

**From:** [Tran, Joanna](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Shikada, Ed](#); [Gaines, Chantal](#); [McDonough, Melissa](#); [Eggleston, Brad](#); [Kamhi, Philip](#); [Star-Lack, Sylvia](#); [Horrigan-Taylor, Meghan](#)  
**Subject:** City of Palo Alto Letter: Caltrans Vehicle Dwellers (Caltrans Proposed SR 82/El Camino Real Bikeway Project)  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 3:18:03 PM  
**Attachments:** [Caltrans Vehicle Dwellers letter - 04.01.2024.pdf](#)  
[image001.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)  
[image007.png](#)  
[image008.png](#)  
[image009.png](#)

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Dear Council Members,

Please see the attached letter sent to Caltrans today regarding the Caltrans Proposed SR 82 / El Camino Real Bikeway Project.

For any questions, please contact Chantal Gaines, Deputy City Manager at [Chantal.Gaines@CityofPaloAlto.org](mailto:Chantal.Gaines@CityofPaloAlto.org)

Thank you,  
Joanna

### Joanna Tran

Executive Assistant to the City Manager

Office of the City Manager

(650) 329-2105 | [joanna.tran@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:joanna.tran@cityofpaloalto.org)

[www.cityofpaloalto.org](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org)



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OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

250 Hamilton Avenue, 7th Floor  
Palo Alto, CA 94301  
650.329.2392

April 1, 2024

Dina El-Tawansy  
District Director  
Caltrans Bay Area  
111 Grand Ave.  
Oakland, CA 94612  
[dina.el-tawansy@dot.ca.gov](mailto:dina.el-tawansy@dot.ca.gov)

**Subject:** City of Palo Alto's Follow Up Regarding Notification and Outreach to Vehicle Dwellers Related to the Caltrans Proposed SR 82 / El Camino Real Bikeway Project

Dear Ms. El-Tawansy,

The City of Palo Alto is writing in response to recent meetings and questions from Caltrans staff regarding the outreach and notification plan from Caltrans related to the Caltrans Proposed SR 82 / El Camino Real Bikeway Project. A summary of the questions received is attached.

This project is important to our community to repave this vital corridor and provide a safer corridor for all users. As currently proposed, this project will lead to the displacement of many vehicle-dwelling neighbors. As a precursor to the responses below, we note that the impact of this could be minimized if Caltrans were to approach the work in phases (i.e., "no parking" for a portion of El Camino Real at a time while work is being done) and the parking removal is temporary and limited to the duration of actual construction activities.

Caltrans recently notified the City that it expects the City of Palo Alto and the County of Santa Clara's Continuum of Care to perform the outreach steps needed for Caltrans Proposed SR 82 / El Camino Real Bikeway Project. Both the City and the County have shared interest in helping vehicle-dwelling neighbors on El Camino Real but have raised several issues about the Caltrans characterization that it is the City's or County's responsibility to perform outreach as part of the Caltrans process. In the absence of any agreements on file related to these services, the responsibility for such outreach for this Caltrans project formally rests with Caltrans as the sponsoring agency, as opposed to the City of Palo Alto or the County of Santa Clara. We understand that there are specific steps which must be taken in terms of notification and informing vehicle-dwelling neighbors of other resources available to them. This should be a multi-step process done by Caltrans to give the families as much time as possible to try to take advantage of the services suggested. We request that Caltrans issue the initial notification to vehicle dwellers on the corridor of the pending Caltrans project and the need for the vehicles to relocate. The County can assist in outreach *after* the households have been notified by Caltrans of the need to relocate and the exact date by which they must relocate. This outreach may include assessment and connection to services but, given the scarcity of available beds and housing, this may not include the immediate offer of a bed or housing.



[CityOfPaloAlto.org](http://CityOfPaloAlto.org)

It is also Caltrans responsibility to formally notify the vehicles with the tow-notice at the appropriate time and, if necessary, for Caltrans to actually tow the vehicles. There seemed to be some confusion on roles and responsibilities related to the City, County, and nonprofit partners in the outreach and formal notice and towing process. One particular interaction referenced was in a February 15<sup>th</sup> meeting between City staff and the Caltrans encampment team. The encampment team left that meeting and later reported that the City held the responsibility related to outreach to the vehicle-dwellers prior to any notification to the vehicle dwellers by Caltrans. However, at that meeting, both City and County staff noted that the outreach organizations in the area currently working with the vehicle-dwellers on El Camino Real are not under contract for outreach services with either the City nor the County. Staff did not make a commitment during that meeting to assume Caltrans' duties in this regard; City staff only offered to ask the voluntary outreach organizations to provide supplementary outreach to vehicle-dwellers. Given that only Caltrans knows the construction schedule, only Caltrans is in a position to make these first early notifications.

While the City is committed to continuing to creatively problem-solve with Caltrans about options for the vehicle-dwelling families along the El Camino Real corridor in Palo Alto, it is also important to be clear on roles. Caltrans referenced their responsibility to document outreach and services offerings as well as their responsibility to do notification steps and any enforcement action that may need to take place. Caltrans should also start the process by providing a specific notice about the project to the vehicle dwellers and businesses along the corridor with specific project timing.

City staff requested the detailed project schedule with more than a three-week outlook from Caltrans. This information would allow the City, County, and nonprofit partners to be more effective in coordinating viable additional resources to augment the work that Caltrans offers as outreach to this specific population. The City team looks forward to receiving the detailed project schedule and timeline as we continue this very important discussion. We also look forward to Caltrans providing the initial early notification specifically to vehicle dwellers and businesses along the corridor, identifying dates when parking will be impacted, to officially start the process before any additional County outreach work will occur. This notice would be more specific than the broader Project Fact Sheet previously issued.

Sincerely,



Ed Shikada  
City Manager

cc: Nick Saleh, Project Management District Division Chief  
Debra Nelson, Office Chief, External Operations and Engagement  
Kathryn Kaminski, Deputy Director, Office of Supportive Housing, County of Santa Clara  
Philip Kamhi, Chief Transportation Official, City of Palo Alto  
Brad Eggleston, Public Works Director, City of Palo Alto  
Meghan Horrigan-Taylor, Chief Communications Officer, City of Palo Alto  
Chantal Cotton Gaines, Deputy City Manager, City of Palo Alto  
Melissa McDonough, Assistant to the City Manager, City of Palo Alto  
Sylvia Star-Lack, Transportation Planning Manager, City of Palo Alto

Attachment: Responses to Concerns and Questions Raised from Debra Nelson, March 27, 2024

**Attachment:**

**Responses to Concerns and Questions Raised from Debra Nelson (email dated March 27, 2024)**

**Clarifications:**

- The Caltrans staff email referenced the following: “[The] *City, County and Caltrans agree anywhere from one to two years, this corridor has been an “unofficially City/County sanctioned” encampment within Palo Alto. There have been no removal attempts by the State, nor expressed concerns from the City and County to the State by virtue of explicit requests to remove.”*
  - **City Response:** The City disagrees with this statement. The City requires vehicles to move every 72 hours per our code. Most vehicles comply with the requirement to move every 72 hours; there is no guarantee of where they will relocate after moving. The Palo Alto Police Department routinely issues warnings for 72-hour violations and issues citations and tows abandoned vehicles as appropriate.

**Responses to Questions:**

1. Is there still concern from City Manager/Deputy City Manager/County of Santa Clara regarding noticing that the role of providing outreach is not Department of Transportation? Caltrans does not provide outreach, and has no services/shelters, being that is not our funding purpose. Yes/No

**City Response:** This is addressed in the letter. This is a Caltrans project and Caltrans should do the initial notification. Such notification has not yet been done specifically to the businesses nor vehicle dwellers along El Camino Real.

2. Has any official outreach occurred since Caltrans requests made on 3/15 and 3/25? Yes/No

**City Response:** As noted related to #1 above, Caltrans has not performed the initial notification to the vehicle dwellers and thus the City and County are unable to formally note outreach done to be included in your Caltrans documentation process to support future decisions Caltrans will need to make regarding actions related to vehicles.

3. Does the City/County have any potential relocation offers for the persons experiencing homelessness who are sheltered with RVs along the corridor? Yes/No

**City Response:** After Caltrans provides the initial notification to vehicle dwellers on El Camino Real, the County will share any resource options available to vehicle dwellers. Note: the amount of available relocation options in Santa Clara County are very limited.

4. Do both the City/County know how many estimated persons (not individual RV count) are at this location?

**City Response:** No additional information available at this time.

5. Has any communication regarding noticing the persons that nearing June, Caltrans will need to begin the paving of Bike Lanes? Yes/No? For either reply- are there pending plans to do so?



**City Response:** The Caltrans project schedule is a repaving project starting later this year and subsequently the bike lanes, pending City Council action in April 2024 locally. To the specific question here, this initial communication is Caltrans responsibility given this is a Caltrans project and City action is pending. This type of initial notification about an upcoming project and the need for the site to be clear for the project is always the responsibility of the entity performing the project. In this case, that is Caltrans. We look forward to details about when this notification will occur, and the County can do some outreach thereafter.

6. Has the City/County communicated any of these needs for outreach to your “grassroots” organizations/persons of familiarity who are working with the persons living in RVs? Yes/No? If no, I note- it was suggested to leverage their ongoing relationship, albeit the “grassroots” is not obligated contractually or otherwise.

**City Response:** Informally, the City and County have activated partners to help vehicle dwelling residents along the corridor. These partners are not under contract with the City for outreach services, thus any work they perform would not be used as part of the Caltrans documentation for future vehicle removal. Even with these efforts, Caltrans is still responsible for the official notification to start the process.

7. How many children do you estimate are living in the RV’s? If you don’t know exactly, I recall it was mentioned on 3/15 “families with children”- thus, an estimate is helpful.

**City Response:** We do not have this information at this time.

8. Is the City/County exploring emergency funding/housing solutions to offer? Yes/No?

**City Response:** We do not understand this question.

9. Are there currently plans to enact parking ordinances once the project has been completed? Yes/No/Unknown

**City Response:** There is a 72-hour restriction already in place.

**From:** [John Ralston](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** El Camino Real bicycle route conversion  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 12:57:37 PM

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To the members of Palo Alto City Council:

My name is John Ralston. I have lived in the Palo Alto area for 25 years, first in Palo Alto and then Mountain View. All that time I have bicycled regularly, to work as an administrative assistant at Stanford and as a substitute teacher in Palo Alto Unified School District. I estimate that I have bicycled over 40,000 miles, and while that may seem a lot, it means averaging about 2,000 miles per year not using an automobile. So I may say I have been a devoted cyclist.

I urge you NOT to approve the proposal to convert, modify - whatever - El Camino Real into some sort of hybrid commercial and bicycle route. If this sounds strange coming from one like myself, let me briefly explain. First, Palo Alto already has a very good cycle route along Bryant Street, from the downtown all the way to the San Antonio Road border at Mountain View (I used the route regularly myself). Bryant Street is well-marked for bicycles, has barriers to through automobile traffic (with space for cyclists to pass through safely), passes three schools - Palo Alto High, El Carmello Elementary, and Jane Stanford Middle) - and, crucially in my opinion, is almost entirely in residential neighborhoods, so cyclists do not compete with delivery trucks or other commercial vehicles. Parallel to El Camino, it is convenient and far safer, particularly for school children. True, it is about five blocks northwest of El Camino, but that's nothing for an experienced or even casual cyclist.

A north-south bicycle route alternative to El Camino is more challenging, and in my opinion is one on which your board should concentrate, rather than considering El Camino as a bike route. A current route goes southeast from about the area of Escondido Elementary School at Stanford Avenue, crosses Page Mill Road, and goes up through Bol Park to Gunn High School, where it turns left at Arastradero Road and connects to a bicycle route past Alta Mesa Cemetery, over Adobe Creek and to Mountain View. This is not completely parallel to El Camino, and the Bol Park bike path also accommodates hikers, parents with strollers, and dogs. I suggest therefore that the board explore some route through the residential neighborhoods between Bol Park and El Camino Real, possibly connecting with the path by Alta Mesa Cemetery; hopefully there is one similar to Bryant Street. I understand that getting more cyclists to use both Bryant Street and the southwest route requires educating them to the about their availabilities, but with all the accessible on-line and print information available nowadays - in Silicon Valley, no less - this is surely possible.

Finally, consider the disadvantages and dangers in the El Camino Real proposal. It is almost entirely commercial, meaning that private cars, delivery trucks, etc. use it for temporary or long-term parking. Removing parking spaces will undoubtedly cause hardship to businesses, but will not even provide a safe route for cyclists. Delivery trucks block views around them; motorists open the drivers doors into cycle routes, even marked ones; finally, trucks and cars will have to navigate around the bike route, which risks bicycles; suffice it to say that the hybrid uses are not compatible (San Francisco's Valencia Street, as recently reported in the San Francisco *Chronicle*, is one example).

