

Authorize Amendment of the Fiscal Year 2014 Budget and Programming and Allocation of $5,350,000 of Measure A Funds from the Grade Separation Program

Joel Slavit, Manager, Programing and Monitoring, said the solicitation for candidate grade separation projects was issued on August 5. Four proposals were received. One proposal was for preliminary engineering environmental work, and three proposals were for planning work, including a request for $750,000 from the city of Menlo Park for the grade separation of Ravenswood Avenue. Proposals were evaluated using the criteria presented to the Board in August. Staff is recommending deferral of the final decision of Menlo Park's proposal until it is revised to meet program eligibility criteria. The existing proposal states the city will only support a two-track option, but this is inconsistent with the requirement that a scenario be considered to accommodate the Caltrain/high-speed rail blended system, which may include a third passing track. Staff will work with the city and will return to the Board when the proposal includes a study of at least one option that could accommodate a passing track.

Director Naomi Patridge asked if another city puts in for money that did pass the qualifications, is it being held up while Menlo Park amends their proposal. Mr. Scanlon said these are the only four proposals received and they are not holding anyone up.

Director Nagel offered thanks for the allocation for Burlingame and she said she brings gratitude from staff, council and citizens.

Public Comment

Larry Patterson, Interim City Manager, San Mateo, said San Mateo supports the recommendations from the evaluation panel and staff for the 25th Avenue Grade Separation Project, which has been in planning for 15 years.

Jim Bigelow, Redwood City/San Mateo County Chamber of Commerce, said he supports staff's recommendation. He said any grade separations can only be an improvement to safety, speeding up the trains and they are good for residents. He said San Mateo already purchased the shoofly land needed for the project.

Rich Hedges, San Mateo, said the way local communities are designed without grids forces everyone on arterials, and just to clean the air, grade separations are a good idea.

A motion (Foust/Nagel) to authorize the amendment of the Fiscal Year 2014 Budget and to program and allocate $5,350,000 of Measure A Funds from the Grade Separation Program was approved.

Authorize Allocation of $240,000 in Original Measure A Funds to the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board for Design Review on the South San Francisco Caltrain Station
Eva Goode, Manager, Budgets, said the funds for this project are coming from previously budgeted amounts and the design review work is being done for the three hold-out rule locations in the county.

Director Nagel said she hopes staff is creating one plan with different options so there is no duplication of effort. She would not like to see something built and then have to be torn up later. Mr. Scanlon said staff is working closely with the community on this. He said within the blended system there are three geographic locations where there could be four-track sections and there is an option to have a third track. He said staff is conscious of not duplicating effort.

Public Comment
Adina Levin, Friends of Caltrain, said moving forward on the holdout rule stations is good for reliability and productivity of the system. She thanked staff for the work in South San Francisco where a set of improvements will have a major impact on the usability of the station.

A motion (Matsumoto/Nagel) to approve the allocation of $240,000 in Original Measure A funds to the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board for design review on the South San Francisco Caltrain Station was approved.

PROGRAM
Review the Program of Projects for Transmittal to Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) for Dumbarton Rail Regional Measure 2 (RM2) Funding
April Chan, Executive Director, Planning and Development, said this is an informational item and no action will be taken. The administrative draft of the Dumbarton Rail Project EIR and Environmental Impact Statement was put on hold because of a deficient funding plan. MTC wanted an implementation plan regarding RM2 funds. Staff has been working with the Alameda County Transportation Commission and the cities of Menlo Park, East Palo Alto and Redwood City to determine how this funding could be used for the corridor and implemented quickly. The list of projects exceeds the $34.7 million that is available. Supporting the existing Dumbarton Express Bus Service was determined to be a priority because it helps to relieve congestion in the corridor. The

Citizens Advisory Panel and the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) made additional recommendations regarding station projects. Staff grouped some bus service improvements with some station projects to add up to $34.7 million.

Ms. Chan said in 1998, Measure A funding was moved from the Grade Separation budget category to the Caltrain Improvement category for the Rapid Rail Study to benefit Dumbarton Rail. Staff is determining how much funding is remaining and will come back with recommendations about what should be done.

Director Nagel asked if staff has a rough idea how much funding is available and if it has to be used for Dumbarton. Ms. Chan said there is around $45 million and staff is trying to determine where to move the funding.

Public Comment
Jim Bigelow, Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce, said the list has projects that total $100 million. He said the Fremont PAC representative wanted to use the $34.7 million for the Warm Springs Bay Area Rapid Transit operation. Caltrain has expressed to be the operator when and if this line ever goes to Union City, so the funds need to be kept in this area and not for other RM2 projects.

Mr. Scanlon said $91 million of the RM2 money already has been loaned to Warm Springs so the TA must be vigilant.

Update on State and Federal Legislative Program
Mark Simon, Executive Director, Public Affairs, provided the following update.

State
Staff is working with the Transportation Coalition for Livable Communities to advocate that fuel-related cap-and-trade revenue be distributed regionally to transportation agencies.

The TA issued a Request for Proposals for State legislative advocates. Staff is working on developing the 2014 Legislative Program.

Federal
The Budget Conference Committee continues to meet to try to develop a compromise that will avoid another government shutdown before the next round of sequestration cuts is triggered January 15. They have a deadline of December 13 to present a spending debt limit compromise plan to Congress.

REQUESTS FROM THE AUTHORITY
Director Matsumoto said Bill Schumacher was very pro-Caltrain and asked the Board to adjourn in his memory. She also added for the SamTrans report, Joan Cassman, Legal Counsel, will be lead counsel effective January 1, 2015.

