

**SOUTH PALO ALTO
BIKE/PED CONNECTIVITY
PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:
ESTABLISH DESIGN PRIORITIES
SUMMARY REPORT**

July 29, 2025



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South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity Phase 1 Community Engagement: Establish Design Priorities Summary Report

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Project Number 30555

July 29, 2025



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Contents

Introduction	1
Key Findings.....	2
Communication Tools.....	2
Project Website	2
Project Fact Sheet.....	3
Small Group Discussions.....	3
Community Workshop	3
Online Survey	4
Pop-Up Events	6
Standing Meetings.....	7
Additional Outreach and Engagement	8
Mailers	8
Notifications to Key Stakeholders	8

July 29, 2025

**Phase 1 Community Engagement: Establish Design Priorities:
Summary Report**

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Project Fact Sheet

Appendix B: Synthesis of Small Group Discussions

Appendix C: Transportation Planning Workshop Summary

Appendix D: Phase 1 Engagement Survey Results

Appendix E: Synthesis of Standing Meetings

Appendix F: Project Mailer

Introduction

The South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity Project (“Project”) aims to identify and develop community-supported locations and design concepts for two new grade-separated bicycle and pedestrian pathways across the Caltrain corridor in south Palo Alto. Creating additional crossings either above or below the railroad tracks will improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity in support of the City’s long-term sustainability and active transportation goals.

Engagement for the Project provides the community with an opportunity to influence the location and design of grade-separated bicycle and pedestrian crossings in south Palo Alto. The City is organizing and facilitating community outreach and engagement efforts with the intent to engage residents and key stakeholders and solicit input at various phases of the project. Community engagement will include a series of workshops, pop-ups, surveys, and other strategies that will be structured to include property owners, residents, businesses, local business employees, representatives of private and public schools, agencies providing services in the area, and visitors.

Public engagement for the Project is taking place over four phases:

- Phase 1 Community Engagement: Establish Design Priorities (Spring 2025)
- Phase 2 Community Engagement: Feedback on Alternatives (Fall 2025)
- Phase 3 Community Engagement: Review Public Draft Report (Spring 2026)
- Phase 4 Community Engagement: Council Adopt Final Report (Summer 2026)

During the first engagement phase, the City sought community input to confirm crossing opportunity locations and establish design priorities and evaluation criteria to be applied in the evaluation of alternatives. Engagement occurred via small group discussions, an online survey, several pop-up events, a community workshop, and discussions at standing committee meetings. Based on the feedback received during Phase 1, the Project team prioritized crossing opportunity locations and updated design priorities and evaluation criteria to be applied in the evaluation of alternatives in Phase 2. The draft and updated design priorities and evaluation criteria are available on the project website (PaloAlto.gov/bikepedcrossings) under the Project Documents section.

During the next engagement phase, the Project team will present concept designs and corresponding network modifications for up to eight alternatives and evaluate each alternative using the updated design priorities and evaluation criteria established in Phase 1. The initial eight alternatives and completed evaluation will be shared with the community for review and feedback during Phase 2. The feedback received during this phase will result in the refinement and selection of two preferred alternatives that will be carried forward for 15 percent concept design.

The Public Draft Report will be shared for feedback as part of Phase 3 in Spring 2026 and a Final Report will be shared in Summer 2026 in Phase 4 for community review and Council adoption.

This report provides an overview of the community engagement conducted and the input received during Phase 1.

KEY FINDINGS

The community engagement process for the Project elicited a wide range of priorities, insights, and concerns to guide future planning and decision-making. Key findings include:

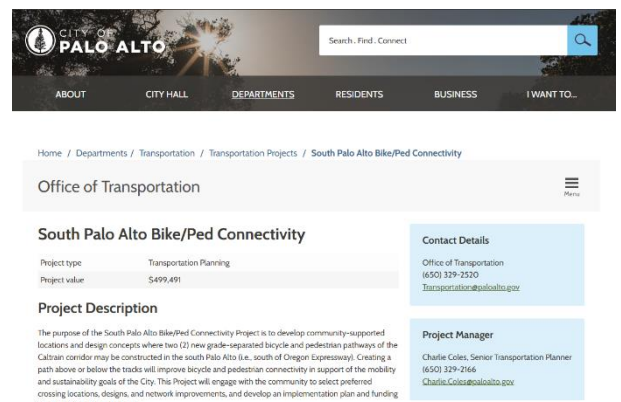
- Strong community support for new grade-separated rail crossings to improve east-west connectivity and mobility in south Palo Alto, especially for students.
- Safety and accessibility were top priorities, with calls for well-lit, wide, comfortable, and universally accessible crossings.
- Equity and network integration were emphasized to ensure underserved areas and key destinations like schools and parks are well-connected.
- Data-driven site selection favored locations with high demand and long gaps between existing crossings, such as near Matadero Creek (El Dorado Avenue to Loma Verde Avenue) and between Meadow Drive and Charleston Road.
- User experience and travel efficiency were critical, with preferences for intuitive, direct routes that minimize detours.
- Design and constructability concerns focused on minimizing disruption to surrounding neighborhoods, ensuring timely implementation and cost-effectiveness, and aligning with other infrastructure projects.
- Transparent and inclusive engagement was called for, with clear evaluation criteria and validation of community input.
- Coordination with broader City and regional plans was encouraged, including integration with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (BPTP) Update, Connecting Palo Alto, and Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Action Plan.
- Balancing local and Citywide needs was a recurring theme, highlighting the importance of equitable outcomes across neighborhoods.
- Implementation readiness was identified as a key factor, with concerns about cost, property impacts, and the need for timely decision-making to secure funding.

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

To raise awareness of the Project and provide the latest information to the community, the Project team developed the following communication tools:

PROJECT WEBSITE

A dedicated project webpage (paloalto.gov/bikepedcrossings) was created in September 2024 where City staff continue to post the latest information and provide regular updates on upcoming meetings/events and ways to engage on the Project. The webpage includes the Project description, a map of the Project study area, scope of work, approach, timeline, status, links to key materials including the Project Fact Sheet, Existing Conditions Report, and the Updated Design Priorities and Evaluation Criteria Memorandum, as well as information on opportunities to get involved, such



as the online survey, workshop date, time, and location, and upcoming meetings. The project webpage also features documentation of past meetings and events. During Phase 1 of engagement, the webpage saw more than 1,000 visitors.

PROJECT FACT SHEET

A Project Fact Sheet (Appendix A) was made available on the project webpage starting in March 2025 and provides an overview of the Project, how community members can get involved, information on how the City will select design concepts, the overall Project and the community engagement timeline. The Project team distributed more than 200 fact sheets at Citywide community events during Phase 1 engagement.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

As part of the background and information gathering stage of this Project, the City hosted eight small group discussions in November and December 2024. These one-hour virtual meetings included members of the City of Palo Alto City/School Transportation Safety Committee (CSTSC) and Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PABAC), and representatives of Caltrain, Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD), Californians Advocating Responsible Rail Design (CARRD), Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC), and Stanford University. The discussions covered a range of topics including:

- Background and Vision
- Alignments and Design
- Evaluation Criteria
- Community Engagement
- Challenges and Opportunities

Participants expressed unified support for easy, well-lit, accessible, safe crossings of the railroad tracks and Alma Street that are suitable for all ages, reducing the long distances between crossings that exist today. Participants encouraged the team to think about crossing locations from a network perspective to consider not only the crossing location but how to get to/from that point. Participants also shared a list of criteria and priorities for consideration in the evaluation of alternatives. For additional details, please refer to the Synthesis of Small Group Discussions (Appendix B).