Thank you for your attention, and I look forward to learning about the results of your meeting.

John Ralston  
1774 Peacock Avenue  
Mountain View, California 94043  
[john\\_ralston@att.net](mailto:john_ralston@att.net)

(650) 282-5336

**From:** [Piet Canin](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Please approve Bike Lanes on El Camino Real  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 12:52:09 PM

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Dear City Council Members,

Please approve bike lanes on El Camino Real, and pass the resolution to remove car parking on El Camino Real to install bike lanes. This is an important step in making El Camino Real safer for cyclists and other road users. It makes this busy corridor more seamless from one city to the next as neighboring cities like Mountain View have already supported adding visible and continuous bike lanes on El Camino Real.

I live a few blocks from El Camino Real and bike on it several times a week. Bike lanes on this street would make me feel a whole lot more comfortable while I bike to my nearby destinations.

Thank you for your consideration to make Palo Alto a better and safer place to bicycle for everyone.

Piet Canin  
3661 Park Blvd, Palo Alto, CA 94306

**From:** [Katie Causey](#)  
**To:** [Council, City; Clerk, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Sandhya Laddha](#)  
**Subject:** Support Bike Lanes on El Camino Real  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 11:35:04 AM  
**Attachments:** [PaloAltoElCaminoReal.pdf](#)

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Hello,

Attached is SVBC's letter of support for Bike Lanes on El Camino Real.

Thank you!

**Katie Causey**

she/her/hers | 庄可欣//莊可欣

Community Organizer

Together we can make our community better through biking - [Ways to Give](#)



Twitter [@bikeSV](#) | Instagram [@bikesiliconvalley](#)



**April 1, 2024**

Palo Alto City Council  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
Palo Alto, CA 94301

**Re: April 1 City Council meeting. Agenda Item #11**

Dear Palo Alto City Councilmembers,

On behalf of Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC) and its members across San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties, we are writing to request you to **pass a resolution to remove parking on El Camino Real to install bike lanes**. The City of Palo Alto is being presented with a rare opportunity to build bike lanes on El Camino Real (ECR) at no cost to the city, as a part of a Caltrans repavement project along with the Cities of Los Altos and Mountain View to be implemented. This marks Caltrans' inaugural project on ECR incorporating infrastructure for people biking, presenting Palo Alto with an opportunity to pioneer the inclusion of green-painted bike lanes, delineating bollards, and bike boxes at intersections along this crucial corridor.

SVBC supports bike lanes on El Camino to reduce traffic crashes, reduce congestion, reduce vehicle miles traveled, support the Housing Element and future residents of new housing developments, improve sight lines and safe systems, and take advantage of this once-in-a-decade opportunity to make El Camino the Grand Boulevard we all desire. SVBC shares the vision of the Grand Boulevard Initiative where El Camino Real is a thriving, vibrant, inclusive corridor that fosters a dynamic community where people can seamlessly live, work, shop, play and connect, prioritizing efficient transit and active transportation to enhance the overall well-being and quality of life for all.

SVBC agrees that this project is not 100% perfect, it needs several more safety elements to have the envisioned benefits. At the same time, we would like to emphasize that **this is just the beginning, it is the first step toward a corridor that is safe for all its users including people walking, biking, and driving**. Along with this letter we are including an appendix which talks about past plans and efforts along El Camino Real, crash data, concerns around parallel routes, parking and consumer behavior, and more to provide a more holistic picture of all the benefits this project can provide.

ECR stands out as the only non-freeway corridor that connects the Peninsula from Daly City to San José. This, coupled with the concentration of housing and businesses along this corridor, makes it the essential North-South route. ECR presents a crucial opportunity to create vibrant and complete communities – not just for the motor vehicles it was primarily designed for but to prioritize alternative and more sustainable modes such as biking and walking. ECR remains a high-injury roadway where more bicyclists and pedestrians are getting hit every day. This indicates that despite being unsafe, the corridor

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continues to be heavily used by people walking and biking. Lastly, El Camino Real is poised to welcome thousands of additional new residents as part of planned and proposed housing developments. We must do everything to promote alternatives to driving that enable safe travel options, reduced car trips, and a healthy community to call home.

Thank you for being an innovative bike leader in the Bay Area, through your policies, programs, and projects over the years. We are positive that the City of Palo Alto will take the necessary steps required to move forward with this project, once again setting a precedent for other cities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clarrissa", followed by a long horizontal line.

Clarrissa Cabansagan  
Executive Director  
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

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## APPENDIX

### 1. Past Plans Detailing El Camino Real as a Preferred Bicycle Route

This is a short collection of the most recent and most relevant planning documents that look at enhanced bike lanes on El Camino Real in the Palo Alto area.

- [Grand Boulevard Initiative](#) - This initiative aims at developing El Camino Real Corridor as a multimodal boulevard that is safe and efficient for pedestrians, bicycles, transit, and automobiles of all ages and abilities. A detailed section of El Camino around California Avenue was analyzed in great detail and with specific recommendations, strategies, and alignment options.
- [Joint Venture Managers Mobility Partnership](#) - In 2019, a partnership between the managers of four Silicon Valley cities (Palo Alto, Mountain View, Redwood City, and Menlo Park) and Stanford University completed a feasibility study to identify a preferred route for a long-distance, high-quality, separated bikeway that connects these cities. The study identified El Camino Real as the preferred corridor for the Peninsula Bikeway.
- 2021 [VTa Bicycle Superhighway Implementation Plan](#) - El Camino Real is identified as one of the top 9 superhighway alignment locations.
- [Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan 2018](#) - El Camino Real is identified as a location for Bay Area Bicycle Highway in the plan.

Further Related Plans Supporting a Bike Lane on El Camino

- **Palo Alto Sustainability Climate Action Plan (S/CAP)** - Our very own S/CAP also calls for developing regional and local bicycle highways to provide uninterrupted bike commutes. It also calls for implementation of the following policies as part of meeting our climate goals, all of this would be brought together with the addition of bike lanes on El Camino Real:

**T1.19.2:** Prioritize investments for enhanced pedestrian access and bicycle use within Palo Alto and to/from surrounding communities

**T8.8.1:** Identify and improve bicycle connections to/from neighboring communities in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties to support local trips that cross city boundaries.

These changes to our roadways are anticipated to result in 12-18 million residential vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduced by 2030 (a 4% to 6% VMT reduction by 2030), 54-63 million commuter VMT reduced by 2030 (16% to 19%), and: 22-36 million VMT reduced by 2030 (6% to 10% VMT reduction by

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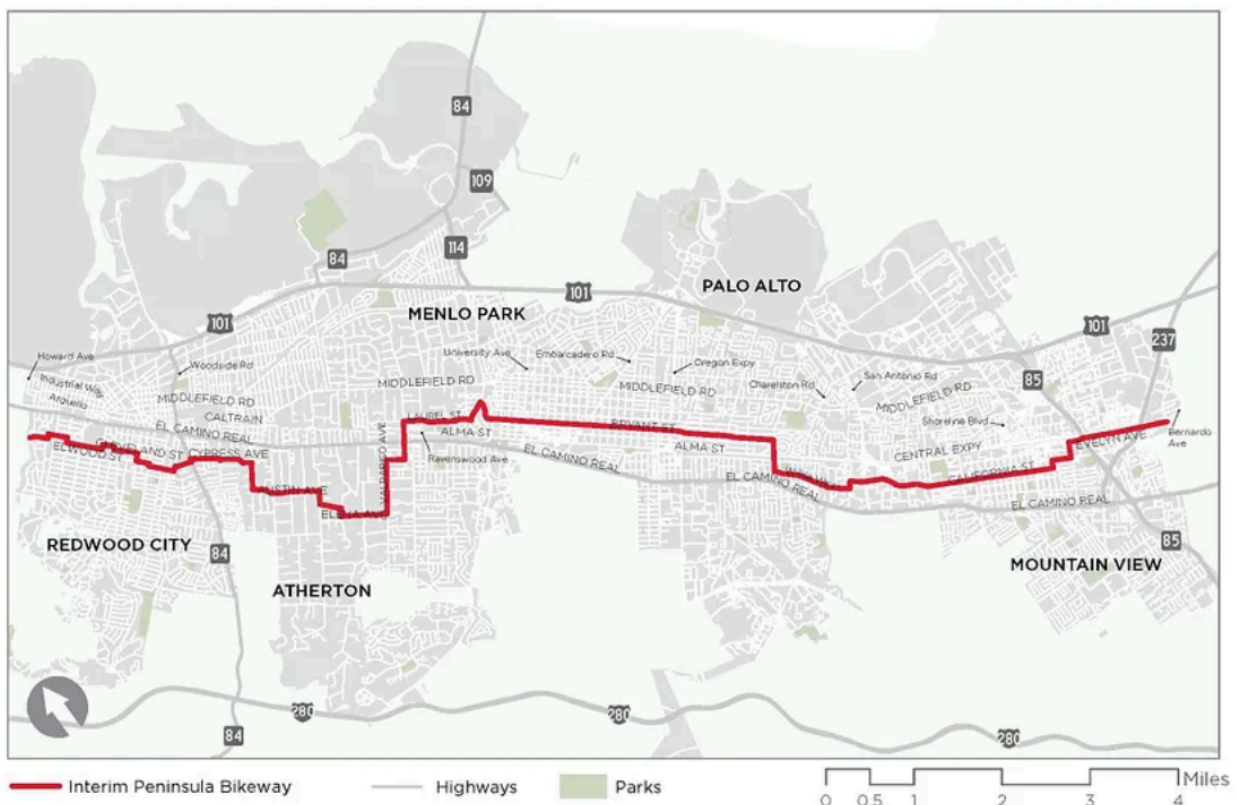
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2030). These anticipated reductions will not happen if we do not give people the opportunity and ability to bike to more places, more often.

## 2. But We Have Parallel Routes

Yes, the City of Palo Alto has great parallel routes to El Camino Real like the Park Blvd and Bryant blvd. And so do some other cities along the corridor. As the map below shows, the alternative routes are neither direct nor intuitive and neglects the fact that more and more people bike to run errands and need direct and convenient access to business, retail, and services which often lie on El Camino Real and not on the parallel routes. Our Palo Alto members have specifically flagged the fact that the parallel routes exclude residents of Barron Park and College Terrace, as well as workers at the Stanford Research Park. For these areas, El Camino Real is the most realistic and easy to access connection to businesses, retail, schools, Stanford University, and services.



## 3. Road Violence Data

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El Camino is 0.5% of all streets in Santa Clara County, yet 2% of all roadway collisions and 3% of all collisions involving people walking or biking occurred on El Camino from 2012-2022. From 2012-2022, ECR in Palo Alto alone saw 11.8% of total crashes which included 14% of total fatalities. In total numbers, this is 123 total crashes, two people killed, and 29 injured.

This data indicates indicates two primary things:

1. In its current condition, ECR is not safe and also not advisable for those walking and biking.
2. At the same time, given the high concentration of bike/ped collisions, it shows people are still walking and biking because of several needs and necessities calling for the urgent need to make this corridor safe.

The collision assessment in the Grand Boulevards Plan says that the four most common crash types along El Camino Real are related to high speed traffic, wrong way bicycling, side streets and driveways, and red-light violations. Solutions to address these collision types include daylighting or green paint at side streets and driveways to improve sight lines and visibility for bicyclists, and traffic calming to reduce speeds - such as what is proposed as part of the Caltrans repaving plan.

Jan 1, 2012 - Dec 31, 2022	Palo Alto	San Mateo County	Santa Clara County
Total # of crashes on ECR	127	2144	1519
# of fatal crashes	2	35	19
# of pedestrian crashes	37 (24% of crashes in SCC)	319 (14.9%)	154 (10.1%)
# of bike crashes	92 (40% of crashes in SCC)	180 (18.4%)	235 (15.5%)

Source: [Tims.berkeley.edu](https://tims.berkeley.edu)

#### 4. The Parking Question

ECR in Palo Alto includes about 250 parking spaces. (Please note, at least 100 of these are along Stanford properties, where many of our neighbors live in RVs and where there are no existing businesses). On-street parking on El Camino Real is currently permitted in a patchwork fashion - there are large stretches of red-curb areas designated as no parking zones, several spaces interrupted by driveways along with several off-site parking lots which includes several multi-storey parking lots like the ones along California Avenue which are often underutilized because people want a convenient on-street location to park.

