Presentation's and City Manager Comments for the

May 13, 2019

City Council Meeting

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS
5/13/19

Topic: Cal Ave Garage Groundbreaking
Submitted by: PWE
Next Tuesday, May 21, at 9 a.m. there will a groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate the start of major construction on the new California Avenue Parking Garage at 350 Sherman Avenue. The new garage is part of the 2014 Infrastructure Plan and once complete, construction of the new Public Safety Building on the adjacent parking lot will begin. The public is invited to attend the groundbreaking.

Topic: Emergency Services Volunteer (ESV) Program Spring Disaster Drill
Submitted by: OES
Emergency Services Volunteer (ESV) Program Spring Disaster Drill will be held this Saturday, May 18, from 12 p.m.-4 p.m. at the Roth Building, 300 Homer Ave. Dozens of trained community volunteers will gather in and around the historic Roth Building to practice their skills in a simulated disaster exercise. For more information, including how to participate, please visit: cityofpaloalto.org/emergencyvolunteers

Topic: Bike to Work Day Recap
Submitted by: SRTS
A record 2,400 bicyclists rode through the four Energizer Stations sponsored by Palo Alto last Thursday for Bike to Work Day – that's a 2.1 percent increase over last year's record numbers. For the first time, there were also two additional youth-focused energizer stations near Gunn and Castilleja High Schools. Another first was the Bike Away from Work Bash held at Summit Bicycles. There educational outreach materials about the City's current transportation safety projects were provided. In the spirit of the day, 18 City bikes were tuned-up so employees could ride them to the annual employee picnic that was held at Mitchell Park that same day.

Evaluation of the Palo Alto Residential Preferential Parking (RPP) Program

City Council || May 13, 2019

What is an RPP Program?

- A system that provides preferential parking privileges to the residents and employees of businesses within an RPP district

- Intended to restore and enhance the quality of life in residential neighborhoods by reducing the negative impacts of non-resident parking

- Usually the boundaries of an RPP district coincide with the boundaries of a residential neighborhood

RPP Application in Palo Alto

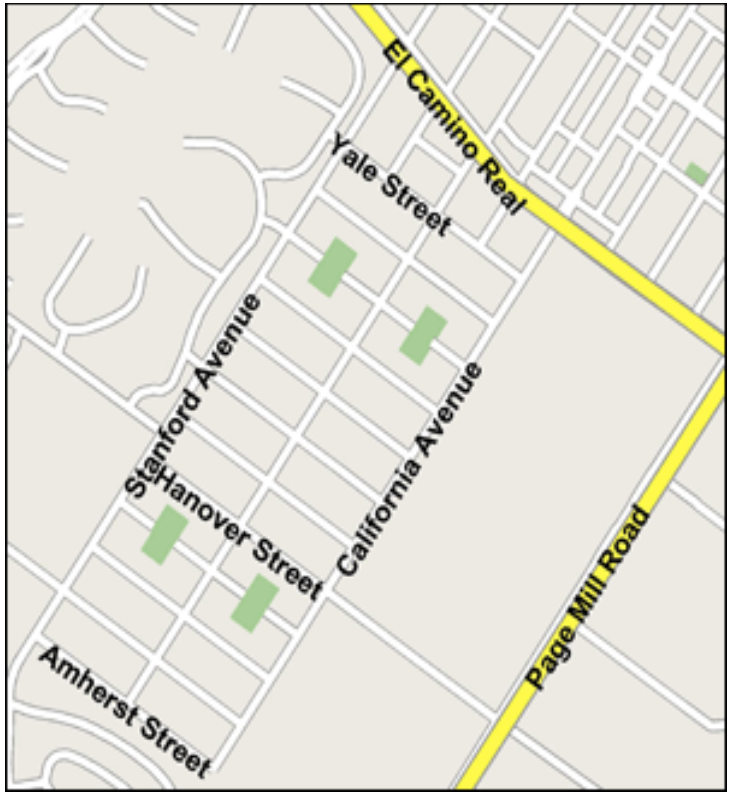
The five RPP districts encompass 28% of the City's households

HOUSEHOLDS IN RPP DISTRICTS		
District	Number	Percent*
Downtown	5,154	66%
Evergreen Park-Mayfield	1,068	14%
College Terrace	676	9%
Crescent Park	616	8%
Southgate	220	3%
Total	7,734	100%

* Percentage of RPP households

College Terrace RPP

- First Palo Alto RPP district
- In response to the spillover of employee parking
- Exempts the residents from the weekday two-hour parking time limits
- Provisions for this district are relatively straight-forward and generally effective



Crescent Park RPP

- Second Palo Alto RPP district
- In response to the intrusion of overnight parking by residents located outside of the neighborhood
- Exempts the residents from the no parking regulation between 2:00 to 5:00 am
- Provisions of this district are relatively straightforward and generally effective

Citywide RPP Ordinance

- Used to establish Downtown RPP, Evergreen Park-Mayfield RPP and Southgate RPP
- Balance the desires of residents to reduce parking within neighborhoods; and the needs of adjoining businesses for customer and employee parking
- Provisions are relatively complicated and partially effective
- Maps of New Districts are in the report

Why review the RPP Program?