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

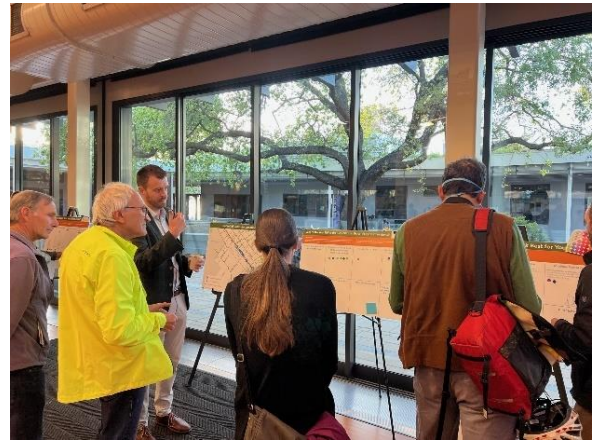
The City hosted a Transportation Planning Workshop on April 2, 2025 from 6–7:30 p.m. at the Mitchell Park Community Center (El Palo Alto Room), to gather input on potential new grade-separated bicycle and pedestrian crossings over the Caltrain corridor. The City promoted the workshop via Weekly City Manager Updates (March 17), PaloAltoConnect Blog (March 27), social media (March 27), UpLift Local eNewsletter



(February 27, March 6, March 20, and March 27), and distributed flyers to all public libraries throughout Palo Alto. The City also sent flyers to all Neighborhood Associations in south Palo Alto and requested it to be forwarded to their networks.

Held in conjunction with the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan (BPTP) Update, the workshop emphasized the connection between the two projects and drew nearly 50 community members.

After a brief presentation, attendees participated in interactive stations where they provided input on how they travel in the area, what types of crossings they prefer, and where crossings should be prioritized.



Key findings from this workshop were:

- Primary reasons for crossing the tracks were for accessing entertainment, recreation, shopping, and dining.
- Biking was the most common travel mode across Meadow Drive, Charleston Road, and the Cal Ave Bike/Ped Tunnel, while driving was most common at Oregon Expressway and San Antonio Road.
- Mobility improvements were the top priority for rail crossing types, followed by enhanced user experience and ease of construction.
- A new rail crossing near Matadero Creek (El Dorado Avenue to Loma Verde Avenue) was the most popular location amongst attendees, followed by a crossing between Meadow Drive and Charleston Road.

For additional details, please refer to the Transportation Planning Workshop Summary (Appendix C).

ONLINE SURVEY

The City conducted a 12-question online survey from April 1, 2025 to May 22, 2025 to understand community preferences for future bicycle and pedestrian rail crossing locations, designs, and improvements. The online survey was hosted by OpenGov.com and could be completed on a smartphone, tablet, or computer. The link for the online survey was available on the project webpage. When possible, the team guided participants to the online survey at pop-up events, the workshop, and during public meetings. The City also promoted the survey via Weekly City Manager Updates (April 7 and April 21), PaloAltoConnect Blog (April 24), social media posts (April 23), and the UpLift Local eNewsletter (April 3, April 10, and April 17). The City also sent direct emails to Neighborhood Associations in south Palo Alto, public and private schools,

Stanford University, and other community stakeholders in Mountain View with a request to promote the online survey through email, newsletters, and/or other means.

The survey garnered more than 700 responses, offering insight into how those typically travel around south Palo Alto and their preferences regarding new bike and pedestrian rail crossings. Of the respondents who provided their zip code (88%), the majority (86%) listed a Palo Alto zip code. Of the respondents who provided their age range (95%), the majority (78%) were age 40 or older. Of the respondents who provided their race/ethnicity (81%) the majority (62%) identified as White, followed by Asian, Asian Indian, or Pacific Islander (16%). The survey and interactive map results are available online¹. The following key themes emerged:

- Importance of New Crossings
 - Respondents expressed strong support for implementing new bike and pedestrian rail crossings in south Palo Alto.
 - Key reasons cited for the importance of new rail crossings included safety, mobility, and equity, particularly for students.
 - Respondents viewed existing rail crossings at Meadow Drive and Charleston as highly trafficked, uncomfortable, or unsafe, especially during school commutes.
 - Rail crossings are an opportunity to increase connectivity among housing, shopping, recreation, and public transportation.
- Existing Travel Habits
 - Nearly half of respondents currently choose to bike, followed by driving alone/riding a motorcycle while traveling in south Palo Alto.
 - Major barriers to biking or walking today include:
 - High vehicle volumes
 - Lack of dedicated bike lanes
 - Unsafe or uncomfortable crossing conditions
 - Comfort, safety and travel time/schedule are top considerations when choosing travel modes today.
- Preliminary Goals and Priorities for New Crossings
 - When asked to rank each preliminary goal and priority for new crossings, nearly half of respondents agreed that “Improving Mobility” should be the top priority for new crossings, followed by “Enhance the User Experience.” “Enhance Visual Appeal” was ranked as last priority.
 - When asked about other priorities that should be considered, safety emerged as the overwhelming top priority, particularly for children, students, seniors, and vulnerable users. Respondents called for separation between bikes, pedestrians, and vehicles, safer railroad crossings, improved lighting, signage, and design features to reduce crashes and deter unsafe behaviors. Accessibility and usability for all ages and abilities was also frequently mentioned.
- New Bike/Ped Rail Crossing Locations
 - When asked where the City should prioritize new bicycle and pedestrian crossings, the following ranking emerged:

¹ South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity Phase 1 Engagement Survey Results:
https://communityfeedback.opengov.com/portals/paloalto/Issue_14352/survey_responses?scope=all#q97567

- 1. Between Meadow Drive and Charleston Road
- 2. Near San Antonio Road
- 3. Near Colorado Avenue and Page Mill Road
- 4. Around Matadero Creek
- 5. Near Barron Creek
- 6. Near Adobe Creek
- 7. I do not think the City of Palo Alto should add bicycle and pedestrian crossings over/under the Caltrain railroad tracks
- Needed Infrastructure
 - Road conditions, such as potholes, gravel, and tree roots, create hazardous situations for cyclists.
 - Traffic calming measures, such as speed humps, roundabouts, and four-way stop signs, are needed in residential areas to slow down vehicles and improve safety.
 - Wide, well-lit paths with gentle grades, better signage, pavement markings, and separated bike lanes are needed throughout the City to create a safer and more connected network for cyclists and pedestrians.

For additional details, please refer to the Phase 1 Engagement Survey Results (Appendix D).

POP-UP EVENTS

To reach stakeholders throughout the community, the City participated in various community-wide events to share Project information and inform them about ways to get involved. Tabling participation included the following events:

- Cal Ave Third Thursday (Earth Week Theme), Thursday, April 17, 2025
- Earth Day Festival, Sunday, April 27, 2025
- Bike to Work Day, Thursday, May 15, 2025



STANDING MEETINGS

The Project team attended the following five standing meetings in May 2025. Staff reports, meeting minutes, staff presentations, and meeting recordings for each meeting can be found in the footnotes. For additional details, please refer to the Synthesis of Standing Meetings (Appendix E).