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Parking occupancy data for other areas of El Camino are unknown but can be inferred from the Mountain View and [Los Altos studies](#) conducted. Average weekday parking occupancy was well under 50% and even lower on weekends in both Mountain View and Los Altos.

There is a misconception that loss of parking will lead to loss of business. There have been several studies that [bikes actually are good for business!](#) - After a protected bike lane was installed in New York City, businesses saw a 49% increase in retail sales with fewer commercial vacancies. A study in Toronto concluded that those who arrive by bike or foot spend more dollars per month on average than those who arrived by car. And more locally, when new bike lanes were installed on Valencia Street in San Francisco, 2/3 of merchants saw a positive increase in sales. We know that almost half of customers arrive at University Avenue by means other than a car.

SVBC talked to several business owners along the corridor and many agreed that removal of parking would improve sight lines and reduce conflicts between people driving, walking and biking.

#### **5. What about our RV-dweller neighbors?**

SVBC understands this housing crisis is entrenched and not likely to be solved anytime in the near term. For our neighbors living in RVs, including many who are school-age children, removal of parking along Stanford-owned lands would be devastating. Fortunately, on Southbound ECR from Stanford Ave to Quarry road which is the primary stretch where several motorhomes are parked, there is an existing Class-I trail on the Stanford property. We urge the City and Caltrans to retain the parking for this stretch in the interim until a permanent relocation solution is determined. We should also engage with Caltrans, Stanford, and homeless services partners immediately to begin discussion about how this issue should be tackled (in person and not with letter or email correspondence, this issue is too important).

#### **6. What About Lane Reduction**

The 2007 El Camino Real Master Plan found that based on an analysis of future traffic volumes, no reduction in lanes along El Camino would be feasible within 400 to 600 feet of Page Mill Road. According to VTA, the agency has evaluated many alternatives for a Bus Rapid Transit for the El Camino Real corridor, including various lengths of bus-only lanes. After coordination with many of the jurisdictions along the corridor between 2010 and 2014, including the City of Palo Alto, it became clear that unanimous support for removal of Travel Lanes was insufficient to advance any of the designs. As a result of this discussion and opposition of dedicated transit lanes on El Camino, the City Council called for maintaining a 6-lane cross-section in the City's Comprehensive Plan 2030, which was adopted in November 2017.


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
## 7. Palo Alto is Not an Island - It's About Connectivity

Different cities have different proposals and recommendations for El Camino Real. Regional and state agencies also have some projects in the pipeline. The following table is a compilation of all the recommendations and projects in the pipeline along with details and timelines. If things move as scheduled, most of El Camino Real from Daly City to San Jose will have bike lanes before the end of this decade

City/Town	Proposed bike facility in bike/ped plans	Caltrans – Tentative construction timeline (SHOPP: State Highway Operation and Protection Program)
Daly City		Caltrans SHOPP – 2026 construction
Colma		Caltrans SHOPP – 2026 construction
South San Francisco		Caltrans SHOPP – 2028 construction. Pop-up bike lane for 0.5 mile corridor in Summer 2023
San Bruno		Received funding from Assembly member for planning and implementation
Millbrae		Received funding from Assembly member for planning and implementation
Burlingame		
San Mateo		Caltrans can put in bike lanes as a part of 2022 SHOPP if city passes a resolution to remove parking
Belmont		
San Carlos		
Redwood City + NFO		City implementing 3-blocks in 2023, Caltrans SHOPP – 2026 construction
Atherton		Caltrans SHOPP – 2026 construction
Menlo Park		
Palo Alto		Caltrans Repavement Project 2023 proposes Class IV bike lanes
Los Altos		Caltrans Repavement Project 2023
Mountain View		Caltrans Repavement Project 2023
Sunnyvale		
Santa Clara		Caltrans SHOPP – 2026 construction



Class IV/Class I - Separated bikelane – will include a physical barrier between the vehicle lane and the bicycle lane



Class II - Buffered Bikelane – will include a painted buffer between the vehicle lane and the bicycle lane

## 8. YES To Even More Future Improvements

Is the Caltrans repaving plan perfect? No. The corridor has wider lanes which should be reduced to 11' outer lanes and 10' other lanes. The proposed protections between bike and vehicle lanes are not ideal. The plan does not adequately address with a high-level of safe crossing infrastructure intersections that are identified as El Camino Real school crossings in the city's Walk & Roll maps and much more!

**Let's be proactive and get these improvements into our pedestrian and bicycle plan, which is being updated right now!**

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bicycling safer and more accessible for all**

155 S 11<sup>th</sup> Street, San Jose, CA 95112 | [bikesiliconvalley.org](http://bikesiliconvalley.org) | 408-287-7259

**From:** [Ken Kershner](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Star-Lack, Sylvia](#); [Kamhi, Philip](#); [kh Dumont@gmail.com](mailto:kh Dumont@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Businesses and Bikers Interests are Aligned ECR Bikeways Agenda April 1 Item 11  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 11:23:03 AM

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Along with Katherine Dumont, I canvassed over 50 businesses on ECR in Palo Alto and shared information about the proposed Caltrans repaving plan and PA TMA Transit passes in January, February and March.

We built an open source citizens' database of the ~188 businesses along ECR and counted the on-street to off-street parking available.

Our key finding is the ratio of 9:1 off-street to on street parking showing that parking removal is not a hardship for most businesses except near Evergreen Park, where some RPP mitigation is recommended.

Our spreadsheet database is [here](#). And our presentation that was given to the PTC meeting March 16 is [here](#). This has also been shared with the Chamber of Commerce.

I strongly support removing on-street parking and installing protected bike lanes on El Camino Real as part of our city's Vision Zero commitment as well as our 2030 S/CAP 40% of work trip goal. I am grateful for Caltrans Complete Streets guidelines and the state funding.

As someone who drives and bikes, separating bicycles from traffic by eliminating parking not only protects cyclists, but increases predictability for drivers by removing visual obstacles that can obscure people walking, biking or driving. A designated bike lane will also reduce today's pedestrian and biker conflicts on the sidewalks.

For businesses, protected bike lanes provide better access for employees and customers, while traffic calming creates a more inviting pedestrian environment that's been proven to boost retail sales. Cars are not customers, people are. People arrive by bike and walking as well as by car and bus. Studies have shown that bikers spend more per visit probably because they thoughtfully chain together their errands and shopping into fewer trips. Bikers are underserved by today's car-centric ECR. Businesses can seize the opportunity to expand their customer base to more bikers and pedestrians. Yes, businesses may need to educate customers to park behind their store or on a side street but it's a small adjustment that is more short term inconvenience than a hardship or lost revenue and well worth the benefits. Every biker is one fewer car.

El Camino today is a stroad - S-T-R-O-A-D - a frankenglom of a Road - designed for

efficient travel between distant destinations and a Street with pedestrians, cyclists and cars being used for shopping and errands - in a phrase Streets, and especially Complete Streets are for business, roads are for travel.

More people biking means more customers, less congestion, reduced emissions, and a safer, more sustainable El Camino Real.

Removing parking is an evidence-based Vision Zero best practice that many cities have embraced to eliminate one of the most common causes of collisions - obscured visibility. Hoboken, NJ a city of 60 thousand has proven this with 7 years of zero deaths.

This road redesign presents a rare opportunity to truly prioritize safety over parking convenience. Maintaining the status quo with parking allows for an unacceptable number of crashes.

I urge you to redesign El Camino as a Complete Street serving all modes by approving parking removal and protected bike lanes now, while continuing to plan intersection and hardscape upgrades.

We cannot call ourselves a Vision Zero city while preserving an outdated, high-injury corridor design.

Thank you.

--

Ken Kershner | Co-Founder & CEO  
Cell 650-248-9059 | Email [ken@triomotors.co](mailto:ken@triomotors.co)  
Trio Motors | Palo Alto

**From:** [Betsy Megas](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Please put Bike lanes on El Camino Real (item 11, April 1, 2024)  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 9:11:41 AM

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Dear Mayor Stone and City Council:

I hope you will take this once-in-a-few-decades opportunity to put bike lanes on El Camino Real.

### **Create a continuous bicycle corridor**

El Camino Real is one of the few surface streets that runs the full length of the peninsula and beyond. I'm writing to you from Santa Clara, where we will be getting parking removal and bike lanes in an upcoming (2026) Caltrans project. Mountain View has similar bike lane plans.

We need continuous bike lanes, not a patchwork or checkerboard that starts and ends at city lines.

### **Address existing dangers and demand**

I hope you've seen a map of collisions on El Camino Real. It's a problem for all the cities it runs through, both high-stress and high-risk, especially for people walking and biking. The solution is not to banish bikes to circuitous side streets but to make El Camino a safe place. The crashes that already happen there speak to not only the danger but also the demand. Even though I don't visit Palo Alto very often and I try to avoid biking on El Camino in general, I've biked on El Camino in Palo Alto, because that was where my destination was.

### **Improve safety for everybody**

Parked cars on the street can block the view for drivers pulling in and out of driveways. Drivers and pedestrians, too, will be safer when parking is removed, and safe places to bike keep bikes off the sidewalks. In Santa Clara, this concern was one of the factors that led our council to decide in favor of removing parking and approving Caltrans's bike lane build as an interim measure until the Central Bikeway is designed and funding sought.

### **Bikes mean business**

There's a common concern that removing parking will decrease business, but it doesn't seem to hold up to real results. When people don't spend as much on driving and parking, they have more to spend on restaurants and shopping. When it's comfortable, bike and foot traffic increase. Downtowns like Palo Alto's thrive in spite of car traffic; not because of it. This is an opportunity to make El Camino a friendlier, more inviting place to be a human outside of a car.

I regret that I will have a schedule conflict this evening and will not be able to attend the council meeting to present these arguments in person.

I hope you will support bike lanes and parking removal on El Camino Real in Palo Alto, and join the growing number of cities doing the same.

Many thanks,

Betsy Megas

Santa Clara Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

VTa Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Member/volunteer, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

speaking for myself



**From:** [doria s](#)  
**To:** [Council City](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd:  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 9:03:11 AM

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----- Forwarded message -----  
From: **doria s** <[doriasumma@gmail.com](mailto:doriasumma@gmail.com)>  
Date: Mon, Apr 1, 2024 at 9:00 AM  
Subject:  
To: doria s <[doriasumma@gmail.com](mailto:doriasumma@gmail.com)>

Interesting article about real safety improvements for bikes/peds In Hoboken, New Jersey.

<https://www.post-gazette.com/news/nation/2024/03/10/new-jersey-street-parking-traffic-deaths/stories/202403100009#:~:text=Street%20parking%20was%20already%20scarce,bid%20to%20end%20traffic%20fatalities.>

Best,  
Doria  
Doria Summa  
(650) 867 7544 Mobile

--  
Doria Summa  
(650) 867 7544 Mobile

**From:** [Zafarali Ahmed](#)  
**To:** [Burt, Patrick](#); [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Katie Causey](#)  
**Subject:** A personal story from Park Blvd: we can do better.  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 8:53:19 AM

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Dear Council Member Burt,

I wanted to share a personal story that happened to me during the weekend a few weeks ago on Park Blvd. Me and my partner were trying to access the Xfinity store on El Camino Real. We decided to chart our circuitous route to avoid ECR:

1. Use the Bryant ave bike Blvd
2. Go under Cal Ave crossing
3. Turn left on Park bike Blvd.
4. Ride Park Blvd until Olive Ave
5. Use olive ave to make our way to the sidewalk on ECR.

For every part of this trip, **we can do better.**

1. I ride Bryant Ave quite often and it could do with some more traffic calming. Since there are no stop signs on it I frequently see cars gunning it and overtaking kids huddled together riding to/from school. Furthermore, cars frequently misjudge who has the right of way when crossing at Bryant, the slow bicycle or the big SUV? The intersection at N California and Bryant is particularly bad: frequent fast cars and it only requires a small mistake or distracted driving to end with a disaster.
2. Cal Ave crossing is too narrow requiring a dismount.
3. The short stretch from the underpass to park Blvd is quite stressful, lots of cars entering and exiting Mollie stones and the big parking garages.
4. On park Blvd between cal ave and olive my partner and I were riding side by side when a big lorry came up behind us at a high speed honked and proceeded to accelerate forcing me into my partners path almost leading to a crash. As you can imagine this rattled us quite a bit.
5. Sidewalk riding involves having to be alert for pedestrians and cars entering and exiting the lots. This happens every time I need to access a business/leisure on ECR (including Real Produce International or the Stanford Dish).

