



San Mateo Set-Out Track

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a “set-out” track?

A set-out track creates a storage space for track maintenance equipment. It typically includes a track approximately 1,000 feet in length and an access road. Maintenance vehicles such as hi-rail trucks of various sizes, tampers, regulators, stabilizers, ballast cars, and flat cars may be stored there on occasion to help with maintenance on the corridor. The maintenance vehicles can be driven to their corridor destination and do not need to be hooked up to a train.

Is a set-out track the same as a maintenance yard?

No, a set-out track is a small spur of track that is not used on a daily basis. It’s primary purpose is to store track maintenance vehicle(s) when work on the corridor is needed within a certain proximity.

A maintenance yard is a large complex used to maintain the trains that provide service to passengers. The trains end their daily service at the yard where maintenance is performed on the locomotives/engines and the cleaning of the passenger cars takes place.

There are no plans, and never have been, to construct a Maintenance Yard at Hayward Park.

(Please see the last page for more information on the differences between a set-out track and a maintenance yard.)

Why is a set-out track needed?

A set-out track is needed to maintain reliable commuter rail service. From the set-out track crews are able to drive a track maintenance vehicle to conduct activities such as tie replacement and track repair, which are necessary due to wear and tear along the corridor.

Set-out tracks are located at regular intervals between San Francisco and San Jose and allow for efficient use of limited work windows to keep the railroad in a State of Good Repair. They also support improvement projects, such as Caltrain Electrification and the 25th Avenue Grade Separation Project.

There are very limited windows of time that track maintenance can be performed (typically during non-revenue hours). Due to speed restrictions on maintenance equipment on the main track the amount of travel time impacts that level of productivity of the maintenance crews. The current standard is to locate set-out tracks approximately three miles apart. This rule can be modified but must be studied and approved by Caltrain Engineering and Operations.

How many set-out tracks are along the Caltrain corridor?

Location	Adjacent Area
San Francisco (3)	Commercial & Former Yard
Millbrae	Residential
Burlingame	School
San Mateo	Removed for Grade Separation Project, Replacement Needed
San Carlos	Residential & Commercial
Palo Alto (2)	Residential & Commercial
Mt. View	Expressway
Sunnyvale	Commercial
Santa Clara (2)	Residential & Commercial
San Jose	Residential

Is the construction of the set-out track part of the 25th Avenue Grade Separation Project?

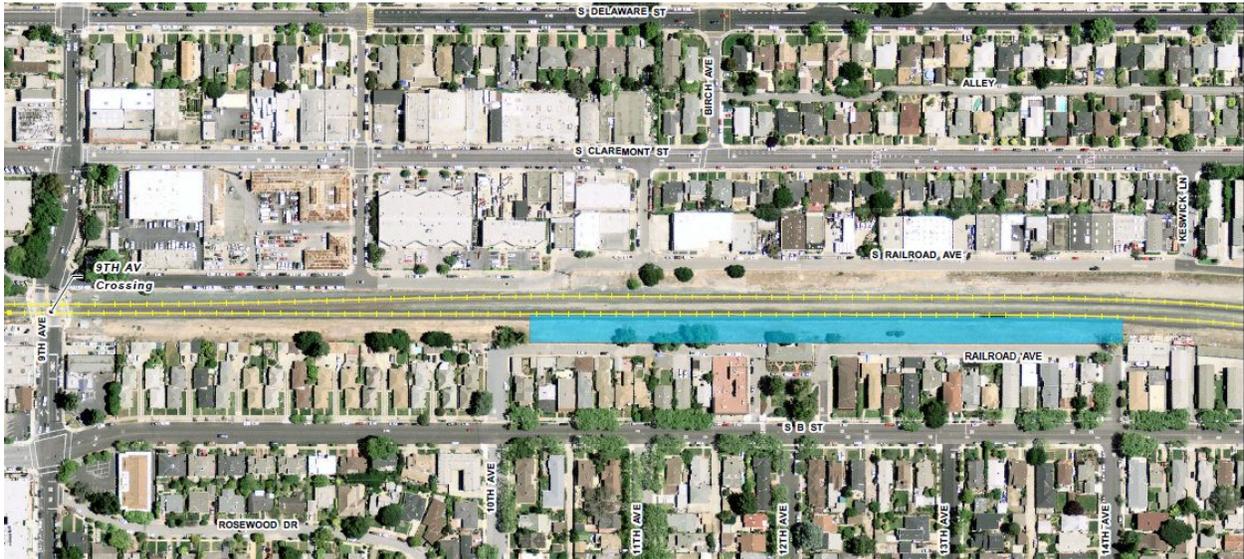
Caltrain previously had a San Mateo set-out track across from Bay Meadows. The 25th Ave. Grade Separation Project, a safety improvement project that will improve safety for motorists and pedestrians and will reduce horn noise and local traffic congestion, prompted the removal of the existing set-out track. At the time it was agreed that there would be a replacement set-out track installed; however, the installation of the future set-out track is a separate project with a distinct design, timeline, and contract.

