

CITY OF PALO ALTO PROJECT FOR GRADE SEPARATION: CHURCHILL AVENUE, MEADOW DRIVE, AND CHARLESTON ROAD

Key Facts and Goals





PROJECT BACKGROUND

The City of Palo Alto and Caltrain, in close coordination with other key community partners, are advancing the grade separation projects at Churchill Avenue, Meadow Drive, and Charleston Road (project) into preliminary engineering (PE) and environmental documentation (ENV). The project is funded by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Measure B and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Rail Crossing Elimination (RCE) grants. The City of Palo Alto, Caltrain, and VTA have entered into a Cooperative Agreement to advance the project through PE and ENV.



PROJECT GOALS

-  Improve Safety
-  Minimize environmental impacts
-  Improve Mobility
-  Minimize potential private property impacts

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

-  Technical Workshops
-  Open Houses
-  Community Meetings
-  Rail Committee and City Council Updates

SCHEDULE

-  **2025:** Project Initiation and Concept Refinement
-  **2026-2027:** Complete Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Documentation

PROJECT PARTNERS



Project Director

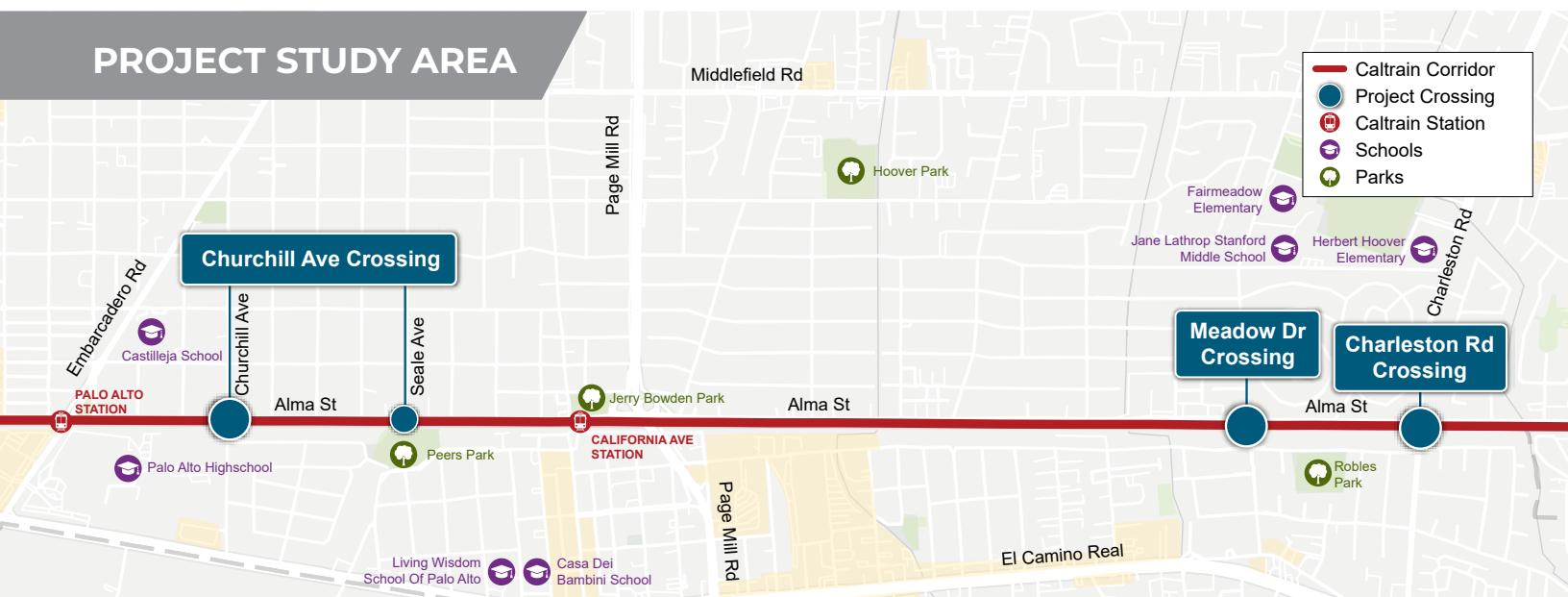


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PROJECT STUDY AREA



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PROJECT PROCESS

CONCEPTUAL ALTERNATIVES

In June 2024, the City of Palo Alto City Council selected the following conceptual alternatives to advance into PE and ENV.

A **Grade Separation** is an infrastructure solution that separates the paths of roads, railways, and other transportation modes at different heights (grades).

Meadow Drive	Charleston Road	Churchill Avenue
 UNDERPASS ALTERNATIVE	 PARTIAL UNDERPASS ALTERNATIVE Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)	
Will retain the railroad tracks at the current grade and lower Meadow Drive and Charleston Road under the tracks and under Alma Street for through traffic.	Will grade separate Churchill Avenue from the current Caltrain tracks via an underpass. Traffic on eastbound Churchill Avenue will descend and pass under the railroad and terminate at a lowered T-intersection at Alma Street then ascend and return to grade along Alma Street.	
 HYBRID ALTERNATIVE	 STREET CLOSURE ALTERNATIVE Backup	
Will combine different grade separation techniques to raise the railroad tracks above Meadow Drive and Charleston Road. The new electrified railroad will begin rising near El Verano Avenue, remain raised above Meadow Drive and Charleston Road, and return to the existing elevation north of Ferne Avenue.	Will retain the railroad tracks at their existing location and grade. Churchill Avenue will become a T-intersection with Alma Street. A pedestrian/bike only undercrossing will be constructed.	

PROJECT PROCESS PLAN