I address you directly because I want to highlight that having alternate routes are not sufficient replacements for direct access. If we applied this logic to motorists we could ask them to all drive the 101 and reclaim ECR into a pedestrian paradise. The reality in all of these spaces is: bikes are a guest and our infrastructure needs to be better if we are to reach our safety, climate, health and sustainability goals.

So in summary, **please pass a resolution to remove parking add the protected bike lanes on ECR.** The plan is not perfect, but I have confidence that after seeing this much support for it, Palo Alto will prioritize improving upon the lanes and intersections building a solid backbone for current and future users of ECR.

I am happy to follow up more on how I can see my trip change in 2025 when these lanes are

done and Palo Alto has taken some leadership in fixing the gaps in its network.

Thank you,  
Zafarali Ahmed

**From:** [George Lu](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** ECR Bike Lane Public Comment  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 8:45:16 AM  
**Attachments:** [Responses to George Lu - Palo Alto PTC - ECR Bike Lane Questions 3.11 \(3\).pdf](#)

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Dear Council,

I'm writing to express support for El Camino bike lanes.

I don't take this lightly. I am concerned about the number of cyclist-car conflicts on El Camino. Just as we can't allow status quo issues to continue, we must ensure future bike lanes are safe.

Ultimately, I see parallels with Council's decision to close Cal Ave to vehicle traffic. In that case, we didn't have all the answers, but we had (1) a vision of a more livable community and (2) optimism that we could realize that future.

There's enough existing and future ridership to warrant a new bike lane. However, my major concern is Caltrans' design, which is barely acceptable.

1.  
There are several particularly unsafe segments. See attached PDF of specific issues from the 3/13 PTC / HRC meeting (and Caltrans' unsatisfactory responses).
2.  
The design can be reasonably good if we apply modest fixes to key issues, like eliminating sharrows and improving routing. For example, the current design asks cyclists to merge into a traffic lane once they enter Menlo Park.
3.  
With further improvements (including concrete-less quick build options for intersections or bus islands), the bike lane could be very good.

Caltrans promised to be responsive to community feedback; Council must hold them accountable. Caltrans' expected completion date is Fall 2025, so we still have some time to constructively resolve key issues. Overall, I urge the council to:

1.  
Support the bike lanes. Our motion can include conditions to push Caltrans to follow their own DIB-94 safety guidelines and eliminate sharrows.

2.

Escalate to our state representatives. If we send a clear message, our representatives can pressure Caltrans to stay engaged and secure funding.

3.

Direct staff to make El Camino safer. The city should aggressively identify and prioritize a slate of projects, like (a) red light enforcement cameras, (b) resolving right-of-way issues so Caltrans can build bus islands, and (c) restrictions on new ECR driveways.

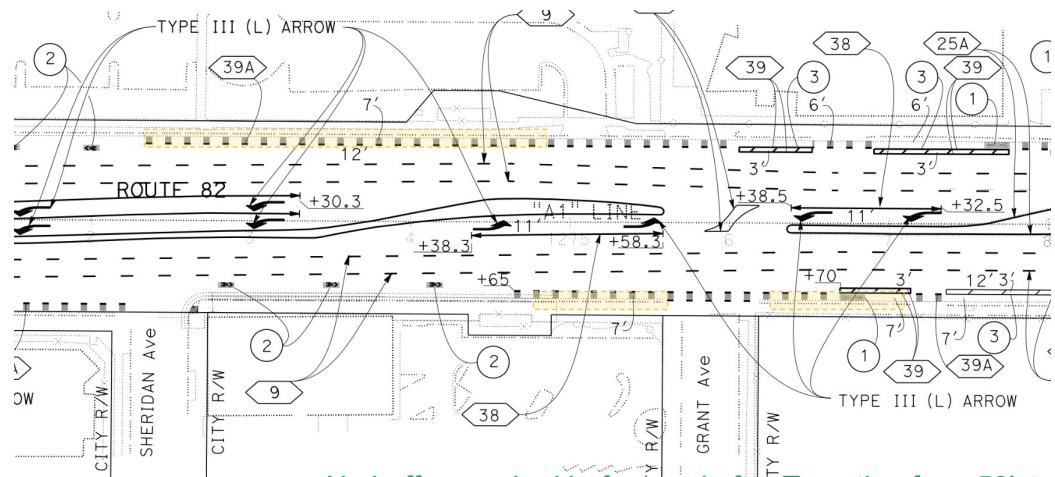
I believe Palo Alto can live up to its ideals for safety, livability, and sustainability. We should seize this opportunity and put in the work to make these bike lanes successful.

Best

George (speaking for myself, and not the PTC of course)



- b. For example, see some highlighted sections near Sheridan and Grant, where a 7' bike lane abuts a 12' car lane. **At this location, bike lane width varies from 5 to 7 feet.**



**No buffer required before and after T-section from 50' to 200'**

## Bike Box Questions

3. Can you confirm whether cars will be allowed to make a right-turn on red at bike boxes?  
How does Caltrans determine which intersections get a bike box?
  - a. I'm trying to understand if it's reasonable to add more bike boxes, especially along [city recommended / safe school routes](#).

Bike boxes were picked for locations to either reduce turning collision (California Ave) or to act as a wayfinding to direct cyclists to turn (Embarcadero). This counter measures increases cyclists' visibility to motorists and to allow bicyclists to get ahead of queuing traffic during the red signal phase. Bike boxes can be used with a 'no turn on red' sign to clarify that the motorist cannot make a right turn on red.

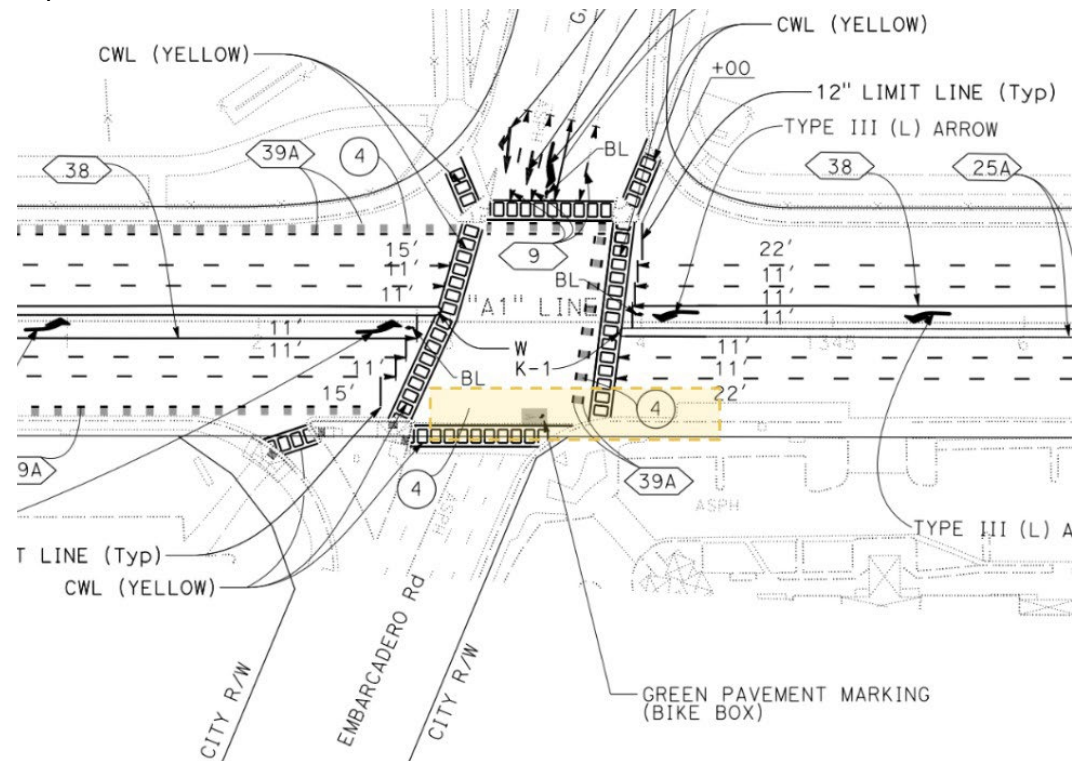
4. How did you decide the placement of the 'Two-Stage Turn Queue' bike boxes at Stanford Ave and Embarcadero?

The purpose of the bike box at Embarcadero and Stanford Ave is to direct northbound cyclists to the bike path along Stanford University. The green cross bike at the intersection is also serving this purpose. The bikeways end here, and it is not advisable for cyclists to attempt to maneuver the undercrossing/ on ramps at Palm Ave/University Ave. This design is consistent with the MassDOT Separated bike lane design guide on how to transition from a two-way bikeway (Mass DOT page 86).

- a. My understanding is that these are the only left turn bike boxes along El Camino in Palo Alto. I worry that if there are only two bike boxes of their type, that neither cyclists nor drivers will understand how to use them.
- b. I also worry that the green bike box in the middle of Embarcadero will be misperceived as a signal that the bike lane continues onward. Moving cyclists might not realize that the box is intended for left turns only, and instead think the box is part of green striping that invites them to keep riding forward into an



unprotected 22' car lane.

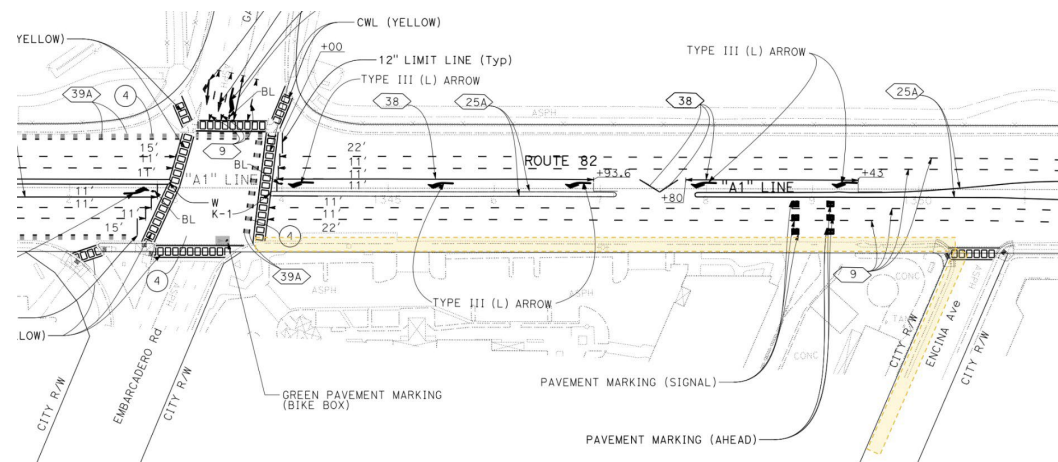


## Route Design

5. Did Caltrans consider extending the Northbound bike lane from Embarcadero to Encina Ave?

- a. See how the area seems sufficiently wide, with a ~22' right travel lane.

The route wasn't extended to Encina Ave, because the bikeway would have to end prior to University. The signalized intersection at Embarcadero offers a way for cyclists to transition to the Stanford Path.



- b. By continuing to Encina Ave, there's a more natural way for cyclists to reach Caltrain, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Town and Country, and the Embarcadero Bike Path.

There are positives and negatives about continuing the bikeway to Encina Ave. While it does provide more connections to the Embarcadero Bike Path, Churchill and Embarcadero Rd both have connections to the Embarcadero Bike Path as well. The design didn't want to encourage cyclists to proceed northbound on El Camino after

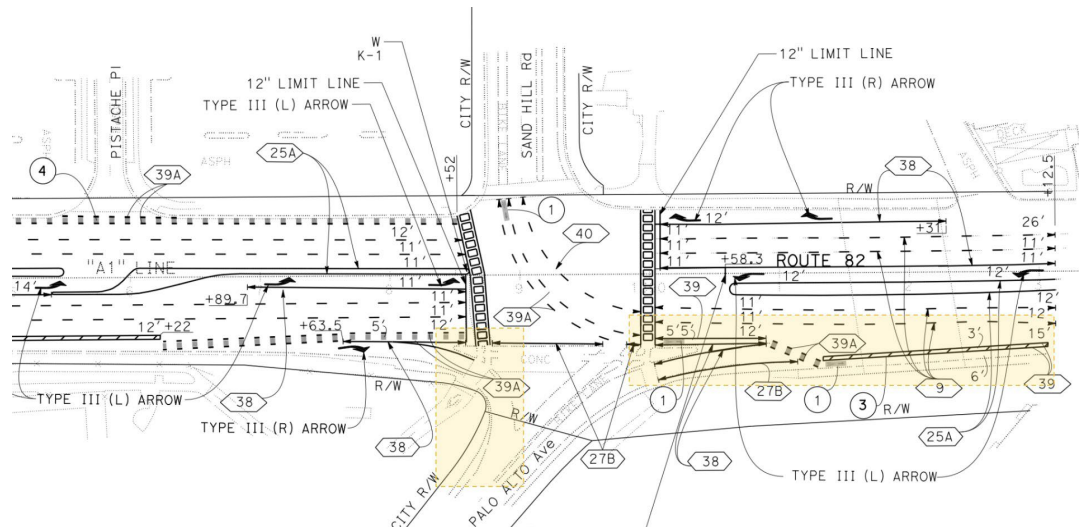


Embarcadero Rd. The bike box has a left arrow pointing cyclists toward the Stanford Path.

