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Get Up to Speed on High Speed Rail

Members of the public, elected officials, transit experts, transit agency representatives and rail enthusiasts are invited to the High Speed Rail Teach-In on Saturday, September 12, to learn about this once-in-a-century project being planned on the Peninsula. The workshop will be held from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Palo Alto City Hall, 250 Hamilton Street, Palo Alto. Admission is free, but space is limited. Advance reservations are required at <http://peninsulacities.eventbrite.com>.

Participants will learn about the latest developments in high speed rail, question experts and discover how the public can influence the design of the project. The event is sponsored by the Peninsula Cities Consortium and is hosted by the City of Palo Alto, in cooperation with Caltrain and the California High Speed Rail Authority.

Among the topics that will be discussed are:

- What are the myths and realities about the Peninsula project?
- What are best practices from around the world?
- What have other cities experienced during construction of a major railroad in an urban setting?
- Why can't it be tunneled all the way?
- What impact will eminent domain have on backyards and grade crossings?

The Peninsula Cities Consortium is also supporting a weekend workshop on October 3-4 at which technical experts will discuss the constraints and possibilities of high speed rail on the Peninsula, then will work with design professionals and members of the public to sketch various alignments for the portions in Menlo Park and Palo Alto. Those two cities are funding the two-day charrette, which is designed to encourage out-of-the-box thinking about possibilities for high speed rail.

The Peninsula Cities Consortium is composed of cities that have joined together to play an active role in the high-speed rail project on the San Francisco Peninsula. The cities of Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Atherton, Burlingame and Belmont are members. They invite other cities on the Caltrain corridor to join with them.

“It is our belief that the final design should minimize the impacts upon local communities and incorporate best practices of urban design ideas from rail communities around the world,” explained Yoriko Kishimoto of the Palo Alto City Council, who chairs the Peninsula Cities Consortium. For more information, visit www.peninsularail.com or call 650-323-5590.

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