- Some residents find that there is still too much parking in their neighborhoods
- Some employees assert inability to obtain place to park
- Some visitors (customers) are confused about parking regulations
- Parking staff is overwhelmed

Parking Occupancy on Residential Streets

- To spread out employee parking the RPP districts are divided into zones
- Between the Downtown and Evergreen Park-Mayfield districts, there are 17 employee zones
- Available parking spaces by zones, during the weekday peak parking period, range from a low of 33% to a high of 81%
- Acceptability of % available spaces is anecdotal
- A parking availability standard does not exist

Employee Parking

RPP District	Garages & Lots Permits			Residential Street Permits		
	Available	Allocated	Unallocated	Available	Allocated	Unallocated
Downtown	3,250	3,050	200	1,000	830	170
EPM	980	980	0	290	250	40
Total	4,230	4,030	200	1,290	1,080	210

- 75% of employees park in garages and lots
- Systemwide there is a 5% vacancy
- 25% of employees park on-street in residential areas
- Systemwide there is a 16% vacancy

Visitor (Customer) Parking

- Visitors receive preferential treatment through on-street*, garage, and lot parking in the commercial areas and adjoining residential streets
- Done through short-term parking time limits and zones

RPP District	Area	Zones/Facility	Parking Regulation
Downtown	Residential	10 zones	2-hour time limit
	Commercial	4 on-street color zones	2-hour time limit
		4 parking lot color zones	2-hour time limit
		4 parking garage color zones	3-hour time limit
		SOFA on-street zone	2-hour time limit
Evergreen Park-Mayfield	Residential	7 zones	2-hour time limit
	Commercial	1 zone	2-hour time limit
		Parking lots	2-hour time limit
		Parking garages	3-hour time limit

*parking-time limit spaces

Visitor (Customer) Parking – Confusing Time Regulations

There are 25 zones, what are the boundaries?

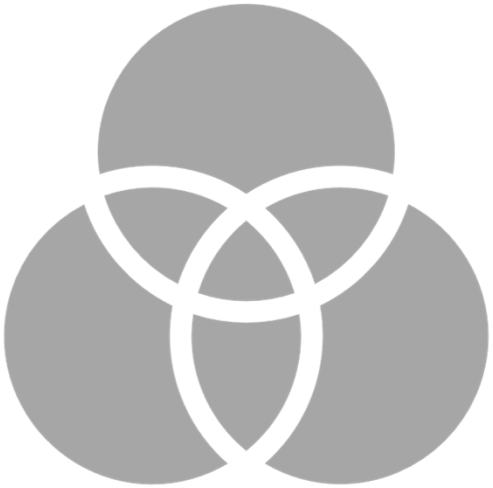
When is the Initial parking?

Visitor (Customer) Parking – Parking Beyond Time Limits

- Move to another zone
- Purchase a permit
- Not widely understood
- Costly – $25 flat fee

RPP Program is Challenging to Administer

- Customized provisions for each RPP district
- Modifications and constituent concerns
- New districts
- System improvements



➢ Prescription for burnout and staff turnover

Customized Provisions for Each District

- Different number of resident permits
- Different resident permit fees
- Different number of single day resident permits
- 19 employee permit zones
- 5 commercial short-term parking zones
- Different employee permit fees
- Regular and reduced-price employee permits
- Different permit renewal dates
- Different expectations for how the RPP should work

Modifications and Constituent Concerns

- Reduce number of employee permits
- Improve user interface
- Audit employee permittees and uses
- Annex to existing RPP Districts
- Modify regulations

Requests for New RPP Districts

- Old Palo Alto – 1st priority

  Staff is collecting parking occupancy data in the Old Palo Alto area and is planning to begin stakeholder outreach this summer

- Green Acres – 2nd priority

  Subject to available staff resources

System Improvements

- Valet program that will result in more spaces for employee parking in garages and lots
- Permit parking and citation management system to improve user interface
- Pilot test of parking garage and lot occupancy indicators
- Downtown parking operations pay-parking plan
- New facilities

Report Recommendations: Action by City Council Category

- Three of the five recommendations will be formally considered by the City Council in the form of contracts for service or the Proposed Operating Budget.
- A fourth recommendation is to add a question to the Annual National Citizen Survey to obtain the opinion of residents affected by the RPP program
- The fifth recommendation relates to the process to engage the community