- c. As noted above, I think the green bike box + abrupt end of the bike lane is potentially dangerous, inviting cyclists to ride straight where they have no protection. By continuing the bike lane forward, we could add green paint that wraps around the corner of Encina, which signals that cyclists should continue through the Embarcadero bike path.

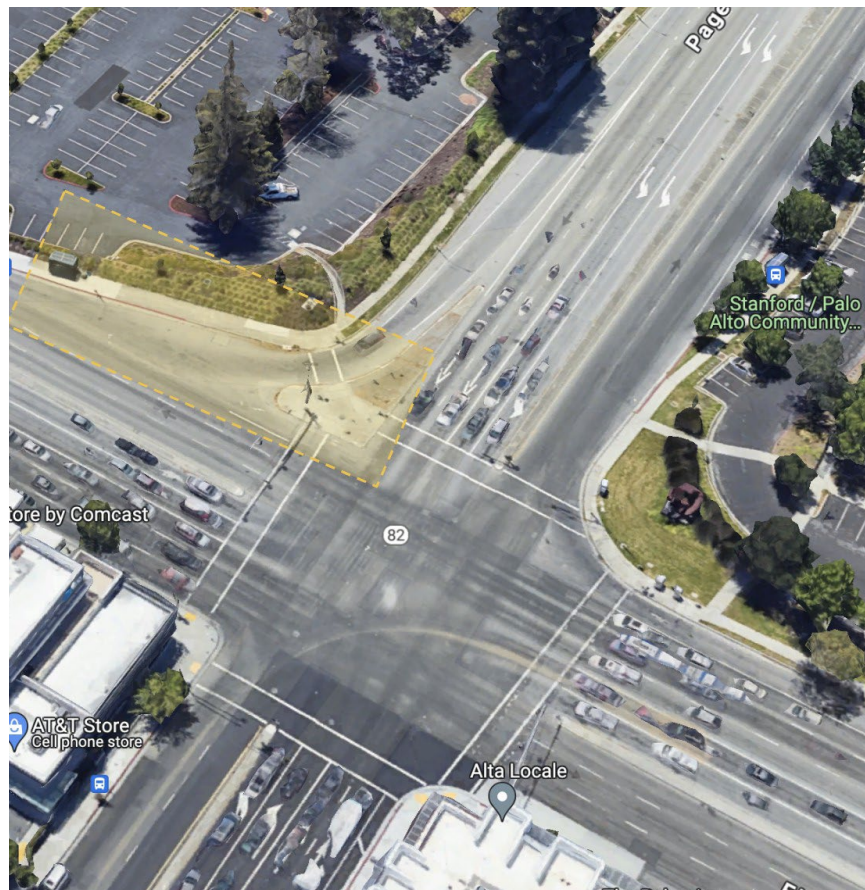
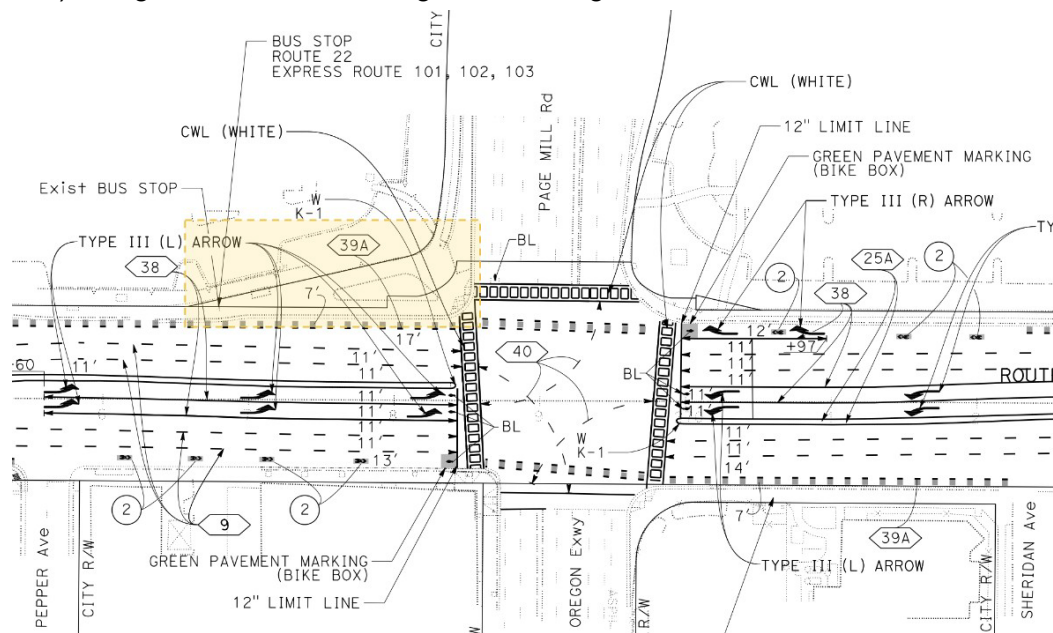
6. How are cyclists expected to continue north-bound in Menlo Park after Sand Hill?
  - a. See how the north-bound intersection at Palo Alto Ave contains two flowing, fast right turns (one onto Palo Alto Ave; one off of Palo Alto Ave). It's not clear how the bike lane then continues into Menlo Park.

This is the end of Caltrans paving project limit so the bikeway ends after Sand Hill. The current design tried to continue the bikeways as long as possible before dropping it.



7. Have there been attempts to limit fast turns onto El Camino? More specifically, is there any communication with the county about Page Mill Road? The County informed the future project to improve this intersection and plan to begin after the Caltrans paving project is completed. The draft plan shows extending the corner sidewalk and removing the right turn lane at the porkchop island.
  - a. For example, the highlighted section of Page Mill includes a porkchop / pedestrian island. Cars drive through that channel extremely quickly, and sight angles are awkward. It seems likely that the bike lane will be used as an extremely dangerous merging lane for cars. Ideally we can coordinate with the county to eliminate the porkchop (or at least add signs, lighting, more green paint, etc.).

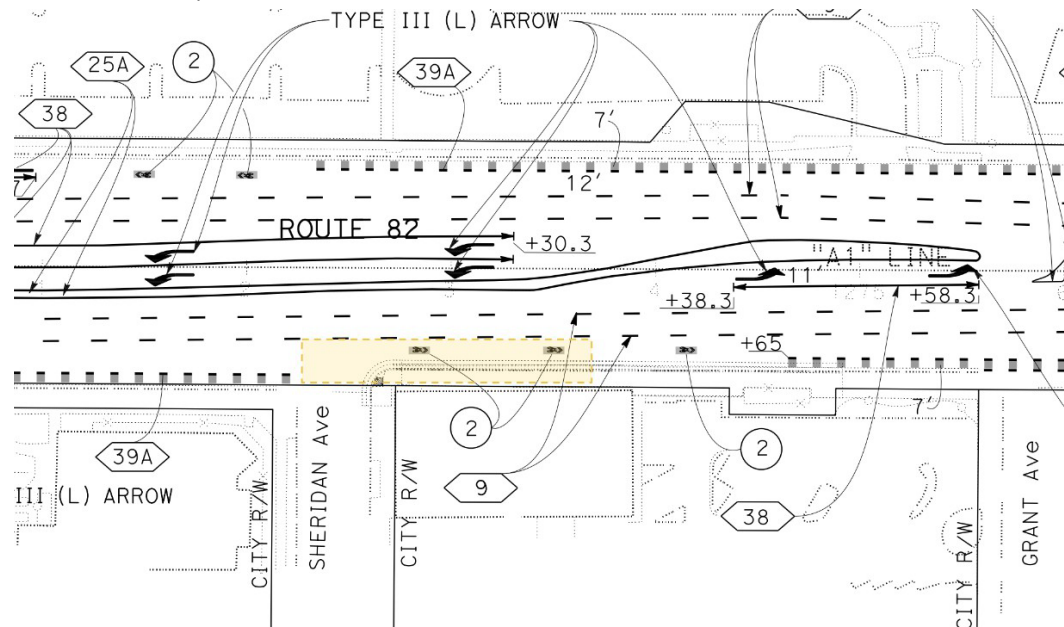
- b. Note there are other fast-flowing right turns (like at Los Altos Ave and Palo Alto Ave) though none seem as dangerous as Page Mill.



8. At locations where protected bike lanes abruptly end, will there be signs to warn cyclists and drivers? What will the signs say?

Sharrow markings are used to warn cyclists that a bike lane is ending.

- a. See intersection at Sheridan. Inexperienced cyclists may panic if they suddenly realize they're sharing a car lane. (Similar conditions exist at Embarcadero, Churchill, etc..)



9. What are the design guidelines for lane width, including for bus lanes?
  - a. Potentially lanes could be slightly narrowed (like from 11' to 10.5' for the central lanes, and 12' to 11' on the outer lane). This could allow a narrow Class 2 bike lane at Sheridan, rather than having to resort to sharrows.

All the lane width will be reduced to 11' and a class II bike lane will be placed here.

### Misc Design Questions

10. Can you briefly discuss any drainage improvements? Are there any guidelines for the design of sewer grates?

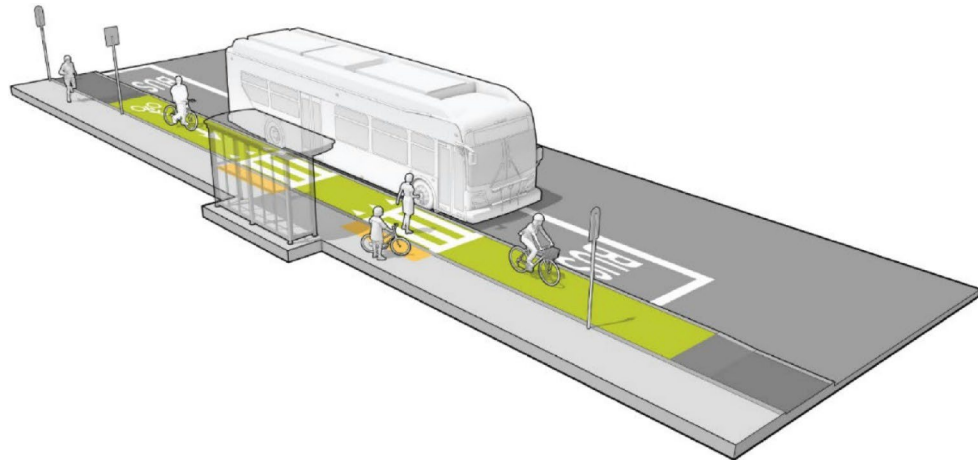
There is no drainage improvement work in Palo Alto under this paving project. Most of the grates are shown as bicycle proof ones but we need to review all the existing grate types.

- a. I want to make sure we take reasonable steps to prevent flooding<sup>2</sup>, and avoid accidents where bike wheels get caught in grates.

11. Could design improvements for bus lanes be in scope? How much money or time would Caltrans need to consider a design like the example from DIB-94 below, where the bike lane is slightly elevated?

There is insufficient Caltrans Right of Way to accommodate the separated bus lane as the figure/ example below.

Figure 7-G - Diagram of an integrated bicycle/pedestrian zone at a bus stop (MassDOT Separated **Bike** lane Guide)



**From:** [Kay Chien](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Guagliardo, Steven](#)  
**Subject:** Comments re: Caltrans SR82 El Camino Real Bikeway Project - April 1, 2024 Discussion  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 8:01:57 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I'm the property owner of 3239 El Camino Real, Palo Alto and my tenants have expressed the following concerns regarding the SR82 El Camino Real Bikeway Project. I'm asking the City of Palo Alto to take their concerns into consideration as these are the business owners who spend their daily life at the property and will be the people directly impacted by the SR82 El Camino Real Bikeway Project.

