

San Mateo Replacement Parking Track Neighborhood Enhancements

Frequently Asked Questions

In February 2020, after a months-long feasibility assessment process, the San Mateo City Council endorsed the proposal to proceed with the parking track replacement project in Hayward Park between 10th and 14th Avenues, with neighborhood enhancements.

What was the enhancement selected by the neighborhood?

A 12' block wall with creeping fig vegetation was preferred for next to Railroad Avenue (between 10th and 14 Avenues) parallel to the replacement parking track.

How was the type of wall and vegetation determined?

An online survey was launched in March 2020 to help identify neighborhood preferred enhancements for the replacement parking track. A block wall with vegetation was the neighborhood priority--but the type of vegetation (ivy versus creeping fig) was too close to call.

To help determine the type of vegetation a second online survey occurred in April 2020. Over 80% of the Survey #2 respondents selected creeping fig vegetation. Results of both surveys are posted to www.caltrain.com/SMParkingTrack.

How tall will the wall be?

The wall will be 12 feet in height. The parking track and train tracks will not be visible from Railroad Avenue.

What graffiti prevention/mitigation will be in place?

Creeping fig vegetation, when mature, will act as a graffiti deterrent. While the vegetation matures, and if there is an issue, residents can report graffiti to the City at the Graffiti HOTLINE: (888) 886-0766.

How far will the wall be set back from the street?

The project team examined how much space for a setback would be possible. Due to the width of the access road, the overhead contact system (OCS) safety envelope, and the need for drainage on the west side of the tracks, the team determined a one foot setback was feasible.

Will the wall absorb sound?

The enhancement wall will be a standard Caltrans sound wall made of concrete masonry blocks.

Will there be a wall across 14th Avenue?

The solid wall will cross 14th Avenue at a 45 degree angle to allow the business at the southern corner of Railroad and 14th Avenue to still have access to their business's driveway. Once the enhancement wall is built, there will be no access to the parking track except from 9th Avenue.

Will the neighborhood be able to review the enhancement design?

The [draft design](#) and [renderings](#) were shared with the public starting May 21, 2020, and was promoted through all available channels including the distribution list, project website, City newsletter, mailers, social media, the Hayward Park focus group, and the Hayward Park Neighborhood Association. Digital reminders were sent, and the month-long comment period ends on June 19, 2020. Per one public member's request for a less technical document, a ["quick reference" guide](#) of the draft design was also created, posted, and distributed.

What do the different dates on the draft design mean?

July 31, 2017 is inside the title block which is placed on all grade separation-related design pages and is only there to be consistent with the overall project. May 18, 2018 refers to the conceptual level design for the Parking Track that was generated in 2018 (without enhancements). This was used as the basis for various exhibits that were shown to the public and the City from June 2019 onward. April 3, 2020 is the date the draft enhancement exhibit was created that now reflects the input received during the February City Council Meeting and public online surveys during the spring of 2020.

Will trees need to be removed for the project?

The enhancement is a significant design feature on limited acreage; some trees may need to be removed for the neighborhood-selected block wall with vegetation to be installed.

When will the work begin and how long will the construction take place?

Overall project track construction may require multiple phases, including:

- Switch construction (potential for advanced work due to COVID-19 service reductions)
- Parking track access road construction (2021)
- Enhancement wall construction and vegetative planting (2021)

The community will be notified of the construction work through the project distribution email list and website, and through social media, including NextDoor. When time permits, printed mailers will be utilized, too.

Will there be lights associated with the enhancement?

Construction of the wall and vegetation are estimated to take approximately 6-8 weeks. There will be lights during the construction, but they will be directed away from residents. Once the wall is built there will be no additional lights.

How will Caltrain access the parking track?

Caltrain is committed to only ingress and egress to the parking track area from 9th Avenue once construction of the parking track and enhancements is complete. There will be no access from either 10th or 14th Avenues once the enhancements are built.

Can a perpetual easement or restrictive covenant be placed on the parking track area?

In the future, the San Mateo Parking Track will be the only electrified parking track in the area and will primarily be used if a train breaks down; not for temporary storage. As part of the parking track enhancement, Caltrain is removing access to its own property (at 10th and 14th Avenues) in a good faith effort to hear and respond to the neighborhood's requests. Caltrain is also committed to creating a regular meeting with the neighborhood to keep communication channels open.

Background Information

The parking track project will replace the formerly existing San Mateo parking track which was removed to facilitate the construction of the [25th Avenue Grade Separation Project](#). A parking track is a temporary storage space for train equipment that allows for efficient use of limited work windows to keep the railroad functioning properly. The anticipated use of the San Mateo parking track is approximately once a month.

The previous San Mateo Parking Track was in existence prior to Caltrain becoming the operator of passenger service. Located in the Bay Meadows area, it was used by Caltrain for 25 years until the grade separation project necessitated its removal. There are over a dozen parking tracks distributed in residential and commercial areas along the corridor. There is only one maintenance yard, which is a large 20 acre multi-acre complex operation and facility that is located in San Jose.

Contact Information

Website: www.caltrain.com/SMParkingTrack

Customer Service: 1-800-660-4287

Email: construction@caltrain.com