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PABAC) Meeting: Tuesday, May 6, 2025²
- Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) Meeting: Wednesday, May 14, 2025³
- Rail Committee Meeting: Tuesday, May 20, 2025⁴
- City/School Transportation Safety Committee (CSTCS) Meeting: Thursday, May 22, 2025⁵
- Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) Meeting: Tuesday, May 27, 2025⁶

Members shared a broad spectrum of feedback prioritizing safety, feasibility, user experience, and long-term network integration. The following key themes emerged:

- Prioritization of Specific Rail Crossing Locations
 - Strong support emerged for several key crossing sites, particularly Matadero Creek/Loma Verde Avenue and San Antonio Road due to their potential to serve new development and close existing gaps in east-west connectivity.
 - It was also mentioned that new rail crossing locations should relieve existing crossings and planned work during the rail grade separation construction at Meadow Drive and Charleson Road.
- Focus on Future Demand and Network Connectivity
 - Emphasis was placed on planning for future population growth, new housing, and job access.
 - Input highlighted the need for connections facilitated by the rail crossings to new housing developments, schools, parks, and employment centers, including underserved areas.
 - Specific suggestions included better connections via e-bike routes and consideration of areas like Barron Park and Arastradero Road.
- Design and Accessibility Considerations
 - Clarity was requested on crossing types (overcrossing, undercrossing, hybrid).
 - Strong focus on universal accessibility, safety (including mental health concerns) and user experience within crossings.
 - Concerns included flood risk, parkland disruption, constructability, traffic impacts, parking, and property acquisitions.

² Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PABAC) Meeting: Tuesday, May 6, 2025:

https://www.paloalto.gov/files/assets/public/v/1/transportation/bicycling-walking/pabac/pabac-meetings-2025/2025-05-06_pabac-agenda-packet_final.pdf

³ Planning and Transportation Commission Meeting, Wednesday, May 14, 2025:

<https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplateId=16526>

⁴ Rail Committee Meeting, Tuesday, May 20, 2025: <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplateId=17205>

⁵ City/School Transportation Safety Committee Meeting, Thursday, May 22, 2025: <https://www.paloalto.gov/Events-Directory/Office-of-Transportation/May-2025-CitySchool-Transportation-Safety-Committee-Meeting>

⁶ Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting, Tuesday, May 27, 2025:

<https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplateId=16896>

- Questions arose about street width, bike infrastructure upgrades, and who the crossings would serve (e.g., students, Little League players).
- Evaluation Criteria and Performance Metrics
 - Members called for greater transparency in how criteria will be applied, especially balancing mobility, cost, and construction.
 - Suggested metrics: trip time savings, user experience, distance to existing crossings, visibility, connectivity improvements, future demand projections, and school enrollment areas.
- Transparency and Community Engagement
 - Concerns about data accuracy, clarity of existing maps, and inclusion of street names and key destinations.
 - Requests included clearer explanation of decision-making process, and integration with broader City policies like Vision Zero.
 - Desire to understand potential bike/pedestrian destinations and activities.
- Policy Alignment and Community Impact
 - Emphasis on accelerating decision-making to access funding opportunities, particularly from Measure B.
 - Priority outcomes: feasibility, timeliness, cost-effectiveness, and convenience for users.

ADDITIONAL OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

MAILERS

The City conducted additional outreach to businesses, community organizations and property owners along the corridor by sending a mailer with information about the Project. The City sent the mailer (Appendix F) to more than 1,500 addresses in the vicinity of the Project.

NOTIFICATIONS TO KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The City sent direct emails to the Principals, PTA Team Presidents, and Traffic Safety Representatives (TSRs) of all public schools in the southern portion of the City to inform them about the Project and share ways to get involved and provide feedback. The City also contacted private schools, Neighborhood Associations, and businesses in south Palo Alto. Additionally, the City notified contacts at several public and private schools, Neighborhood Associations, and businesses in nearby Mountain View that are in the vicinity of the Project. The City provided additional information, promoted the online survey, and asked community partners to help spread the word with their networks by providing a communications toolkit for them to distribute.



Appendices

July 29, 2025

**Phase 1 Community Engagement: Establish Design Priorities:
Summary Report**

Appendix A: Project Fact Sheet

The City is working to identify two new locations for people to walk, roll, and bike across the railroad. Creating a path above or below the tracks will improve connectivity, and support the City's mobility and sustainability goals. Help select the preferred crossing locations, designs, and improvements!



Get Involved!

Visit the website and connect with us on social media to gain project details and updates, ways to engage, and share your feedback.

cityofpaloalto.org/bikepedcrossings



How We'll Select Design Concepts

Understand Current Conditions:

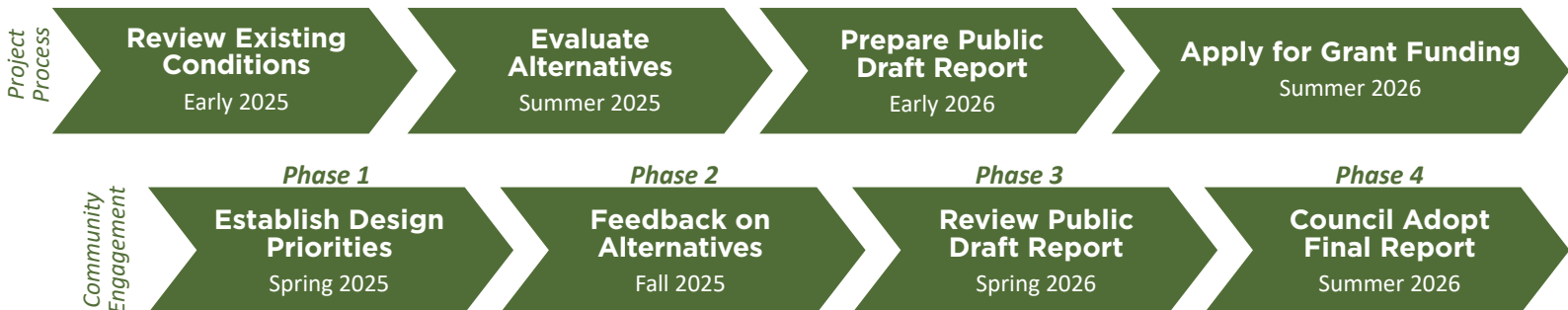
- How workers, residents, students, and visitors get around
- Where trips begin and end
- Demand for walking and biking
- Collision trends
- Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit routes and qualities
- Prior studies completed

Community Input:

- Visions for future bike and pedestrian crossings
- Evaluation framework to select preferred crossing locations and designs
- Crossing locations, design preferences, and surrounding bicycle and pedestrian network improvements to be considered
- Ideas that serve the entire community, including children, elderly, people with disabilities, low-income residents, as well as workers, students and visitors

The project will conclude with the selection of locally preferred crossing locations and design concepts. Next steps for the City include securing grant funding for final design and construction.

Project Timeline & When to Share Input



*Detailed timeline can be found on the project website

July 29, 2025

**Phase 1 Community Engagement: Establish Design Priorities:
Summary Report**

Appendix B: Synthesis of Small Group Discussions

July 2, 2025

SOUTH PALO ALTO BIKE/PED CONNECTIVITY

Synthesis of Small Group Discussions

As part of the background and information gathering stage for the [South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity](#) project, the City of Palo Alto, in partnership with Kittelson, hosted eight small group discussions in November and December 2024. The purpose of these discussions was to gather early input and perspectives from community members to inform and refine the project approach. These one-hour virtual meetings included members of the City of Palo Alto City/School Transportation Safety Committee and Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PABAC), and representatives of Caltrain, Palo Alto Unified School District, Californians Advocating Responsible Rail Design (CARRD), Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC), and Stanford University.

The discussions covered a range of questions across the topics of: Background and Vision; Alignments and Design; Evaluation Criteria and, Community Engagement, Challenges and Opportunities. This document presents a summary of the conversations, organized by topic area.