- Roadside Parking will be Limited - Many tenants are Retails which their consumers will park on the road side if the parking space in the building is full. Unlike the nearby California Avenue or downtown Palo Alto which have several public parking structure available, there are not many public parking space available in the area of the El Camino Real Bikeway Project. In the Letter that City of Palo Alto issued regarding SR82 El Camino Real Bikeway Project, the tenants did not see the City address how they are planning to "replace" the roadside parking that will be taken away for the bike lanes and are concerned. Having convenient parking for my tenants' consumers is very important to their business and they would like City of Palo Alto to address the plan for parking in the area.
- Bicyclists' and Drivers' Safety - Many tenants would like the City of Palo Alto to be more clear about how the City is planning to protect the safety of both Bicyclists' and Drivers' when they are passing/coming in-and-out of the property. Will there be devices in placed for the bikers / cars to slow down or give them an warning? Many tenants recalled a couple close encounters between aggressive bikers/ drivers in the past few months.

Sincerely,  
Kan-Hui Chien



**From:** [Frank Viggiano](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Please Remove Street Parking on El Camino Real and Replace it with Protected Bike Lanes  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 7:18:48 AM

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As a nearly lifelong Palo Alto resident and local cyclist I am writing to you to strongly urge you to allow CalTrans to proceed with their plan to remove street parking on El Camino Real and replace that space with bike lanes.

El Camino as it currently is not safely accessible to cyclists. Despite this, we know that many cyclists do attempt to bike to ECR-based businesses and residences. Because cycling out in the traffic lane is rather scary, many of these cyclists end up riding on the sidewalk, which in turn endangers pedestrians (and we have heard this feedback from ECR merchants). In addition, the parallel-parked cars block sightlines, increasing the chance of collisions between autos and bikes or pedestrians, and even between autos and other autos. If you have tried to pull out of an ECR parking lot in your car, you have probably experienced this issue.

I know that the biggest obstacle people have with this proposal is the loss of parking spots. However, the number of parking spots on the street is very small compared to the number of spots in the lots of the El Camino Real merchants (9 to 1 in favor of the lots). On the west side of ECR we have found that most of the occupied parking space is taken up by RV dwellers, a situation which the City needs to find a way to satisfy in a way that is safer for both the RV dwellers themselves and other users of the road – perhaps using the parking lot of one of the many unoccupied office complexes in Palo Alto.

The City has invested heavily on public parking lots and parking structures, but in this case the safety concerns should take priority over a few more parking spots. There are legitimate reasons that we don't allow parking everywhere, and having parallel parking on a road such as ECR is simply not best practice.

Our neighbors in Mountain View and Los Altos have already agreed to this move to remove parking as part of this CalTrans repaving project, and, as a link up and down the peninsula, continuity and uniformity on this corridor is important.

Replacing street parking with protected bikeways is a trend in many cities and towns throughout the US. Cambridge, MA is one such example which is in the process of replacing street parking with protected bike lanes on all of its larger streets. These changes have not adversely affected business at retailers located on those streets. And as someone who travels there on a regular basis, I can attest that these changes have also greatly improved the physical attractiveness of these streets, a factor which actually helps retail activity. The businesses on Palo Alto's ECR are hurting partly because, in its current state, it is not a very inviting place. We need to make it a beautiful grand boulevard that welcomes people to shop and eat there.

Some have pointed out that the proposed design for ECR is not perfect, but we should

focus on the improvement over the current status quo. Further improvements can be made in the future, and will be even more optimal after seeing exactly what worked and what didn't. As those of us who made their careers in Silicon Valley have learned, it is better to make iterative changes and learn from those changes with real world feedback than to spend years trying to come up with a perfect design ahead of time before making any implementation.

In summary, I'm so happy that we have this opportunity to jump start the improvement of El Camino and help make it the thriving boulevard it could be, and I hope that you will give CalTrans the go ahead to continue with their plan.

Thank you for your time,

Frank Viggiano

**From:** [Tim Oey](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Yes, Bike Lanes on El Camino!  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 1:16:52 AM

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Honorable Mayor and Palo Alto City Council,

Don't look a gift horse in the mouth. Caltrans has given Palo Alto an opportunity to expand its bike network and make El Camino safer for bicyclists AND everyone else. The more who bike (instead of drive), the safer it is for everyone now (collisions) and in the future (pollution, climate change, health, etc).

People already are biking on El Camino. We need to make it safer for them and also safer for all the others who need to bike on El Camino to reach businesses there and take more direct routes to wherever they need to go.

I'm a bicycle instructor and a strong and confident rider. I have successfully taught some students to ride on El Camino. However it still takes considerable courage to navigate this route. Caltrans's proposed updates to El Camino are not perfect but they are a big step forward.

Palo Alto has been a leader in making it safer for bicyclists and pedestrians yet it still has some facilities that need major improvements. Roll with the Caltrans project and use it as a base to continue to make improvements. It is well worth removing some parking spots. It saves money and saves lives.

Thanks!

Tim Oey  
Zero Waste Engineer, [ZeroW.org](#)  
League of American Bicyclists Cycling Instructor #6033





**From:** [Sharlene Liu](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** YES on El Camino Real bike lanes, Option B  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 12:42:33 AM

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Dear Palo Alto City Council,

I support removing parking on El Camino Real and installing bike lanes. Specifically, I support Option B in the Agenda Packet:

Adopt a phased approach that implements the Caltrans proposed bicycle lanes now and acknowledges additional analysis is needed to both incorporate a Safe Systems Approach to the design yet establishes bike facilities that take into account future housing development on El Camino Real.

I will be a frequent user of the ECR bike lanes when they are built. I live in Sunnyvale and have to commute (by bike) to and in Palo Alto periodically for medical appointments and for dining. Because I'm not very familiar with PA, I have to first consult a map to identify a safe bike route that is parallel to ECR. If bike lanes were installed on ECR in PA, I would be able to take ECR through PA instead of a circuitous alternative route.

ECR is a major thoroughfare for people to reach the downtowns of all the cities on the peninsula. Unfortunately, it currently accommodates mostly vehicles, and not bikes. We need to make it safe for bicyclists so that people can bike in PA safely and conveniently. Please paint in bike lanes now, and then further improve its safety by incorporating a Safe Systems Approach to the design.

Thank you!  
Sharlene Liu  
Sunnyvale Resident

**From:** [President LWVPaloAlto](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Lisa Ratner](#); [Judy Kleinberg](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 11, Bike Lanes Comment LWVPA  
**Date:** Sunday, March 31, 2024 11:06:16 PM  
**Attachments:** [LWVPA 4.1.24 Bike lanes.docx](#)

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April 1, 2024

Re: Agenda Item 11, City Council Meeting, April 1, 2024 (Protected Bike Lanes on ECR)

Dear Mayor Stone and Council Members:

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto supports creation of protected bike lanes by CalTrans on El Camino Real but urges the City and CalTrans to take into serious consideration the safety concerns and design changes suggested by consultants Fehr & Peers to comply with the "safe system approach." Without those changes, the consultants state "the plan fails to account for high speeds of motorists along El Camino Real which would impose significant risks." The current plan probably isn't safe for bikes.

Our League's Transportation Position supports city actions that minimize the use of single occupant vehicles, is safe and convenient for motorized vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians, and reduce greenhouse gases. The transit system should address the mobility needs of all, and be designed to reach employment, educational and shopping locations.

Protected bike lanes planned by CalTrans are a good first step in creating a safe infrastructure for people who walk or bike on El Camino Real in conformance with our city's Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (S/CAP). Protected bike lanes will help reduce vehicle miles traveled by single occupant vehicles and increase the share of transit by walking and biking, helping us reach our climate goals for 2030. Hundreds of new homes are planned for development along El Camino Real. Students will need a safe way to ride their bikes to school, as will people with various income levels and transportation needs, including food delivery workers, teens, service workers, and people who just prefer traveling by bicycle. Protected bike lanes will help serve the mobility needs of all.

Sincerely,

Nancy Shepherd and Judy Kleinberg  
Co-Presidents  
LWV Palo Alto



April 1, 2024

Re: Agenda Item 11, City Council Meeting, April 1, 2024 (Protected Bike Lanes on ECR)

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Sincerely,

Nancy Shepherd and Judy Kleinberg  
Co-Presidents

**From:** [President LWVPaloAlto](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Judy Kleinberg](#); [Lisa Ratner](#)  
**Subject:** LWV Palo Alto Comment on item 11; Caltans bike lanes  
**Date:** Sunday, March 31, 2024 11:05:42 PM

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April 1, 2024

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Sincerely,

Nancy Shepherd and Judy Kleinberg

Co-Presidents\_

LWW Palo Alto

**From:** [holzemer/hernandez](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item #10 -- CalTrans" Proposal to add bike lanes on El Camino Real  
**Date:** Sunday, March 31, 2024 9:21:56 PM

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Dear Honorable Mayor Stone and Council Members,

I would like to add my voice, serious concern, and objection over the new CalTrans proposal to add bike lanes to El Camino Real, which is a major state highway (State Route 82) and is one of the most heavily used traffic routes throughout our City.

My concerns are divided into two separate areas -- 1) bicyclist safety and 2) elimination of street parking for commercial properties along El Camino.

As for bicyclist safety, I find it somewhat surprising and even astounding that anyone would want to ride their bike on El Camino within inches of fast moving vehicles (cars, trucks, buses, etc.) traveling at times over 40 or 45 miles an hour! What happens if a cyclist has a mechanical breakdown (flat tire, gear malfunction) and slowly wanders out of their narrow lane into ongoing traffic? There are many numerous possible scenarios that would lead very quickly to fatal accidents or serious major injuries. On top of that, is the vehicle driver distraction factor. I've seen it myself. Vehicles that are traveling next to bike lane are often distracted by what the cyclist(s) is doing in that lane. This leads to distracted driving for those vehicles, when drivers should be focused on the cars and traffic around them. I suggest this is the wrong road to put bike lanes on and there should be other alternatives that the City should suggest to CalTrans.

The elimination of street parking for the commercial businesses along El Camino should also be a non-starter for the City. I was involved several years ago when the City and the Council introduced the Evergreen Park/Mayfield Parking Permit Program. One of the specific goals of that effort was to try to eliminate the need for commercial businesses, along El Camino, from parking in the Evergreen Park neighborhood and adding that parking for employees along El Camino. If street parking is eliminated on El Camino, you will have more commercial businesses, their employees, their customers parking in the neighborhood again -- something the Council and public said they wanted to eliminate. I think the City should do its own specific needs analysis on what the parking needs are along the El Camino corridor and only then discuss with the public and CalTrans what changes or adaptation should be considered along this major thoroughfare.

I sincerely hope you will not support the CalTrans proposal for adding bike lanes to El Camino.

Thank you.

Terry Holzemer

2581 Park Blvd. #Y211

Palo Alto, CA 94306



**From:** [Andrea Eckstein Gara](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Hilary Glann](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item #11 / Council Meeting on Monday April 1  
**Date:** Sunday, March 31, 2024 8:07:53 PM

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Palo Alto Councilmembers,

350 SV Palo Alto urges you to adopt bike lanes on El Camino, as per the Caltrans plan. This is very much in keeping with the city's priorities, and investing in safer infrastructure for people who walk or bike on El Camino Real and throughout the city is a necessary action identified in the city's Sustainability and Climate Action Plan. Additionally:

- In order to reach our 2030 emissions reduction target, the city needs to reduce total vehicular miles traveled as well as increase the percentage of local work trips that are made with bikes, walking and public transit. We cannot meet those commitments without new infrastructure. El Camino is a major connection to jobs, shopping, and services and would help with our needed VMT reductions.
- Hundreds of new homes are planned for development along El Camino Real. We need to ensure these new neighbors don't just add to the road congestion. Let's give them the option to safely bike.
- This is an equity issue: bikers using El Camino are often those making the lowest incomes, including service workers and food delivery drivers. Let's make our city streets safe for everyone; reduce our climate emissions; provide a clear connection to jobs, homes, and adjacent cities; and take the first steps toward making El Camino Real the grand boulevard we all want it to be.
- Finally, we have to make sure that new bike infrastructure is indeed safe. We recommend that the City Council persuade Caltrans to adopt the safety improvements suggested by consultants Fehr & Peers to provide more protection for cyclists at intersections as well as narrowing lane width for cars to accommodate wider bike lanes/buffer zones for cyclists. Studies have shown that narrower car lanes reduce car speeds and crashes.  
<https://narrowlanes.americanhealth.jhu.edu/>

Respectfully,

350 SV Palo Alto Steering Committee

**From:** [Alan Wachtel](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed El Camino Real bikeways (April 1 meeting, agenda item 11)  
**Date:** Sunday, March 31, 2024 6:44:43 PM

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Members of the Council:

You're being asked to make a snap decision on whether to remove parking on El Camino Real for bikeways, at the last second and on the basis of incomplete information. I share your frustration. I'm a long-time member of the City's Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee, but I can't speak for that committee, only for myself, because PABAC has never been given a chance to offer recommendations to the City on most of the issues this project presents.