How was the location selected for the future set-out track?

Selecting a new site for the replacement set-out track area included considerations such as tracks at ground-level, width and length requirements, and compatibility with electrification infrastructure.

Where will the future replacement set-out track be located?

The originally planned location of the replacement set-out track project is inside the Caltrain right of way between 9th and 14th Avenues in San Mateo (map below).



In the coming months Caltrain will be examining possible alternative locations for a set-out track that will replace as close as possible the set-out track functions that were displaced for the San Mateo 25th Avenue Grade Separation Project. There will be a community meeting to discuss potential alternative locations and to take additional input.

What environmental work was done to determine the originally planned replacement location?

An environmental process began in July 2017, with the development of the project concept and preparation of the environmental study which considered all environmental areas required under CEQA, including biological resources, cultural resources, visual resources/aesthetics, noise, air quality, hazardous materials and construction impacts, among others. The CEQA public review period occurred in early 2018, and the project was approved in April 2018.

What work is occurring for the project?

A construction contract has not yet been awarded for the project. Recently, soil that was removed as part of the 25th Avenue Grade Separation Project was placed in the area. In the near future, crews will install a drainage ditch to prevent any excess runoff and pooling caused by the rain. In order to make the location a functional set-out track area, additional installation work is needed. No other work will occur until there is a project contract.

What is the project schedule and timeline?

A construction contract for additional installation work has not been issued and no installation work is expected until next year. After examining any possible alternative locations, Caltrain will hold an additional community meeting to discuss potential alternative locations and to take additional input.

Prior to the start of any installation work, Caltrain will communicate with residents, businesses and other interested members of the public to discuss the project in more detail.

When the project is complete, how often will the set-out track be used?

Typically, anticipated use of a set-out track is once a month; however, depending on construction project needs, crews may access the site approximately one to two times a week to park or store vehicles during the day or night. If staging of materials occurs, it is anticipated that the majority of this work would take place during daytime hours.

How can I stay informed about this project?

Caltrain offers a weekly construction notice for those interested in the latest construction activities. To sign-up please visit www.Caltrain.com/ConstructionNotice.

There is also a dedicated project information page at www.caltrain.com/HP_Set-OutTrack. For questions please call Caltrain Customer Service at 1-800-660-4287 or email construction@caltrain.com.

Set-Out Track versus Maintenance Facility

The table below describes in more detail the differing functions, appearance, and expected use between a set-out track and maintenance facility/yard.

	Set-Out Track	Maintenance Facility/Yard
Size	Spur of track (approx 1,000 feet) and access road	Multi-acre facility with multiple tracks and structures, including maintenance pits, cranes, train washing equipment, waste oil/water storage, fuel farms, control facilities
Purpose	Occasional storage and staging site for maintenance vehicle	To perform mechanical maintenance on trains and to clean interior and exterior of rail vehicles
Location where Maintenance is Intended to Occur	On corridor tracks (not on-site)	At facility (on site)
Frequency of work	For corridor maintenance: typically less than once a month If construction project needs access: possibly 1-2x a week during isolated periods On a rare occasion a disabled train may need to be moved to the set-out track awaiting movement to a Maintenance Yard.	Daily
Type of Vehicle	Hi-rail trucks of various sizes, tampers, regulators, stabilizers, ballast cars, and flat cars	Trains (locomotive, passenger cars)
Photos		