



Quarry Road Connection

Partner Agencies



Project Orientation



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PALO ALTO



April 22, 2024

www.cityofpaloalto.org



Alignment with Comprehensive Plan Policies

Program T3.10.4

Pursue extension of Quarry Road for transit, pedestrians and bicyclists to access the Palo Alto Transit Center from El Camino Real. Also study the feasibility of another pedestrian and bicycle underpass of Caltrain at Everett Street.

Program T1.11.1

Collaborate with Stanford University, VTA, Caltrain and other agencies to pursue improvements to the Palo Alto Transit Center area aimed at enhancing the pedestrian experience and improving circulation and access for all modes, including direct access to El Camino Real for transit vehicles.



El Camino Park

El Camino Park is 10.75 acres of land leased by Stanford to the City under a 1915 lease that expires in 2042.

The Park has been dedicated by the City by ordinance for recreational and conservation purposes.



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Ballot Measure

"No land heretofore or hereafter dedicated for [park, playground, recreation or conservation] purposes shall be sold or otherwise disposed of, nor shall its use be abandoned or discontinued **except pursuant to majority vote of the electorate.**"

-City Charter, Article VIII





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The Quarry Road Connection

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The Project Need

Busy transit center with confusing and congested circulation

- 600 buses serve the transit center daily
- 10 public bus bays at the transit center

Safety and access for pedestrians and cyclist is challenging

- 750-800 bicyclist access the station daily

University Circle is congested with turning radii of buses

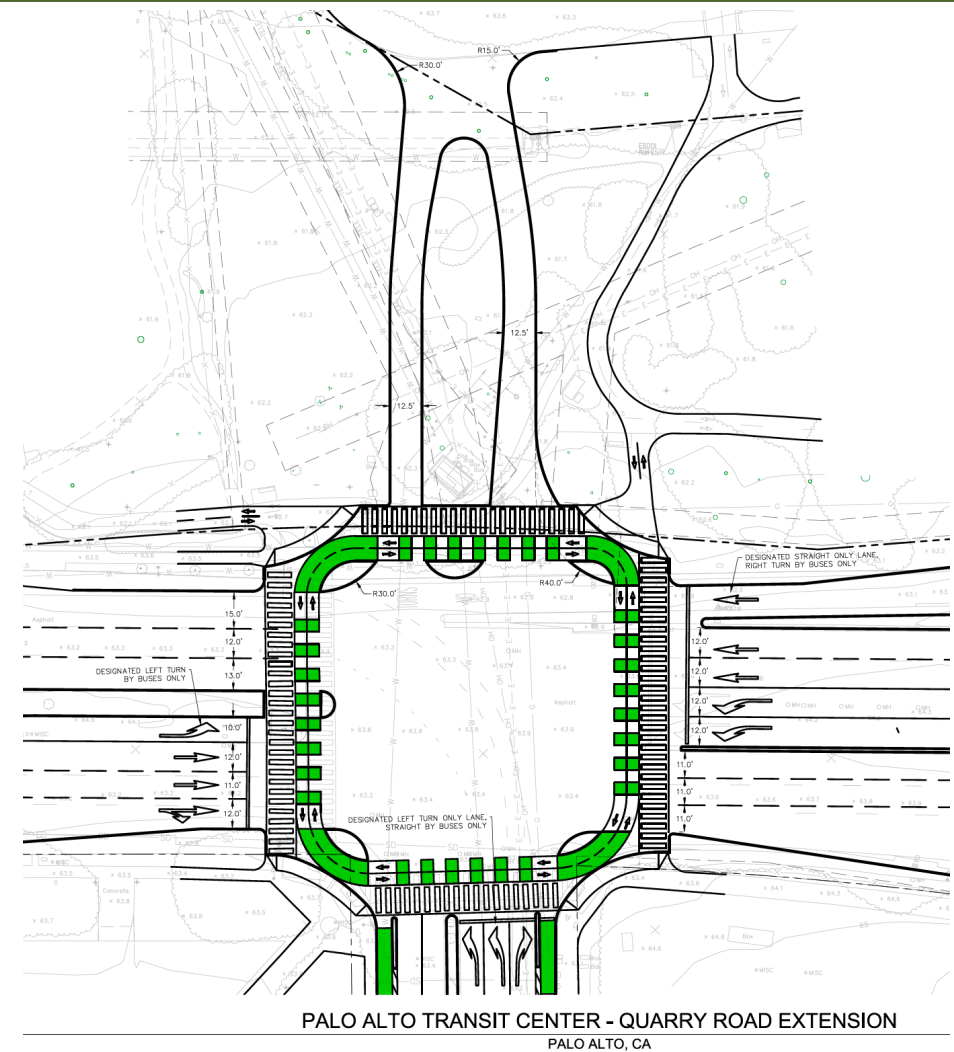
- Articulated buses have difficulty making the sharp turn
- Conflict with pedestrian and bike movements
- Create additional congestion for travel to Downtown



Concept Design

The preliminary concept design includes:

- 12.5 foot wide inbound and outbound transit travel lanes (188 feet and 163 feet in length, respectively), with six-inch curbs.
- Landscaped median that ranges in width between 18-33 feet that would house existing utilities.
- The project would require 0.24 acres of land within El Camino Park to accommodate transit circulation.



