

May 1, 2018

MP Grade Separation Issue #2:

How Will Multi-Year Heavy Construction Impact Residents & Local Businesses?

Menlo Park City Council Members:

A consultant (AECOM) has estimated that the construction of Menlo Park grade separations could take up to 4 to 5 years; however, no assessments have been made of the severity of disruptions and inconvenience residents, visitors and local businesses would experience due to general construction activity and street and lane closures that could affect up to FIVE streets. These problems would vary a great deal between the different grade separation alternatives.

Alternative C (partially raise tracks over Ravenswood, Oak Grove and Glenwood, depress all three roadways)

1. Traffic disruptions will not only impact Ravenswood, Oak Grove and Glenwood, they will also be felt on El Camino, Middlefield and Encinal as traffic circulation patterns are forced to change.
2. Street closures at Merrill and Alma are required as both must be modified to reconnect with Ravenswood and Oak Grove.
3. The relocation of underground utilities will require long street closures at Ravenswood, Oak Grove and Glenwood.
4. The relocation of underground utilities - and the possible need to install flood management systems - adds significant risks to construction schedules and costs.
5. Relocating the Hetch Hetchy pipeline that runs under Garwood Way and along the tracks under Oak Grove and Glenwood - and possibly Ravenswood - has not been evaluated. Is it even possible?
6. Extensive traffic disruptions in the center of Menlo Park would significantly harm local businesses downtown, on El Camino and in the train station area.

Fully Elevated Grade Separations (tracks raised fully over Ravenswood and Oak Grove - no roadway changes - and either fully or partially over Glenwood)

Based on the recently completed grade separations in San Bruno, construction of fully elevated grade separation would cause much less traffic disruption than Alternative C - a few short and mostly weekend street closures that are needed for minor street work and for train bridge installation. Also, the entire San Bruno construction project was completed in 3.5 years.

Dana Hendrickson
650-521-7908

I am a member of a growing coalition of residents, local businesses and commercial property owners who are not only deeply concerned about the "high stakes" associated with the selection of a design alternative for future grade separations but also with the amount of misleading and inaccurate information and unfounded fears that appear to be deterring the Council from approving a study of THE most promising alternative, fully elevated grade separations.

Since we expect little time to express our views at the May 8 Council meeting we are publishing a series of responses to the objections heard from individual council members, city staff, and residents from Felton Gables who spoke at the recent Rail Subcommittee meeting. We also will address important concerns that have largely been ignored.