I'm also a member of the Institute of Transportation Engineers, and I've published bicycle safety research (conducted in Palo Alto) in the institute's journal. In addition, from its formation in 1992 until it was dissolved in 2018, I was a member of the California Bicycle Advisory Committee (CBAC), which advised Caltrans headquarters in Sacramento. From 1999 to 2013, I served as CBAC's chair.

I'll comment only on the proposed bikeways. Parking removal is a separate policy issue. This is not to imply that you should accept what I say on my authority, only that it deserves your attention on its own merits. See my comments on the staff's proposed alternatives at the bottom.

### **The proposed bikeways do not address the causes of car-bike collisions**

After maintaining that its collision statistics could not differentiate, and declining to give the City access to them for its own analysis, Caltrans acknowledged last month that about two-thirds of the bicycle collisions in the El Camino corridor in Palo Alto occur at intersections, and half of all collisions involve bicyclists crossing El Camino, rather than traveling along it.

Caltrans statistics also show that 79 percent of these bike crashes are broadside. Only 6 percent are sideswipes, and rear-end crashes are too few to enumerate separately; they're lumped under "other" at 12 percent. These figures are consistent with those from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan update in progress and with the Safe Streets for All plan currently under development, and imply that intersections are the primary collision sites.

Bike facilities along El Camino Real between intersections do not prevent crashes at intersections. Moreover, the Class IV separated bikeways proposed in some locations are designed to address sideswipe and rear-end crashes, which are infrequent. They do nothing to reduce broadside crashes, which are the most common type, and in some case may actually increase their frequency.

Although the proposal includes some general intersection upgrades that might improve safety, the best way to address bike and pedestrian safety in this corridor would be to identify the precise causes of collisions by analyzing crash reports and implementing corresponding

context-related countermeasures. This project might well have overlooked many of the most important safety improvements.

We also do not know whether these crashes show a demand for bicycle facilities along El Camino, as Caltrans maintains, rather than crossing it. As of last report, Caltrans had not taken the elementary step of counting bicycles along or crossing El Camino. This means it will also be impossible to evaluate the effects of any bikeways that might be installed in increasing bicycle traffic.

### **Certain proposed bikeways may actually increase bike-car collisions**

Separation does not always, or even usually, need to mean a physical barrier. Class II bike lanes, delineated by paint or cross-hatched buffers, are suitable for this project. Lane stripes serve the purpose of demarcating space for bicycle traffic and indicating travel paths for both motorized and nonmotorized traffic, just as all longitudinal lane striping does. We do not expect physical barriers between every lane of vehicular traffic.

Caltrans makes much of Design Information Bulletin (DIB) 94, "Complete Streets: Contextual Design Guidance," which recommends Class IV physically separated bikeways on high-speed, high-volume roads. DIB 94's uncritical endorsement, which unaccountably neglects the importance of minimizing and regulating crossflows, is difficult to understand in light of long-standing guidance whose reasoning remains valid and in effect.

The City would be well served by expanding its outlook beyond DIB 94 to a broader range of design guidance, including the Caltrans Highway Design Manual, other DIBs, and the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. For instance, DIB 89, "Class IV Bikeway Guidance," includes the following statement, which applies to both major and minor intersections and driveways:

"Intersection crossing points offer unique challenges to the design and operation of a separated bikeway. [T]he usability and safety of the separated facility depends heavily on the manner in which intersections, driveways, and alleys, as well as pedestrian facilities, interact with and connect to the separated bikeway and bikeway network. The bikeway must provide adequate visibility at intersections, driveways, and alleys, to avoid right or left hook collisions in which vehicles turn in front of bicyclists traveling straight. As such, it is critical that careful thought and planning go into the design of all intersections, driveways, and alleys located along a bikeway."

Bikeways that remain barrier-separated too close to driveways or intersections prevent motorists from merging toward the curb in advance of turning, as required by law and good driving practice, forcing them instead to make a nearly 90-degree turn. This creates the type of geometric conflict popularly known as a right hook, a well-known and common type of bike-car crash. Bicyclists--including the increasing number of faster e-bicyclists--must overtake turning vehicles in what for many drivers is their right rear blind spot, while traveling at full speed and expecting to have right-of-way, magnifying the chance of a collision. Lanes of traffic intended for vehicular travel would never be designed with right turns from the left of through traffic. Excessive physical separation therefore has the potential to create new broadside conflicts, which did not exist before, at every driveway and minor intersection.

In this way, Class IV separated bikeways resemble the sidewalk bicycling they are meant to supersede. It has been firmly established for many years (including through my own work)

that bicycling on sidewalks adjacent to busy streets, though it might seem safer, can actually cause more bike-car collisions than riding on the street itself. Bicyclists on sidewalks may feel separated from cars, but in fact they encounter unexpected conflicts with crossing and turning traffic at intersections and driveways, at locations where neither party expects or can easily see the other. Class IV bikeways too close to driveways or intersections have the potential to create the same type of conflicts, with the same false sense of security.

You would never know any of this from reading DIB 94. The Safe System Approach has analogous blind spots, which there is no need to go into further.

The high density of high-volume commercial driveways along El Camino Real, and the frequent unsignalized minor cross streets, make it particularly unsuitable for Class IV bikeways in most locations, other than the Stanford and Palo Alto High School frontages. It would be preferable to drop at least the flexible delineators, and possibly the painted buffer, 100-200 feet before driveways and intersections, as is done when solid bike lanes stripes become dashed. But Caltrans acknowledges that often there is simply not enough space between driveways to do this. Barriers should not be installed in such locations.

It is hard to be sure exactly what mitigation measures Caltrans does intend, and whether they comply with the guidance of DIB 89, because the plans are insufficiently detailed.

It's understandable that there is widespread popular enthusiasm for separated bikeways (often erroneously referred to as "protected bike lanes," though they are neither). But they may in fact intensify the broadside turning conflicts that are already among the most frequent, and less experienced bicyclists are most at risk. This is why even Caltrans acknowledges that proposals for more separation even closer to intersections are inconsistent with good design practice.

### **The Fehr & Peers memo**

The memo from Fehr & Peers correctly identifies many of the potential shortcomings in Caltrans's proposal, but it also offers several misguided suggestions that would not be in bicyclists' best interest.

The memo finds that:

"The proposed design does not address the high-speed conditions for through and turning movements, which contribute to the greatest kinetic energy risk (and therefore severe injury and fatality risk) for vulnerable road users in the corridor. In particular, the proposed design retains the number of vehicle travel lanes, retains wide travel lanes, removes the 'friction' associated with on-street parking, and does not address turning movement speed at the intersections/conflict points. High speed and/or uncontrolled vehicle conflict points for pedestrians walking along and across El Camino Real are not addressed."

I fully agree. The greatest improvements to traffic safety for all travelers on El Camino Real would be to reduce vehicle speeds and minimize intersection conflicts. This should command the highest priority.

However, F&P also recommend extending physical separation of Class IV bikeways all the way to certain intersections. This treatment conflicts with the well-reasoned design guidance of DIB 89 and should not be implemented, unless the resulting conflict can be resolved by

special treatments such as separate signal phasing for bicyclists, which might be useful at difficult intersections like Page Mill Road.

### **PABAC has had minimal opportunity to participate in this process**

PABAC saw draft plans for the El Camino Real project at our meeting last May, though no one from Caltrans was present to explain them or to answer questions. Instead we submitted a lengthy list of written questions, which went unanswered for nine months, until March 5, when Caltrans finally responded as part of this current initiative to generate public support for a proposal they had already settled on more or less unilaterally. Even so, many of our concerns were never actually addressed, only marked as "Noted."

In response to Caltrans's request in November for parking removal, City Manager Shikada wrote to Caltrans with a number of questions about the project. PABAC was not consulted in composing this letter and only learned of it when it was posted on the City's website.

Caltrans gave a presentation on this project to PABAC on March 7. The committee was able to ask questions, but was given no opportunity to discuss the project afterward or to make recommendations to City staff. PABAC was not consulted on City Manager Shikada's follow-up letter to Caltrans on March 14 and did not see that letter or the accompanying memo from Fehr & Peers until they were posted on the website. The staff report for this April 1 Council meeting likewise does not contain any comments or recommendations from PABAC.

If PABAC has been shut out partly for reasons of timing, that only indicates a rushed and potentially error-prone process.

### **Alternative actions**

I urge you to think carefully about these issues before making any decisions. Removing parking from El Camino would facilitate bicycling there, by making more roadway width available and eliminating the hazards of opening car doors. Class II bike lane striping, and even buffering, would help to identify and separate parallel travel paths. But in most locations, barriers have the potential for unintended consequences. Caltrans and the City also need to do much more to identify the causes of and mitigate bike crashes crossing, rather than along, El Camino Real.

The staff reports suggests the following alternative paths (my comments below each item):

*A. Defer action related to bike lanes until Caltrans provides a Safe System Approach Design that is DIB-94 compliant.*

Avoid focusing narrowly on DIB-94 or the Safe System Approach and their excessive emphasis on separated bikeways, which can introduce unexpected conflicts. Look for a design that also complies with the Caltrans Highway Design Manual, the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and DIB 89, and that prioritizes speed reduction and intersection design, which have the greatest potential to improve safety. Also ask Caltrans for counts of bicycles traveling along and crossing El Camino, distinguishing those in the roadway from those on the sidewalk and those traveling with traffic from those against it.

*B. Adopt a phased approach that implements the Caltrans proposed bicycle lanes now and acknowledges additional analysis is needed to both incorporate a Safe System Approach to the*

*design yet establishes bike facilities that take into account future housing development on El Camino Real.*

The Caltrans proposal includes Class IV separated bikeways near high-volume commercial driveways that call for closer attention before the City accepts them, along with the other issues listed in my comment on Alternative A. This would not delay the project.

*C. Defer action pending a Caltrans feasibility analysis on travel lane reductions to support parking protected bike lanes.*

This would be a terrible idea. Parking-separated Class IV bikeways (not "bike lanes," which are distinct in design, law, and function) trap bicyclists in a narrow channel, making it difficult to pass slower bicyclists, avoid debris or potholes, or turn left; expose bicyclists to car doors opening on the passenger side; and obstruct sight lines approaching driveways or intersections where cars and bikes must interact.

*D. Align decision of bicycle facilities on ECR with the update of the BPTP to complete in late 2025.*

This may be unrealistic. El Camino Real will be and needs to be paved now. Even a future project that only needs to realign lane stripes would potentially be disruptive. It would also likely shift costs onto the City. In fact, this might be true of any alternative that doesn't conform to Caltrans's repaving schedule.

And I would add to all alternatives: Insist that PABAC be consulted in all pedestrian- and bicycle-related decisions. That is what a Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee is for. Staff and the Council are under no obligation to follow our advice, but you ought to know what it is.

~ Alan Wachtel  
Palo Alto

**From:** [Chris Parry](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment for 4/1/2024 City Council Meeting; Agenda Item No. 11  
**Date:** Saturday, March 30, 2024 9:58:08 PM  
**Attachments:** [Letter to PA City Council.pdf](#)

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Dear Palo Alto City Council,

I'm submitting the attached letter to comment on Agenda Item No. 11 for the April 1, 2024 City Council meeting.

Regards,

Chris Parry



March 30, 2024

Palo Alto City Council  
City of Palo Alto  
[city.council@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:city.council@cityofpaloalto.org)

**Re: Letter in of Support Replacing Street Parking with Bike Lanes on El Camino Real (Item 11 on the Agenda for April 1, 2024 City Council Meeting)**

Dear Palo Alto City Council,

I am a Mountain View resident who frequently commutes to destinations in Palo Alto – via bicycle and driving. I am writing in support of the proposal to remove street parking on El Camino Real and to install protected bike lanes in that space.

I'm concerned that in El Camino Real's current layout, *the street parking creates unsafe conditions for drivers*. This is illustrated by the picture below (taken from Google StreetView, depicting the stretch of El Camino Real near Wilmer Hale in Palo Alto).



I would ask you to imagine that you are the driver of that Black SUV in the above picture who is trying to make a right hand turn onto El Camino Real. Many of the cars are traveling down El Camino at high speed. Then there are several parked cars on El Camino (e.g., the white SUV) *that are obstructing the driver's view of oncoming traffic*.

I frequently encounter this problem when I drive to locations on El Camino Real. When I exit the parking area to merge onto El Camino, the cars parked on the road obstruct my view.