Director Rosanne Foust thanked Mr. Scanlon, Corrine Goodrich, Manager, Strategic Development and Ronny Kraft, Planner, for their work on the Grand Boulevard Initiative.

She congratulated Director Matsumoto for her reelection to the South San Francisco City Council.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE AUTHORITY
No discussion

REPORT OF LEGAL COUNSEL
No report.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING
December 5, 2013 at 5 p.m. in the San Mateo County Transit District Administrative Building, Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd floor, 1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos CA 94070

Meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m. in the memory of Bill Schumacher.

Good evening Madam Chair and Board members. Here is what I have to report from the CAC's Tuesday evening meeting:

(TA Item 4a) - The CAC reviewed the TA Board's Minutes of October 3, 2013, without any questions or comments.

(TA Item 4b) - The CAC supported the acceptance of the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for Fiscal Year Ending June 2013.

(TA Item 4c) - The CAC supported the acceptance of the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for September 2013.

(TA Item 4d) - The CAC supported the approval of the 2014 Board of Director's calendar and was glad to see that the Board proposes to change its first meeting of the year to January 9th, instead of January 2nd, thereby giving both the members of the CAC and the Board the potential opportunity to be away for the New Year's holiday.

(TA Item 10a) - The CAC was disappointed that, due to illness, Mr. Bill Osher (our TA Investment Advisor), was unable to attend our meeting and present, in person, his usual in-depth discussion of the TA's Investment portfolio. However, the CAC voted to support the acceptance of the Quarterly Investment Report and Fixed Income Market Review and appreciates and accepts the offer from Mr. Osher to attend next month's CAC meeting to further discuss same.

(TA Item 10b) - Following a brief update by Mr. Joel Slavit, Manager, Programming and Monitioring, along with a thorough Q and A session immediately following, the CAC voted to support the Amendment of the Fiscal Year 2014 Budget and Programming and Allocation of $5,350,000 of Measure A Funds from the Grade Separation Program category for planning at 2 grade crossing; South Linden and Broadway and environmental studies at 25th Avenue in San Mateo.

(TA Item 10c) - The CAC supported the allocation of $240,000 in Original Measure A Funds to the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board for Design Review on the South San Francisco Caltrain Station.

(TA Item 11a) - As an information item only, April Chan , Executive Officer, Planning and Development, reviewed with the CAC the list of prioritized projects included for Dumbarton Corridor Regional Measure 2 (RM2) funding consideration. Because the list of projects exceeded the $34.7 million of RM2 funds available, projects were prioritized to support existing Dumbarton Bus service and then to support possible service enhancements, such as transit centers that would support near-term bus transit service and future rail service. The remaining projects exceeding the amount of RM2 funds available were not prioritized however, the CAC agrees that these also should be submitted to the MTC because they are beneficial to the Dumbarton Corridor.

(TA Item 11b) - The CAC received no update on the State and Federal Legislative Program, however, the CAC was advised by Joe Hurley, TA Program Director, that there hasn't been much activity since the last month report being the state legislature is in recess and won't return until January and on the federal side focus was on working through and the government shutdown and once that was addressed attention was turned to health care.

CAC CHAIR'S REPORT TO CAC:

1. The first order of business in my own report to the CAC was to discuss the rescheduling of our December 30th meeting to January 7th, in order to conform with the Board's newly amended meeting schedule for January 2014. The CAC voted unanimously to approve the change in schedule.

2. Reported to the CAC about Caltrain's 150th birthday celebration festivities that were held at the Menlo Park Caltrain Station on October 19th. Although I was unable to attend, John Baker, the newest member of the CAC, did and reported back to us that the day's events were a huge success, especially with the added treat of free ice cream being given to all!

3. Additionally advised the CAC that the public will be able to get a sneak peak of TransForm's Strategic Plan, entitled TransForm 2018, at its upcoming fall event to be held at it's SF office on Thursday November 14th from 6-9pm.

4. Announced to the CAC that the MTC has recently reported that the streets and roadways of the Bay Area have received a score of 66 out of 100 for its Pavement Condition Index (PCI), which means 43,000 miles of lanes and roadways remain in fair condition, with the typical stretch of asphalt showing serious wear and likely to require rehabilitation soon. (BTW, this score has not changed by more than 2 pts since 2006.)

Streets and roadways below a 60 PCI score are likely to deteriorate rapidly. Jurisdictions in San Mateo County with a PCI score of 60 or below are: Belmont, East Palo Alto, Half Moon Bay and Pacifica. The goal is to get everyone of our Bay Area cities to a score of 75 or better.

5. In reference to the new Bay Area Bike Share Program, I advised the CAC that over 2,500 people have now signed up for an annual membership, which costs $88, and 6,100, thus far, have taken advantage of the $22 three-day pass or the $9 daily pass.

6. Advised the CAC about both the Transbay Terminal update scheduled for Wednesday, November 6th at the Transbay HQ in downtown SF and the November 7th JPB San Carlos meeting which will have a Caltrain update on a study exploring the feasibility of moving rail car storage to allow space near 4th and King Streets to be used for new real estate development in San Francisco.

In Joe's report to the CAC, he reiterated what I had initially said about the MTC's PCI Report concerning

the pavement conditions of our local roads and explained further the safety issues and financial challenges involved in rapidly deteriorating roadways. He took the opportunity to remind the CAC of the Measure A's contribution of 22.5% of the sales tax revenue used to maintain roads which totaled $15.3 M this year and to consider how bad conditions might be without this funding.

He also reminded us that, to our annual Holiday dinner on December 3rd to reflect on and celebrate the accomplishments of 2013

Finally I'd like to extend an invitation to the Board to join us.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Arietta
Chair, SMCTA/CAC