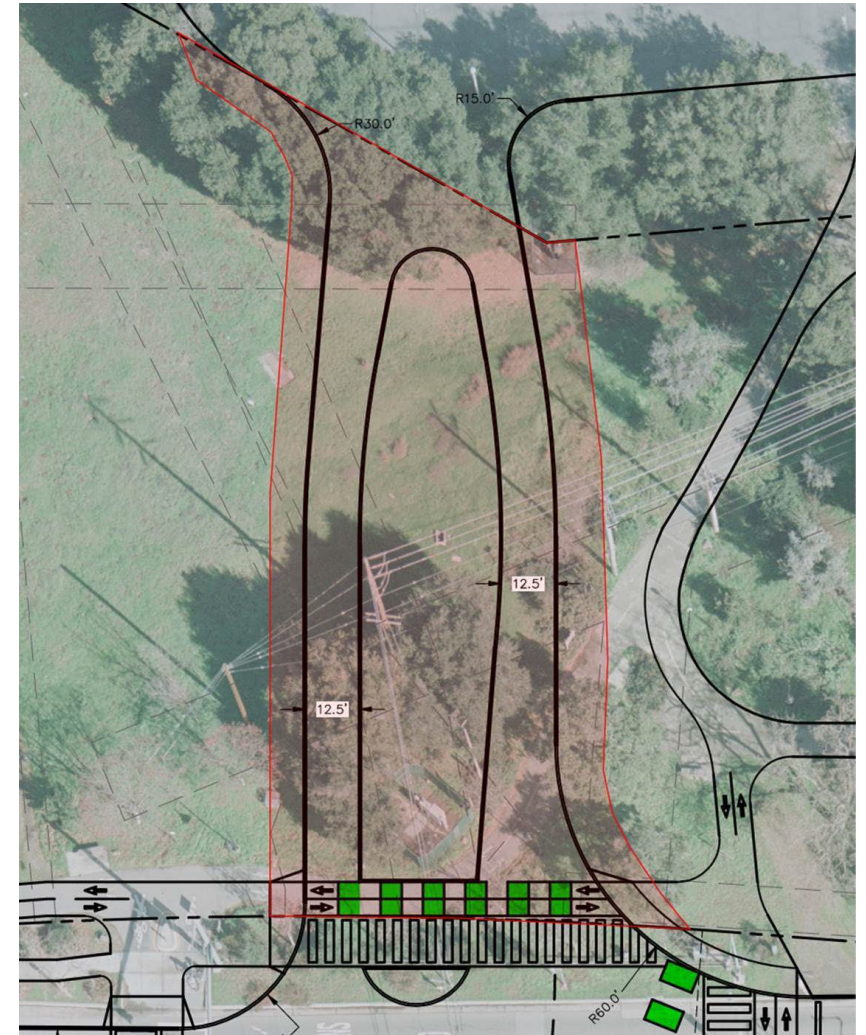
Concept Design

Request voter approval to discontinue park uses on a slightly larger area:

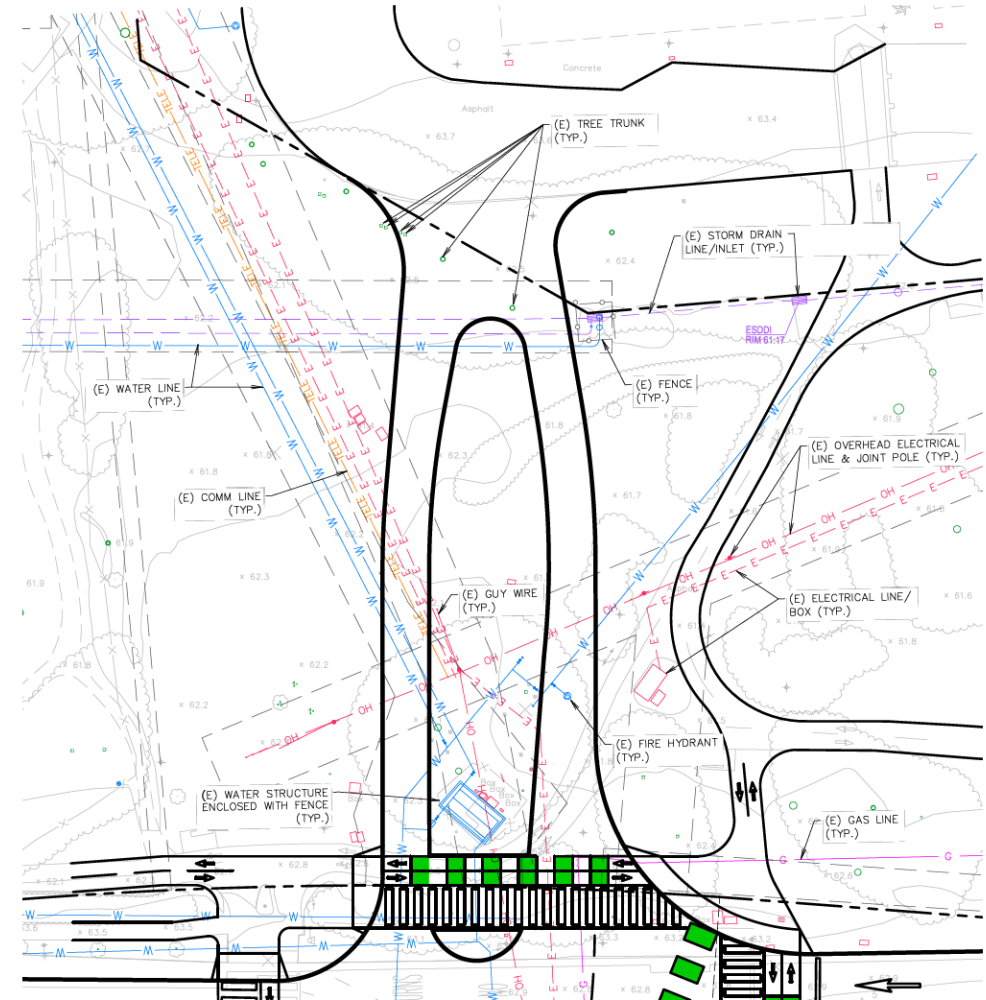
- an additional 0.09 acres
- 10 ft buffer
- 0.33 acres total

Allow for minor shifts as project plans are finalized, to better meet access, circulation, and other goals.

Following completion of project construction, the City would anticipate re-dedicating for park purposes the portion of the discontinued area that was not needed for the project.



Design Constraints



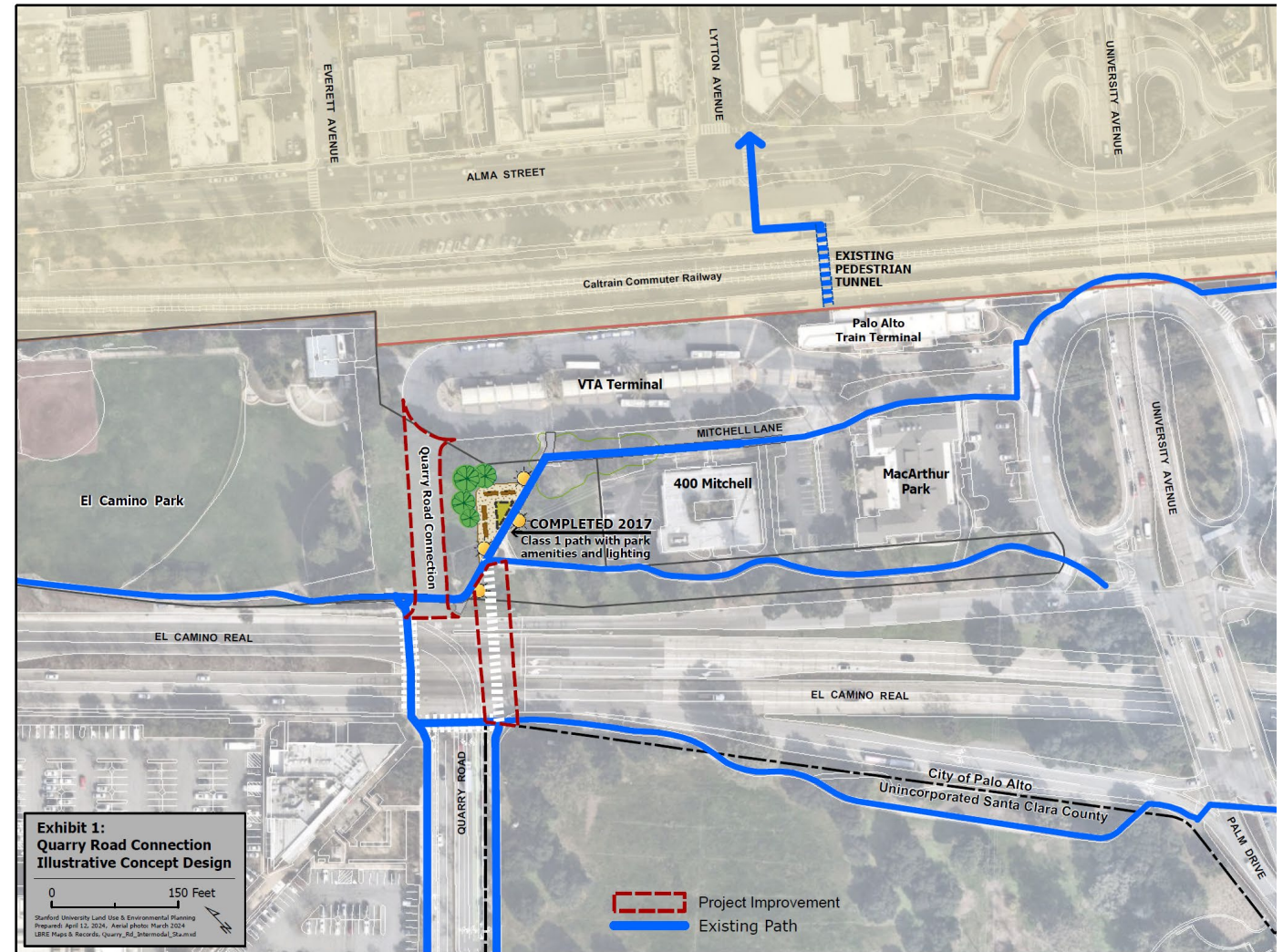
Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Improvements