Background & Vision

1. Share your background and interest in this project? How have you been involved in past planning efforts related to railroad crossings in Palo Alto, and in south Palo Alto?
 - Participants had a range of background and interest in the project with differing levels of involvement and familiarity with past planning efforts. Many participants lived nearby, or used the existing crossings regularly, and expressed strong interest in improvements.
 - Several people indicated they had been involved for multiple decades, while others had only recently become aware of the project.
2. What is your overall vision for bicycle and pedestrian railroad crossings and connectivity in south Palo Alto?
 - Unified in support for easy, well-lit, accessible, safe crossing of the railroad tracks and Alma Street that is suitable for all ages (8-80), reducing the long distances between crossings that exist today.
 - Many people appreciated that a new crossing(s) would support future development and increase east-west connectivity.
3. What would a successful study look like to you?
 - A successful study would begin with a well-defined purpose (e.g., how do we get kids safely from one side of the tracks to another, how do we increase walk/bike mode share, how do we connect to Mountain View), with a clear statement of scope (including how this project relates to planned

E Meadow and Charleston grade-separated crossings), and result in identification of an implementable project with community buy in for funding and construction.

- The study should be grounded in data, identify major origins and destinations (e.g., Stanford and Downtown Palo Alto, schools, Mitchell Park, Google Complex, Caltrain Stations, North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan, California Avenue, community centers, after-school destinations, parks, libraries, public transit, residential areas, shopping centers) and identify how many people live (currently and in the future) in this area, where they go, in order to quantify benefits to these service populations.
- The study should consider existing and, importantly, future land use and development as generations will use the crossings for many years to come.
- The study should include specific goals and evaluation metrics to clearly differentiate alternatives and assess tradeoffs among the alignments.
- The study should include understanding of how the streets/crossings in the area are used today.

Alignments & Design

4. What do you see as the top two potential crossing locations and alignments for a new bicycle and pedestrian railroad crossing? What locations should be avoided?
 - Participants encouraged the team to think about crossing locations from a network perspective. Consider not only the crossing location but how to get to/from that point. What route improvements would be needed to create low stress route?
 - Some people indicated there may be higher needs for crossing near Meadow where people are accessing schools and other key destinations (e.g., Grocery Outlet)
 - A couple of people noted the sheer volume of people walking/biking/driving to school and the need for a crossing facility and approaches that can accommodate high volumes during peak periods, as well as designing solutions that will be intuitive and not require dismounting.
 - Specific locations mentioned were:
 - El Dorado Avenue
 - El Carmelo Avenue
 - Matadero Creek, look at examples of Stevens Creek in Mountain View
 - Loma Verde Avenue, Loma Verde onto Matadero Avenue connection across behind (north of) Chimalus Drive to open path connecting to Bol Park. Loma Verde was identified in the 2012 BPTP Plan.
 - Lindero Drive (or Ely) to Robles Park, which connects to Gunn High School Walk and Roll Routes to School. Some noted they did not like the Lindero option because the approach may require people to travel through the Circles neighborhood, which would likely be an indirect route. Some noted that Meadow and Charleston may be a barrier to this option as well, as people would need to cross these high-volume streets to access the crossing. However, others noted that Lindero works well since it connects to the bike boulevard on Bryant Street.
 - Adobe Creek, though seasonal flooding may be an issue.
 - Greenmeadow, this may be more challenging with a landing in Mountain View

- San Antonio interchange area
- Along Alma Street, opportunity to repurpose duplexes near Loma Verde and reduce Alma St to three lanes, and/or consider a dedicated bike and pedestrian facility along Alma between Meadow/Charleston and San Antonio

Evaluation Criteria

5. What are the key factors you believe should guide the evaluation of alternative designs and alignments for these grade-separated crossings?
 - Construction cost
 - Connectivity to existing/planned network (route directness). South Palo Alto has few direct streets and some “swirly” paths prohibiting direct through movements.
 - Identification in past plans
 - Property acquisition
 - Across barrier connection (e.g., how easily can people cross both Alma and the railroad track)
 - Operations and maintenance cost (what is required to maintain over time, e.g., in terms of needs for pumping stations, high water tables)
 - Alignment with Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (S/CAP) goals (reduce VMT and promote mode shift)
 - Facility width (wider is favorable)
 - Facility height (length and grade of the ramp)
 - Level of separation from other modes
 - Alignment with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) (e.g., facility design and visibility of people on facility, limiting bends/turns and dark corners)
 - Lighting and lighting quality (preference for natural light)
 - Driveway impacts (effect on local driveway access)
 - Environmental impacts (cultural resources, groundwater, and sea level rise)
 - Cost per trip
 - Benefits to students
 - Safety (number of conflict points at facility entrance/exit)
 - Days of operation (e.g., with creek alignment there would be flooding some times of year and crossing would be closed)
 - Number of lower-income and underserved populations benefiting from infrastructure

Community Engagement

6. Who should we be sure to engage in the planning and design process?
 - Participants identified the following specific groups and individuals the project team should engage with:
 - Groups aligned with bike/ped projects – PABAC, SVBC, City/School Transportation Safety Committee,

- Neighborhood/community groups near each crossing, Circles neighborhood, Starr King, Ventura neighborhood group, Midtown neighborhood, Palo Alto neighborhoods group, Barron Park Neighborhood Association, as well as neighborhoods on both sides of Meadow and Charleston that use existing crossings
 - Residents in the area, planned future residents, hotel guests, and commuters
 - Connecting Palo Alto Expanded Community Advisory Panel (XCAP) members
 - PTA, PTA Transportation Safety Representatives (TSRs), and PTAC presidents of south Palo Alto schools, JLS students and parents
 - High School students, Gunn High Bike Club, Fairmeadow, JLS and Hoover students/families
 - Private schools in the area
 - Property holders of larger properties, south of Adobe Creek on either side of Alma (St. Andrew's Methodist Church, Jewish temple); and apartments on the Mountain View side with roads edge the creek
 - Stanford Research Park
 - Utilities (substation)
 - Valley Water
 - Fire Department
 - Police Department
 - Planning and Transportation Commission
7. What events or activities would you like to see included in our engagement plan?
- Many people noted challenges in getting people involved in planning efforts and suggested combining outreach for this project with outreach for the BPTP Update to maximize people's time and leverage input across projects.
 - Several participants offered to help raise awareness of the project and specific engagement events by messaging their channels (e.g., Stanford University and Stanford Research Park newsletters, PAUSD messages from the principals, SVBC newsletter, NextDoor, Facebook groups, parents WhatsApp groups, neighborhood associations).
 - Participants expressed interest in a field visit (walk or bike).
 - Monthly coffees with school principals were also suggested.
 - Utilize pop-ups or interactive feedback stations in high-traffic areas to make it easier for casual cyclists and pedestrians to engage with the project.
8. What other thoughts about communicating concepts and getting people involved?
- Additional feedback received on engagement and approach to engagement included:
 - Include context and background of project, incorporate educational elements, consider how to teach terms/concepts to elevate discussions and make them more meaningful.
 - Be concrete and specific with requests for public input.
 - Provide graphics or illustrations that compare concepts to existing crossings; use local examples; illustrate ramp grades/slopes at ADA vs comfortable for bikes.
 - Consider leveraging technology (e.g., Oculus Rift) to illustrate how it would feel to walk through tunnel of varying widths (8', 20', etc.).
 - Presentations should explain tradeoffs among options.

- Make sure prior input is incorporated and be specific about the inputs the project team is considering ensuring people feel validated and heard.
- Be clear about assumptions and reasons behind them (laws of physics, standards) and what impacts they have on other parts of the project.

Challenges and Opportunities

9. What challenges or obstacles do you foresee in achieving the study objective of selecting two preferred alignments?
 - There was general acknowledgment that this project is intended to solve an urgent need and people are passionate about it. There may be conflicting and strong opinions to navigate.
 - People noted that the more vocal participants are also often experienced bikers and there is a need to also hear from less experienced bikers and people who walk.
10. What else should we (the project team) know?
 - Several participants indicated that property acquisition would be the biggest challenge and suggested creating a list of potential properties the City may need to acquire and flagging those to identify when they go up for sale. One person also suggested the project team create a policy toolkit to support these connections and facilitate establishment of easements.
 - Some participants acknowledged the importance of framing the project and suggested creating an FAQ document to provide relevant background information and acknowledge everything that's been done (i.e., Comprehensive Plan, BPTP Plan, Midtown Connector Study, Rail Corridor Study, and other planning documents).
 - Some people expressed concern that this project and Connecting Palo Alto grade-separation may be working at odds in terms of competition for limited funding.
 - Service agreement with Caltrain will need to be established during this project.