Report Recommendations: Actions by City Mgr Category

- 21 recommendations referred directly to the City Manager
- Staff develop parking workplan which will be brought back to City Council
- Actions that have policy and/or fiscal implications will return to the City Council for consideration

Report Recommendations: Comm. Engagement Category

- Community input on key policy issues such as the establishment of “Parking Availability Standards” and reductions in employee permits on residential streets
- Parking availability is the “end in mind”
- Reducing number of employee permits issued is a means to achieve the “end in mind”

Reducing Downtown RPP Employee Permits

- Just Do It – Predetermined reduction of spaces
- Use It or Lose It - Take away spaces that go unused

Year	Available	Reserve
2016	2,000	0
2017	1,400	100
2018	1,000	200

- Quid Pro Quo – Take away on-street spaces as new off-street spaces created

Report Recommendations: Comm. Engagement Category

Community input forum could come through a variety of venues

- Planning and Transportation Commission
- Working group convened by the City Manager
- Working group established by the City Council

Recommendation for Action Today

1. Accept the RPP Program Review and direct staff to return to City Council with a workplan that reflects City Council direction on the 35 recommendations as well as an evaluation and implementation timeline
2. Identify the preferred forum for resident and business community engagement
3. Confirm staff's intent to continue the proposed RPP district outreach and stakeholder process for Old Palo Alto and Green Acres
4. Confirm that modifications to existing RPP districts will be put on hold until potential overall program changes are considered

City Council Meeting
Grade Separation Alternatives and Evaluation Criteria

May 13, 2019

CITY OF PALO ALTO

Presentation Overview

- Recap Council Action from April 22
- Review Current Alternatives to Study
- Review of Citywide Tunnel Alternative
- Evaluation Criteria Matrix
- Discussion and Recommendations

At-Grade Crossing
Churchill Ave. and Caltrain Tracks

Summary of April 22 City Council Action

A. Approve the Rail Grade Separation Work Plan as a follow up to the March 18th Committee of the Whole recommendation including a timeline and process by which the City Council would select a preferred solution to begin environmental review;

B. Add more check-ins with Council. Redefine the Community Working Group (WG) meetings to cover more ground;

C. Approve Additional Alternatives to be studied including:

   i. Allow WG to brainstorm some alternatives such as Embarcadero, Meadow and Charleston;

   ii. Ensure the trench alternative minimizes construction impacts;

D. Direct Staff to return to Council with an amendment to contract C18171057 with AECOM to reflect scope changes and extension to October 2019 for Council selection of a preferred solution; and

E. Direct Staff to return to Council with an update on the citywide tunnel.

Link to April 22, 2019 Agenda and Minutes: https://cityofpaloalto.org/gov/agendas/council/default.asp

Alternatives to Study-For Consideration

Meadow / Charleston Trench

- Lower the railroad below the roadways at Meadow and Charleston

Meadow / Charleston Hybrid

- Partially lower the roads and partially elevate the tracks at Meadow and Charleston

Meadow / Charleston Viaduct

- Raise the railroad above the roadways at Meadow and Charleston on structure

Citywide Tunnel

- Lower the railroad below the roadways in a tunnel

Churchill Ave. Closure

- At-grade crossing to be fully closed at Churchill Ave. with a grade separation for Bike/Ped connectivity [added the ability to consider all street mitigation options including Embarcadero]

Churchill Ave. Vicinity Viaduct

- Raise the railroad above the roadways in the vicinity of Churchill on structure

South Palo Alto Tunnel

- Tunnel south of Oregon Expressway under Meadow and Charleston ~~(with a variation to separate freight and passenger rail)~~

Citywide Tunnel

Future handling of a Citywide tunnel as an alternative to study, either:

I. Removing the citywide tunnel from further study and consideration;

II. Refining the description of the alternative that will continue to be studied and considered to “Tunnel from Channing Avenue and the southern City limit”; or

III. Making no change.

Citywide Tunnel Questions

Staff received many questions from the Council related to the citywide tunnel. The questions from the staff report are:

1. Where *exactly* does the tunnel start?
2. What is the reason for the tunnel starting location?
3. Where *exactly* does the tunnel end?
4. Why can't you build the tunnel adjacent to the existing rail line and use the existing tracks as the temporary tracks during construction (similar to the plan for the viaduct at Meadow-Charleston)?
5. Are there any alternative locations for the temporary (shoofly) track?
6. Is there an opportunity for value capture to pay for the tunnel?