- Enhancing connections to the Class 1 path through the Park
- Connect to the regional pedestrian and bicycle network by enhancing the crossing at El Camino Real
- Improve the visual and physical connectivity by creating a multi-modal connection that enhances accessibility
- Activate an inactive area of El Camino Park through functional design; improve safety



Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Improvements

- Regional Connectivity
 - Embarcadero Bike Path
 - Stanford Perimeter Trail
 - Menlo Park



Transit Improvements

- Reduce traffic congestion, bus traffic, and turnarounds, which also reduces emissions and noise from vehicular traffic
- Improve the functionality of the PATC for public transportation
- Reduces bus run time by 5-8 minutes
- Over 600 bus trips through the Palo Alto Transit Center daily
- 59% of inbound/outbound trips would avoid University Circle with the connection project;
- Improve throughput on University Avenue and reducing emissions



Trees and Landscaping

A conceptual landscaping plan will be developed in the next phase of the project. If any tree removal is needed, replacement per City ordinance will occur.



CEQA Exemption

The project qualifies for the statutory exemption from CEQA for “facility extensions not to exceed four miles in length which are required for the transfer of passengers from or to exclusive public mass transit guideway or busway public transit services.”

-Pub. Res. Code § 21080(b)(12).

Due to its fixed location, Caltrain qualifies as an “exclusive public mass transit guideway” service.

Staff continues to investigate whether any additional CEQA exemptions also may apply to the project.



The Ballot Measure Process

The City Charter requires a two-step process to approve a ballot measure to undedicate land:

1. April 22: Council adopts a resolution of intention. The resolution identifies the land proposed to be undedicated and its proposed disposition. The resolution also explains that any interested person may lodge a written and signed protest against the proposal until the time scheduled for Council's meeting on June 10, at which time Council will consider the protests.
2. June 10: Council shall review written protests and decide whether to sustain or overrule them. If the Council overrules the protests, it can adopt an ordinance to place the measure on the ballot for the November election. (This all happens during the same Council item).



Timeline

- Presentation to Parks & Rec Commission – **March 26, 2024**
- City Council Hearing – **April 23, 2024**
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee – **May 7, 2024**
- City Council Resolution to Place
Ballot Measure – **June 10, 2024 (tentative)**
- Submit ballot language – **August 9, 2024**
- Election Day – **November 5, 2024**



Issues to be Resolved Ahead

- Tree Replacement and Landscaping Plan
- Construction Funding, Maintenance, and Operational Responsibilities
- Property “Ownership” and Relationship to El Camino Park Lease
- Caltrans Approval and Permitting Process



Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Review and provide input on concept plans for the proposed Quarry Road Transit Connection and;
2. Adopt a Resolution of Intention to Undedicate a portion of El Camino Park that is necessary for the new transit connection. (Attachment E).





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