July 29, 2025

**Phase 1 Community Engagement: Establish Design Priorities:
Summary Report**

Appendix C: Transportation Planning Workshop Summary

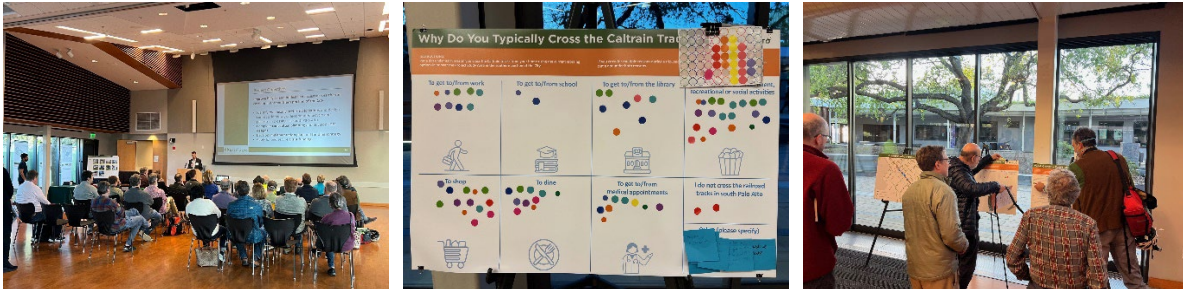
South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity Community Workshop – Summary

April 2, 2025, 6–7:30 p.m.

Mitchell Park Community Center, El Palo Alto room

Event Purpose

The purpose of the South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity Project is to develop community-supported locations and design concepts where two new grade-separated bicycle and pedestrian pathways of the Caltrain corridor may be constructed in south Palo Alto. The first workshop for the project was held in conjunction with the City’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan Update (BPTP) to highlight how the two projects are connected, as the Connectivity project is occurring as part of the implementation of the BPTP. The workshop was held at Palo Alto’s Mitchell Park Community Center (El Palo Alto Room) on Wednesday, April 2, 2025, from 6–7:30 p.m., with nearly 50 community members in attendance. The workshop began with a brief presentation to introduce both projects, after which attendees were invited to share their feedback at different interactive stations. A summary of input received at each of the South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity stations follows.



Bike/Ped Connectivity Board Feedback

The following are key themes from the feedback heard at the Connectivity project stations, while the tables provide more details about community responses for each question.

- Community members typically cross the Caltrain tracks to get to/from entertainment, recreational, or social activities.
- The most common travel modes differed based on the crossing corridor, with most people biking across Meadow Dr., Charleston Rd., the Cal Ave. Bike/Ped Tunnel, and San Antonio Caltrain Station Bike/Ped Underpass, and driving alone or motorcycling across Oregon Expressway/Page Mill Rd. and San Antonio Rd.
- The majority of community members prioritized crossings that improved mobility, with additional comments emphasizing their support for the project and its fast completion.

- A crossing around Matadero Creek (El Dorado Avenue to Loma Verde Avenue) was the most popular location amongst attendees, followed by a crossing between Meadow Drive and Charleston Road.

Why do you typically cross the Caltrain tracks?	
Reason for travel	# of dots
To get to/from work	9
To get to/from school	2
To get to/from the library	8
To get to/from entertainment, recreational or social activities	20
To shop	13
To dine	10
To get to/from medical appointments	9
I do not cross the railroad tracks in south Palo Alto	2
Comments: Other (please specify)	
To get to Mitchell Park	1
Community engagement	2
Fitness/exercise	1
Live near after park library to get to other events Banet Park, saw Antonio/Los Altos	1
Appts at Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF)	1

How do you typically cross the Caltrain tracks?		
Location	Mode	# of dots
Meadow Drive	Walk or mobility device	3
	Bike	20
	E-scooter	0
	Bus or train	1
	Taxi/Rideshare	2
	Drive alone/Motorcycle	4
	Carpool	1
Charleston Road	Walk or mobility device	3
	Bike	8
	E-scooter	0
	Bus or train	1
	Taxi/Rideshare	1
	Drive alone/Motorcycle	3
	Carpool	1
Cal Avenue Bike/Ped Tunnel	Walk or mobility device	4
	Bike	16

	E-scooter	0
	Bus or train	0
	Taxi/Rideshare	2
	Drive alone/Motorcycle	0
	Carpool	1
Oregon Expressway/Page Mill Road	Walk or mobility device	0
	Bike	1
	E-scooter	0
	Bus or train	0
	Taxi/Rideshare	0
	Drive alone/Motorcycle	9
	Carpool	0
San Antonio Road	Walk or mobility device	1
	Bike	0
	E-scooter	0
	Bus or train	1
	Taxi/Rideshare	0
	Drive alone/Motorcycle	4
	Carpool	0
San Antonio Caltrain Station Bike/Ped Underpass	Walk or mobility device	1
	Bike	2
	E-scooter	0
	Bus or train	1
	Taxi/Rideshare	0
	Drive alone/Motorcycle	0
	Carpool	0
I typically do not cross the railroad tracks in south Palo Alto		0
Other (please specify)		0

<i>What crossing types work best for you?</i>	
Crossing types	# of dots
Improve mobility	19
Enhance the user experience	7
Maximize ease of construction	6
Enhance visual appeal	3
Minimize community impacts	2
Comments: Other (please specify)	
For improving mobility: Minimizing elevation change (go under)	1
Easy grade, no long dark tunnel, options D+E would allow more comfort for users because they have fewer driveways to navigate, but if you are considering pedestrian traffic on Alma, this may be a tradeoff.	1

Cost, cost, cost	1
Fastest Implementation	1
Monitor MLS listings on Ponte Blvd. across from Lindero (?) to potentially acquire parcel without eminent domain	1
Do it fast!	1

<i>Where do you think the City should prioritize the crossings?</i>	
Location	# of dots
Near Colorado Avenue and Page Mill Road	0
Around Matadero Creek (El Dorado Avenue to Loma Verde Avenue)	17
Near Barron Creek	4
Between Meadow Drive and Charleston Road	7
Near Adobe Creek	2
Near San Antonio Road	3
I do not think the City of Palo Alto should add bicycle and pedestrian crossings over/under the Caltrain railroad tracks	0
Comments: Other (please specify)	
Improve Cal Ave crossing	1
Same as above	1
Bike/ped separated crossing at Meadow Dr	1
No yield (?) to Meadow Charleston's crossing	1
Where are current trip origins? Where will future trip origins be for new residents (e.g. San Antonio Rd corridor development)?	1

July 29, 2025

**Phase 1 Community Engagement: Establish Design Priorities:
Summary Report**

Appendix D: Phase 1 Engagement Survey Results

South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity

May 29, 2025, 2:07 PM

Contents

i.	Introduction	2
ii.	Summary of responses	3
iii.	Survey questions	11
iv.	Individual responses	14

South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity

Share input to help select the preferred crossing locations, designs, and improvements as part of the South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity project.

Introduction

The City is working to make walking and bicycling easier in Palo Alto. This year, the City Council will be considering adopting a Safe Streets for All Plan, considering updates to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan and advancing several major infrastructure projects such as rail grade separation designs, quiet zone studies at all Palo Alto Caltrain crossings, several traffic calming projects, and more. The previous 2012 Bike Ped Plan identified a critical need for grade-separated bicycle and pedestrian pathways.