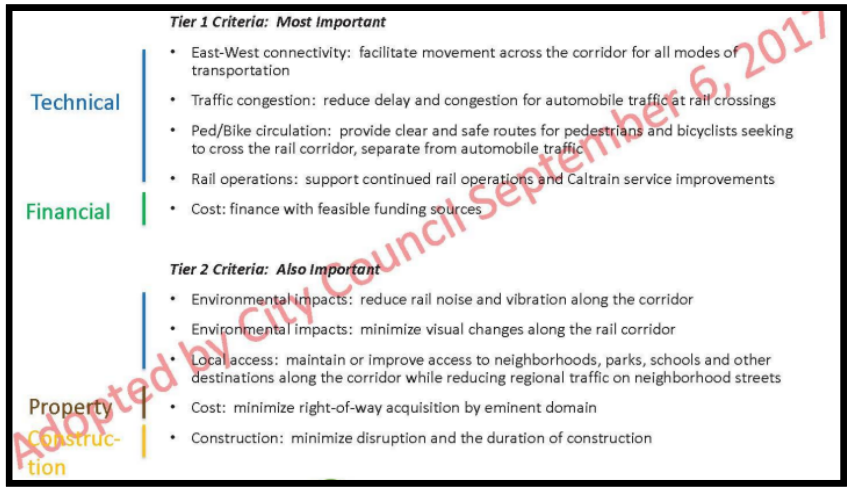
Citywide Tunnel Animation

Citywide tunnel animation available online at:
https://pagradesep.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Palo-Alto_Full_Tunnel-05.wmv

Process for Evaluation Criteria Weighting

Proposed Process to Weight Evaluation Criteria:

- Today is first discussion for Council to review a proposed weighting model for criteria
- Council to provide direction to staff regarding the proposed weighting model
- The Working Group would evaluate alternatives using the Council-approved model
- Council would reevaluate the model and determine if any changes are needed



Process for Evaluation Criteria Weighting

City Council Action to Date:

- September 6, 2017: Council approved the evaluation criteria that is being used today. No weights were given to the criteria. Staff has used colors to indicate impact.
- March 18, 2019: Council directed staff to create a dynamic model that orders the alternatives based on the criteria.
- April 22, 2019: Council adopted a Rail Workplan which called for the iterative approach explained on the previous slide.

Process for Evaluation Criteria Weighting

Example model that orders the alternatives based on criteria – has pass/fail option for 2 of the criteria; the rest would be weighted

EXAMPLE ONLY: SOUTHERN SEGMENT: CHARLESTON AND MEADOW CROSSINGS										
Criteria		Relative Weight	Value/Score (Score = value times relative weight)							
			Viaduct		Southern Tunnel		Trench		Hybrid	City Tunnel
D	Support continued rail operations	Pass/Fail								
E	Finance with feasible funding sources	Pass/Fail								
A	Improve east-west connectivity	10%								
B	Reduce traffic congestion and delays	15%								
C	Provide clear, safe routes for pedestrians and bikes	10%								
F	Minimize right-of-way acquisition	15%								
G	Reduce rail noise and vibration	5%								
H	Maintain or improve local access	15%								
I	Minimize visual changes along the corridor	5%								
J	Minimize disruption and duration of construction	10%								
K	Order of magnitude of (City) cost	15%								
Total		100%								

Process for Evaluation Criteria Weighting

Example model that orders the alternatives based on criteria – has pass/fail option for 2 of the criteria; the rest would be weighted

Iterative approach is recommended for the weights; also, clarity on how Council will use the model

EXAMPLE ONLY: SOUTHERN SEGMENT: CHARLESTON AND MEADOW CROSSINGS										
Criteria		Relative Weight	Value/Score (Score = value times relative weight)							
			Viaduct		Southern Tunnel		Trench		Hybrid	City Tunnel
D	Support continued rail operations	Pass/Fail								
E	Finance with feasible funding sources	Pass/Fail								
A	Improve east-west connectivity	10%	10		10		10			
B	Reduce traffic congestion and delays	15%	10		10		10			
C	Provide clear, safe routes for pedestrians and bikes	10%	10		10		10			
F	Minimize right-of-way acquisition	15%	10		10		2			
G	Reduce rail noise and vibration	5%	5		6		9			
H	Maintain or improve local access	15%	10		10		10			
I	Minimize visual changes along the corridor	5%	4		5		10			
J	Minimize disruption and duration of construction	10%	7		7		3			
K	Order of magnitude of (City) cost	15%	6		5		1			
Total		100%								

Council Decisions

Decide how to proceed regarding the citywide tunnel:

- Removing the citywide tunnel from further study and consideration;
- Refining the description of the alternative that will continue to be studied and considered to “Tunnel from Channing Avenue and the southern City limit”; or
- Making no change.

- Decide on initial weights and use for model for the Evaluation Criteria as direction for staff with the Expanded CAP

At-Grade Crossing
Meadow Drive and Caltrain Tracks

Materials for this meeting will be posted to:
www.cityofpaloalto.org/ConnectingPaloAlto