Staff has worked to identify current conditions and are now launching community engagement for the South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity project. This effort will identify community-supported locations and design concepts where two new grade-separated bicycle and pedestrian pathways across the Caltrain railroad tracks may be constructed. Creating a path above or below the tracks will improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity in support of the mobility and sustainability goals of the City.

Survey results will help shape the development of this project and identify and compare different options for bicycle and pedestrian railroad crossings and other improvements in south Palo Alto. Learn more about the project at www.cityofpaloalto.org/bikepedcrossings.

South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity

Share input to help select the preferred crossing locations, designs, and improvements as part of the South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity project.

Summary Of Responses

As of May 29, 2025, 2:07 PM, this forum had:

Attendees: 887
Responses: 708
Hours of Public Comment: 35.4

Topic Start

March 24, 2025, 12:33 PM

Topic End

May 22, 2025, 11:59 PM

QUESTION 1

1. How important is it for the City to consider adding bicycle and pedestrian crossings over/under the Caltrain railroad tracks in south Palo Alto?

South Palo Alto is generally defined as south of Page Mill Road/Oregon Expressway.



QUESTION 2

2. How do you get around south Palo Alto?

Please select your primary travel mode.



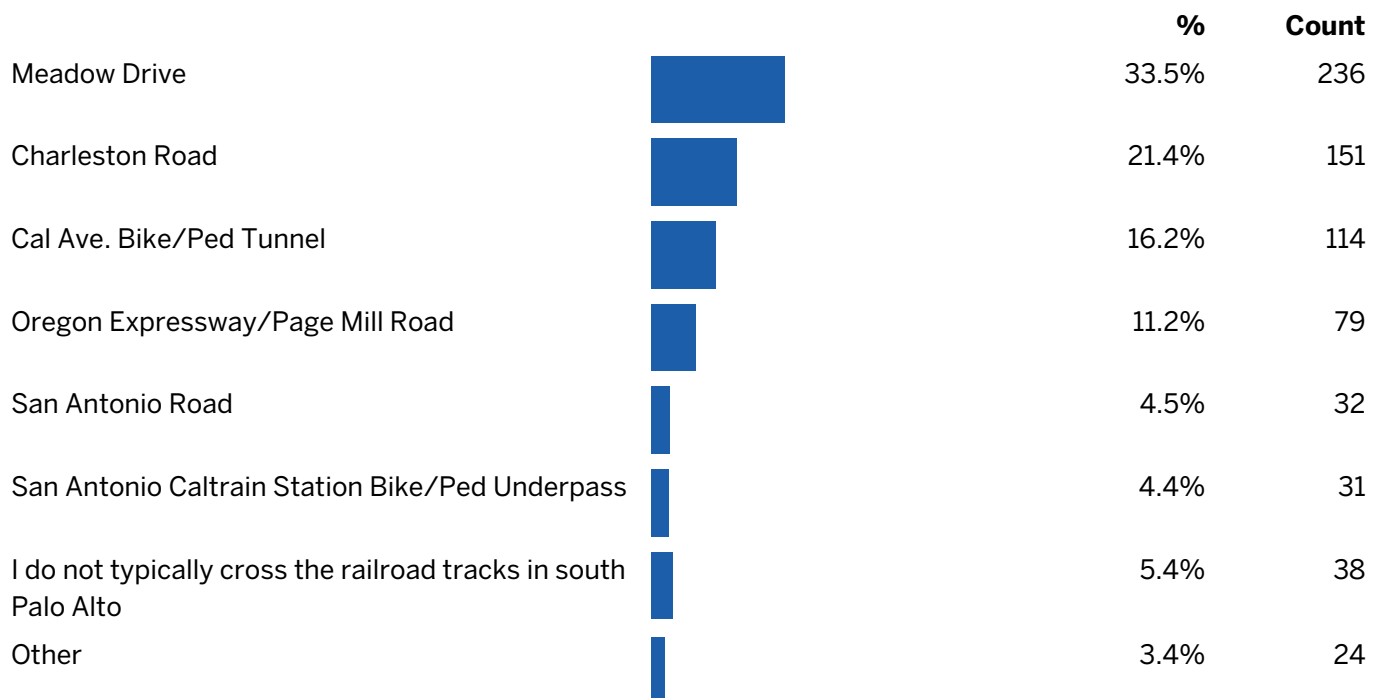
South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity

Share input to help select the preferred crossing locations, designs, and improvements as part of the South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity project.



QUESTION 3

3. Using the travel mode selected in Question 2, where do you typically cross the Caltrain railroad tracks in or near south Palo Alto? (Select one)















South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity

Share input to help select the preferred crossing locations, designs, and improvements as part of the South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity project.



QUESTION 4

4. What factors are most important to you in choosing your means of travel? (Select all that apply)

		%	Count
Travel time or schedule		67.4%	475
Cost		12.2%	86
Flexibility		31.2%	220
Comfort and safety		52.9%	373
Environmental impact		35.5%	250
Accessibility		9.2%	65
Stress reduction		25.8%	182
Travel distance		45.8%	323
Traffic or congestion		36.3%	256
Ability to make stops on the way to or from my destination		19.1%	135
Amount of items I need to carry		41.6%	293
Other		6.0%	42

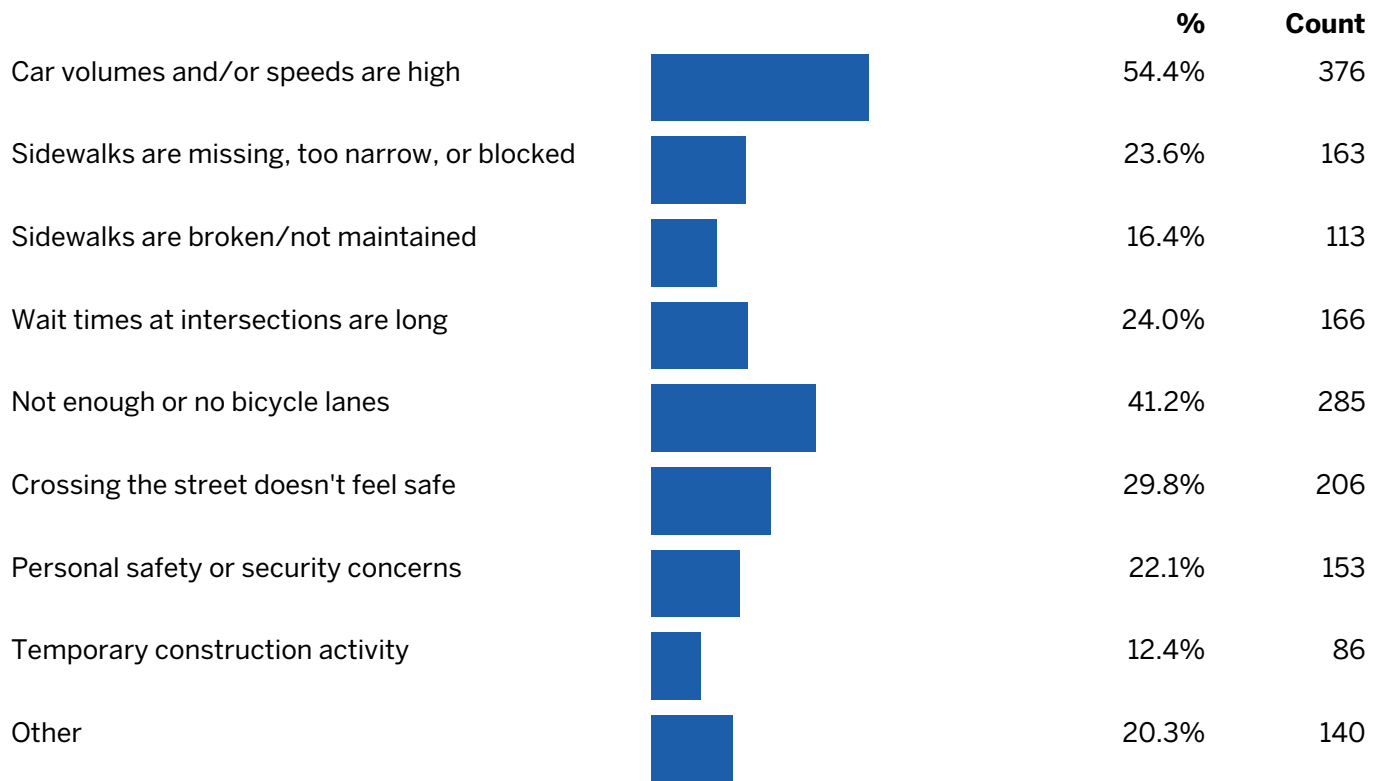
QUESTION 5

5. What are the biggest obstacles that affect your comfort when walking or biking? (Select all that apply)

		%	Count
I never walk or bike		3.0%	21
Streets and sidewalks are not well lit		12.7%	88

South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity

Share input to help select the preferred crossing locations, designs, and improvements as part of the South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity project.



QUESTION 6

6. What is your connection to south Palo Alto? (Select all that apply)



South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity

Share input to help select the preferred crossing locations, designs, and improvements as part of the South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity project.

		%	Count
Medical or dental visits		16.5%	115
Entertainment, recreation, or social purposes		33.8%	235
Visiting libraries and community centers		39.8%	277
Other		6.3%	44

QUESTION 7

7. Please rank each preliminary goal and priority for new crossings.

1. Improve Mobility
2. Enhance the User Experience
3. Minimize Community Impacts
4. Maximize Ease of Construction
5. Enhance Visual Appeal

QUESTION 8

8. If you have other priorities that should be considered, please include here.

Answered	211
Skipped	497

QUESTION 9

9. Where do you think the City should prioritize new bicycle and pedestrian crossings?

1. Between Meadow Drive and Charleston Road
2. Near San Antonio Road
3. Near Colorado Avenue and Page Mill Road
4. Around Matadero Creek
5. Near Barron Creek
6. Near Adobe Creek
7. I do not think the City of Palo Alto should add bicycle and pedestrian crossings over/under the Caltrain railroad tracks

South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity

Share input to help select the preferred crossing locations, designs, and improvements as part of the South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity project.

QUESTION 10

10. Please describe the reason for your selection of preferred crossing locations.

Answered	449
Skipped	259

QUESTION 11

11. Are there other crossing locations along the railroad corridor in south Palo Alto you think should be prioritized in this study?

There are 295 place types - too many to print on a map in this report. Please visit https://communityfeedback.opengov.com/portals/paloalto/Issue_14352/survey_responses?scope=all#q97567 to see all 295 place types on a map.

QUESTION 12

12. Do you have additional comments, suggestions, or concerns regarding the South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity project?

Answered	276
Skipped	432

QUESTION 13

1. What is your home zip code?

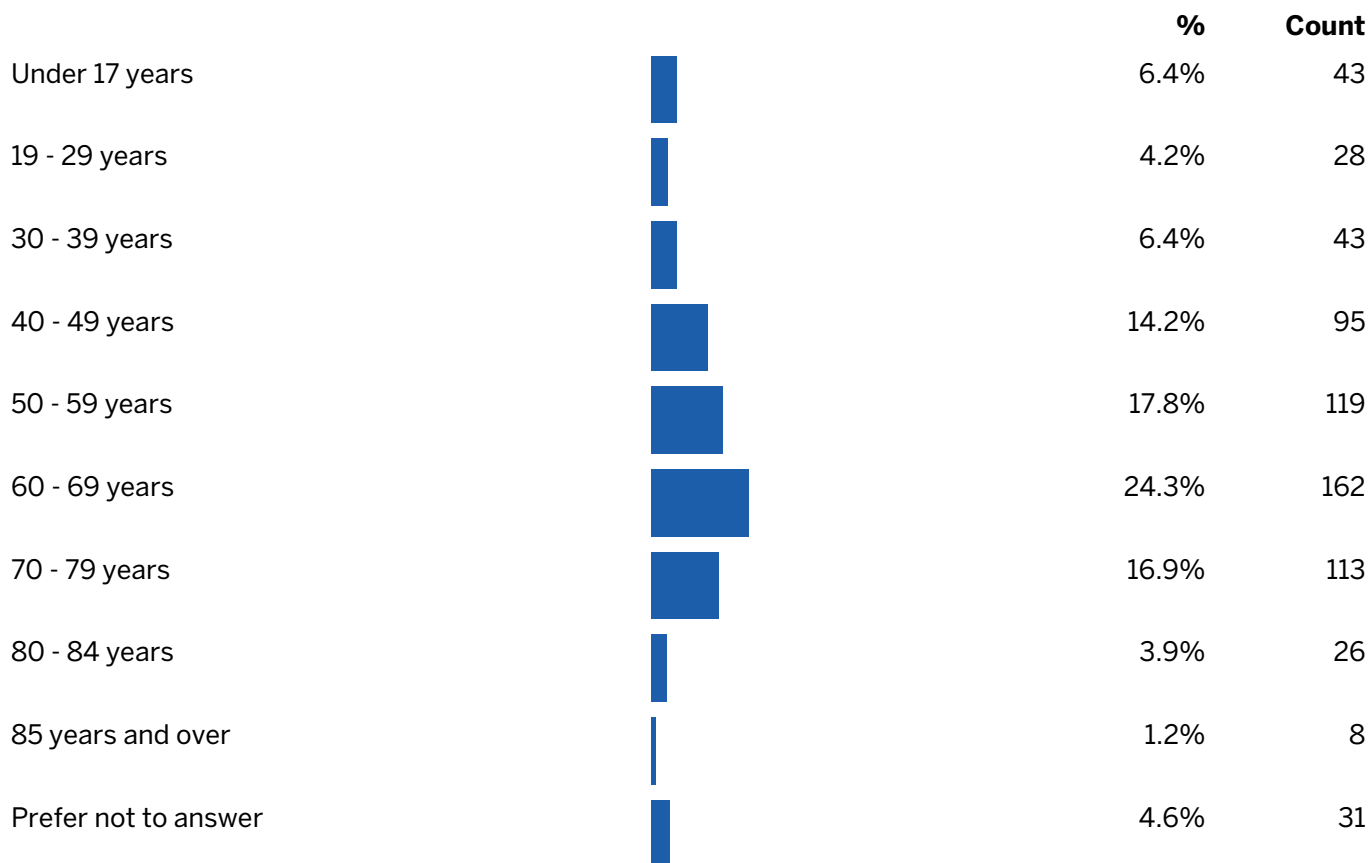
Average	95446.27
Total	59,272,131.00
Count	621
Skipped	87

QUESTION 14

2. How old are you?

South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity

Share input to help select the preferred crossing locations, designs, and improvements as part of the South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity project.



QUESTION 15

3. How do you identify your race/ethnicity? (Check all that apply)



South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity

Share input to help select the preferred crossing locations, designs, and improvements as part of the South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity project.

		%	Count
White		62.1%	404
Prefer not to answer		18.7%	122
Other		2.2%	14

QUESTION 16

4. How do you identify your gender?

		%	Count
Woman		43.1%	284
Man		45.1%	297
Prefer not to answer		10.9%	72
Identify in another way		0.9%	6

July 29, 2025

**Phase 1 Community Engagement: Establish Design Priorities:
Summary Report**

Appendix E: Synthesis of Standing Meetings

SOUTH PALO ALTO BIKE/PED CONNECTIVITY

PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY OF STANDING MEETINGS

Phase 1 Committee Meeting Synthesis by Group

Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PABAC) Meeting (May 6, 2025)

- Expressed concern with the use of the term “locally preferred alternative” and whether that means neighborhoods could sway the decision.
- Requested clarification on whether crossing designs will consider overcrossings, undercrossing, or signalized intersection at Alma Street coupled with an over- or undercrossing.
- Noted the feasibility of bike and pedestrian rail crossings is highly dependent on what the City selects for preferred designs as part of the on-going Meadow and Charleston grade separation project.
- Mentioned online survey did not clearly show the potential crossing location at Loma Verde Avenue and should be updated to make that clearer.
- Suggested the design priority “maximizing ease of construction” consider construction duration for each alternative.
- There was general agreement to prioritize “Location B” near Matadero Creek/Loma Verde Ave, noting advantages with existing connections to the bike network and distance between existing rail crossings at California Avenue and Meadow Drive.
- Suggested evaluation criteria consider user experience (e.g., sight lines and other aspects of design concepts that affect user experience) within the rail crossing, as well as user experience to get to/from the rail crossing.
- Expressed concerns with future facility width and ability to accommodate demand.
- Requested demand calculations consider population densities, future land use, population growth, current demand at existing crossings that accounts for some shift to occur and induced demand.

Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) Meeting (May 14, 2025)

- Discussed project study area, including how the boundary was selected, what it represents, and what it will be used throughout the project, and suggested expansion of the study area to include more of south Palo Alto (e.g., Barron Park and Arastradero Road) since those areas are also important.
- Requested clarification on the accessibility analysis, level of traffic stress analysis, origin-destination maps, count data, and travel model data (e.g., population growth) used in the analyses.

- Commented on the resolution and character of the data used in the Existing Conditions Report and recommended additional explanation of the data could be helpful.
- Recommended evaluation criteria consider benefits to interpersonal relationships, personal security, and mental wellbeing by improving neighborhood accessibility and deterring unwanted behaviors (e.g., assault, self-harm) at rail crossings.
- Discussed history of the project and planning context with Rail Grade Separation Expanded Community Advisory Panel (XCAP) recommendations to focus on area near Loma Verde Ave.
- Requested definition of “vulnerable populations” in the draft design priorities.
- Suggested focusing on shifting trips that are more likely to be made by walking or biking (e.g., recreational trips, commute trips, shopping trips).
- Acknowledged existing trips at Meadow and Charleston suggest people travel in loops rather than using the same roadways to/from destinations and suggested future analysis consider relationship between potential crossings.
- Suggested evaluation criteria consider flooding risk as part of operations and maintenance costs.
- Noted of the fourteen evaluation criteria presented, eleven are specific to the immediate crossing and three (accessibility, demand, and pedestrian and bicyclist comfort) consider the area outside of the crossing. Recommended separating list of evaluation criteria into those two categories.
- Suggested evaluation criteria consider number of turns, existing and new bike/ped comfort, traffic congestion or vehicle delay on Alma St and Park Blvd, and accessibility for different users (e.g., wheelchairs, large bikes, bike trailers).
- Endorsed a future rail crossing at “Location B” at Loma Verde Ave, “Location A” at El Dorado Ave, “Location E” at Greenmeadow Way connecting to Wilkie Way, and “Location F” at San Antonio Road.

Rail Committee Meeting (May 20, 2025)

- Commented that materials should mention all the other things happening in south Palo Alto (e.g., San Antonio Road Area Plan, Vision Zero/Safe Systems Approach, Cubberly Community Center Project, Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan Update, future housing in vicinity of San Antonio Road and El Camino Real, Rail Grade Separation Projects), and how these efforts all go together. Emphasized that additional context is important to tighten the web of understanding for future bike/ped rail crossings.
- Requested that viaduct and trench alternatives are not viable grade separation solutions and should not be discussed.
- Suggested evaluation criteria consider how a new rail crossing would increase access to new areas/geographies.
- Requested future land use development should be considered and an overlay of potential growth (e.g., housing sites) could be included in the maps. Recommended including schools (Gunn High School), enrollment districts, and suggested walk and roll routes on maps as well.
- Mentioned that “Location B” at Loma Verde Ave had historically been supported by the community and would provide a connection from Stanford Research Park to Midtown. “Location B” near Matadero Creek and “Location F” at San Antonio Road were also supported because they

June 24, 2025

have the widest physical location and may provide more opportunities with less property impacts, and close the biggest gaps in the community.

- Noted several north-south routes for bikes and pedestrians in Palo Alto, with limited east-west routes.
- Suggested evaluation criteria consider distance/time to access a rail crossing (and Alma St).
- Commented that at “Location B” around Matadero Creek there is a wide planting strip on the eastside of Caltrain tracks and some surplus Caltrain right-of-way on the westside of the tracks.
- Expressed urgency and would like to see this project move forward as soon as possible. Also noted that new rail crossing will need to relieve existing crossings and provide crossings during rail grade separation construction at Meadow and Charleston, which should be included in the evaluation criteria.
- Suggested Measure B funding for grade separation projects may be a potential funding source for the project.

City/School Transportation Safety Committee (CSTSC) Meeting (May 22, 2025)

- Expressed support for “Location B” around Matadero Creek given distance between existing crossings and noted a concern about the location of other crossings being considered given the close proximity to existing crossings.
- Expressed concerns about potential increases in bicycle volumes on narrow streets with on-street parking accessing a new crossing and how those trips will be accommodated by this project.
- Requested overlay of enrollment boundary on maps of the schools to understand which students have to cross Alma St and railroad tracks. Noted youth also have to cross Alma St and railroad tracks for other purposes, such as to access Palo Alto Little League on Middlefield Rd.

Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) Meeting (May 27, 2025)

- Commented on design priorities noting that community impacts to parkland and convenience under “enhance user experience” should be considered.
- Expressed constructability, feasibility, and cost-effectiveness as priorities.
- Recognized the largest gap between existing rail crossings is at “Location B” near Matadero Creek and Loma Verde Ave and suggested the project prioritize this location over others closer to existing crossings (e.g., Colorado/Page Mill).
- Noted that Rail Grade Separation is a major consideration and additional construction and property impacts near Meadow and Charleston might exacerbate pain for those neighborhoods.
- Asked about the public engagement plan and outreach to English learners.
- Expressed general support of draft design priorities and evaluation criteria with member(s) noting that safety and convenience could be more explicitly discussed and avoiding parcel impacts was a priority.

July 29, 2025

**Phase 1 Community Engagement: Establish Design Priorities:
Summary Report**

Appendix F: Project Mailer

Learn about and share input on South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity.

Take Our Brief Online Survey Before May 15!

Scan the QR Code or Visit PaloAlto.Gov/BikePedCrossings



Contact Us

Phone: (650) 329-2520

Email: Transportation@PaloAlto.Gov



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

City of Palo Alto

Office of Transportation

250 Hamilton Ave.

5th Floor

Palo Alto, CA 94301

South Palo Alto Bike/Ped Connectivity

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The City of Palo Alto is engaging with the community to develop locally preferred locations and design concepts for additional bicycle and pedestrian crossings above or below the Caltrain corridor in the southern part of the City.

Community feedback will help inform every aspect of this project, including the selection of preferred rail crossing locations, designs, and improvements along the corridor.

PaloAlto.Gov/BikePedCrossings

SHARE INPUT & FEEDBACK

Take the brief online survey to share how you travel around south Palo Alto and provide your feedback on potential new bike and pedestrian rail crossings!

Complete the online survey before May 15, 2025.