This problem gets worse when oversized vehicles are parked there – e.g., delivery vans, trucks, RVs. If street parking were replaced with protected bike lanes then drivers would have a clear view of oncoming traffic when turning onto El Camino Real.

Needless to say, adding bike lanes would also make El Camino Real safer for cyclists. The conditions on El Camino Real today are extremely unsafe for cyclists – a high volume of fast moving traffic with no separation between cars and bikes. Despite these unsafe conditions, there are some cyclists who still ride on El Camino Real. Unfortunately, there have also been a number of collisions – which will continue to happen in the future unless the current street design is changed.

I've heard some concern expressed regarding the impact that removing street parking would have for businesses that do not have an off-street parking area. In my experience, most businesses on El Camino Real have parking lots off the street. For those that don't, there is usually parking available on nearby side streets that is only a short walk away (*i.e.*, less than a block). Trading a little bit of inconvenience for improved public safety seems like a worthwhile investment.

I urge the Council to vote in favor of removing street parking from El Camino Real and replacing that space with protected bike lanes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Chris Parry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chris" being more prominent than the last name "Parry".

Chris Parry  
Mountain View resident

**From:** [Natalie Geise](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Council Meeting Apr 1, Item 11 - Caltrans' Repaving Project of El Camino Real  
**Date:** Saturday, March 30, 2024 6:10:38 PM

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Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to support a [resolution to remove parking on El Camino and install bike lanes](#). I have ridden my bike on El Camino (when I have forgotten a turn to stay along recommended bike routes) and I would do so much more willingly with the addition of bike lanes. I live half a block off of El Camino in the Mayfield neighborhood and would love the option to bike to places like Real Produce Market, Dumpling City, and State of Mind Pizza.

I have summarized and linked a few studies below on similar bike lanes. Each of the studies linked below addresses a safety concern seen raised at the previous public meetings. I share those concerns, but based on the data, I am reassured that the proposed bike lanes will both protect the riders who already bike regularly on El Camino, as well as those who may start riding more often.

Please [support this resolution and work with Caltrans to make proposed bike lanes even safer](#) through some of the specific suggestions put forth by the [City's consultants](#) and at the [PTC meeting](#) such as addition of bike boxes, restriction of rights-on-reds, and elimination of sharrows.

Thanks,  
Natalie

**Concern: El Camino is a high speed road, inappropriate for bikes**

- A study of 37 miles of urban arterial roads in Florida where bike lanes were installed showed that the bike lane had positive safety effects for all crashes and bike crashes. They found that after adding a bike lane, numbers of crashes were reduced by 22% for all crashes and 62% for bike crashes. They also studied the impact of annual average daily traffic and number of lanes and found crash modification factors (multiplicative factor that indicates the proportion of crashes that would be expected after implementing a countermeasure) of less than 1 for roads with very similar traffic levels and lane numbers as El Camino. This study did remove intersection crashes and did not look at bike traffic rate changes over time. ([link](#))

**Concern: The proposed bike lanes do not provide enough buffering, separation or protection**

- An analysis from New York City measured the changes in cyclist risk (cyclist injuries per 10M cyclists per mile) before and after installation of bicycle projects. The study showed a risk reduction of -32% across all study projects of conventional bike lane installs (which they define as "a lane defined only by paint, sometimes referred to as

Class II Bicycle Facilities") and improved safety on all classes of streets (low, medium, and high volume). ([link](#))

**Concern: If ridership increases, there may be an increase in total crashes even if the risk is reduced**

- Another study in New York City looked at the installation of on-street, unprotected bicycle lanes did not find statistically significant increases in crashes or KSIs for areas where lanes were installed compared to similar roads with no bike lanes, for either of segment or intersection crashes. The study did not control for increases in traffic on the routes, but noted importantly that bicycle ridership volume in the city increased during the study period, with a 123% increase during the study period. ([link](#))

**From:** [Scott Kenealy](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Parking and Bike Lanes on ECR  
**Date:** Saturday, March 30, 2024 3:53:33 PM

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Hello councilmembers,

There is a vote up at the April 1st meeting regarding whether El Camino Real should maintain street parking or whether protected bike lanes should be installed. I'd like to express my support for installing protected bike lanes.

There are two reasons I support this:

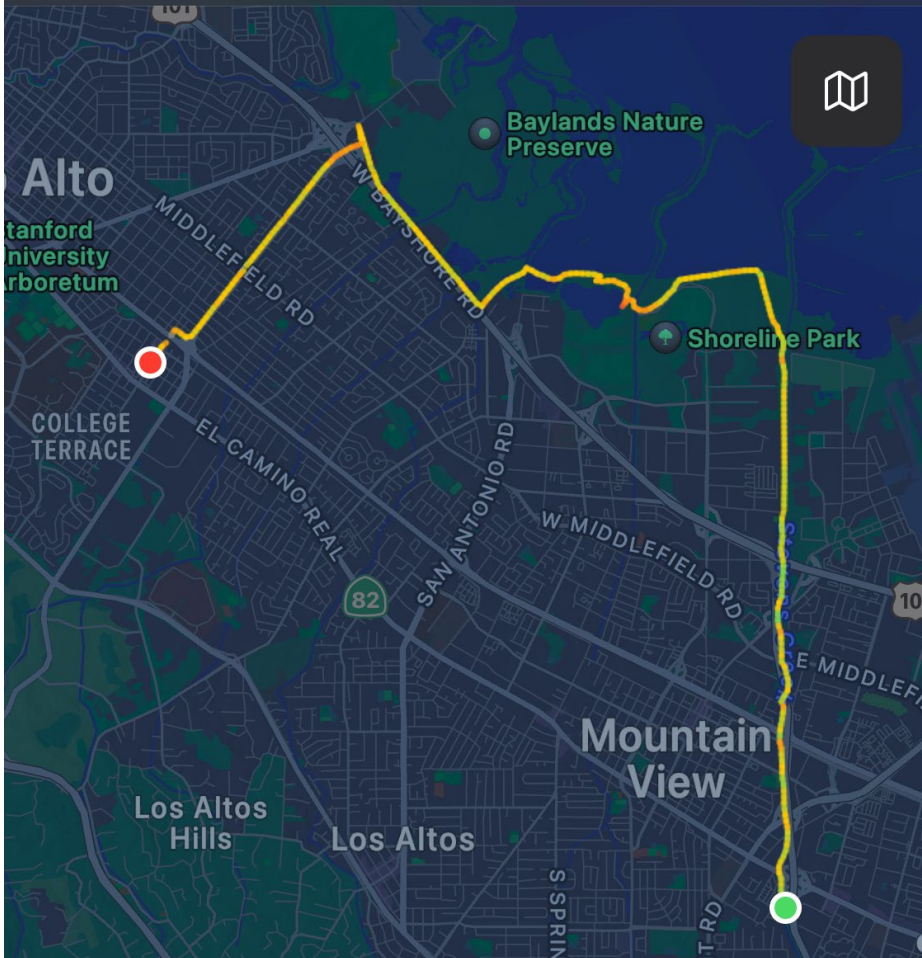
- I would be more likely to ride up to Palo Alto for shopping and dining if it were easier to get there by bike. I have a car but I prefer going places I can get to on my bike.
- As a general rule, I think moving vehicles should get priority over non-moving vehicles on streets. Businesses can band together to build an off-street garage for their customers that want to park, but they can't do anything about customers having a bad route a mile away.

I live in Sunnyvale, but I do like to spend my weekends riding my bike to the various downtowns and grabbing coffee and lunch. I recently went to downtown Cali Ave for Zareens and Backyard Brew one nice weekend, but because ECR is hostile if you're not a car, we took a roundabout way. I've also tried smaller streets between ECR and Caltrain on my bike to get to Palo Alto, but it's quite unpleasant and I don't think I'd do it again. Mountain View is adding lanes on ECR, so if Palo Alto did the same, I'd likely visit your businesses much more.

Thank you,  
Scott Kenealy



# 10.65 MI Outdoor Cycle



**From:** [YORIKO KISHIMOTO](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Item 11: bike lanes vs. parking on El Camino Real  
**Date:** Saturday, March 30, 2024 3:49:31 PM

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Item 11: Potential Approval of Resolution to support El Camino Repaving Project by Replacing Car Parking with Bicycle Lanes

Dear Mayor Stone and Honorable City Council members:

Carpe diem!

Please **approve Option B** of your alternate paths by adopting a phased approach that implements the Caltrans proposed bicycle lanes now and acknowledges additional analysis is needed to both incorporate a Safe System Approach to the design yet establishes bike facilities that take into account future housing development on El Camino Real.

I am so grateful that our state agency, Caltrans, has committed to a complete streets philosophy in its planning and goals and our neighboring cities like Mountain View have already supported adding visible and continuous bike lanes on El Camino Real.

In adopting Option B, the city would need to commit to a serious program of designing and finding the funding for all the intersections and crossings. We also need to design a feasible way for VTA buses to pull over and to pick up and discharge passengers without creating safety hazards for bicyclists.

I would use the bicycle lanes myself sometimes in biking to the headquarters of Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District near Showers and El Camino from Palo Alto. Currently when I bike there, I do enjoy the side routes of Bryant bike and Park boulevards and California Avenue in Mountain View. But I need to wind my way on half a dozen streets vs. two streets if I could go straight down El Camino - it's simply more straight forward. As a regional and state bike facility, it would be a major asset for workers and residents especially as we add more and more housing on this street.

Taking away rows of parked cars and dedicating them for prominent green bike lanes would in itself **transform the look and feel of El Camino Real.**

**I strongly support the city doing everything it can to make El Camino usable but safe by reducing unsafe speeding, by improving all the intersections to make them safe to cross, and allowing Caltrans to move forward by removing car parking on the street and replacing them with green bike lanes.**

Thank you very much for your hard work and attention to this important decision.

Yoriko Kishimoto  
Former Mayor of Palo Alto  
251 Embarcadero Rd, Palo Alto

**From:** [Bruce England](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** RE: City Council Agenda Item 11 - Discussion of Caltrans' Repaving Project of El Camino Real,  
**Date:** Saturday, March 30, 2024 12:10:37 PM

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Dear members of Palo Alto City Council:

Like others in your community and in the region, I value any safety features that can make El Camino safer for those walking and biking through the space, including adding bike lanes that are currently lacking and any related infrastructure to support the additions.

As you know, El Camino in its present design is nearly exclusive to serving motor vehicles, and this doesn't take into account the reality that bicyclists use this transportation route, and more would if it were adequately safe.

As we move into an era where active transportation is being prioritized in our jurisdictions, and when cities north and south of you are having related discussions, the time is right to course correct and for Palo Alto and Caltrans to work together to make the bike lane changes under consideration at your upcoming City Council meeting.

Best regards,  
Bruce England  
328 Whisman Station Drive  
Mountain View, CA 94043



**From:** [Robert Neff](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Neff, Robert](#)  
**Subject:** 4/1/24 Item 11: ECR Repaving Project  
**Date:** Saturday, March 30, 2024 9:25:56 AM

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Palo Alto City Council March 30, 2024

Re: April 1, 2024 Item 11, El Camino Bike Lanes

Honorable Council Members,

Regarding Item 11, on the April 1, 2024 agenda, El Camino Real Paving Project:

I write in support of staff option B, "Adopt a phased approach that implements the Caltrans proposed bicycle lanes now and acknowledges additional analysis is needed to both incorporate a Safe System Approach to the design and establish bike facilities that take into account future housing development on El Camino Real."

I think converting parking to bike facilities, and pedestrian improvements is the right approach to El Camino Real long term, and taking advantage of this CalTrans repaving project as an opportunity to move forward at low cost should not be missed. I think if the other choices offered in the staff report are taken, then we will likely see no change in the streetscape on El Camino Real for 10 or 20 years, much like the previous 40 years. We know we need to make our transportation systems support active transportation and transit better, to improve the street, and to meet our long term sustainability goals. This is a fiscally effective way to get started. Additional improvement should be expected, as improvements in bike facilities, pedestrian crossings, and traffic corridors are ongoing throughout the city. Don't let the perfect get in the way of the good.

Removing parking needs analysis and a plan for existing users of free parking on El Camino. Between now and the actual repaving and restriping in 2025, plans can be made. Volunteer and city efforts to quantify current use have shown that while 90% of the parking on ECR is already "on-site" and off-street, there are sections that are heavily used with the current free parking. If parking must be maintained in some blocks, then let's identify those locations, put a user price on that parking, and support development of a plan to mitigate the impact to bicyclists and pedestrians.

I hope you will move us forward on this, and adopt a version of staff option B.

Thank you for your service to the city of Palo Alto.

– Robert Neff

Emerson near Loma Verde

A volunteer led report on parking occupancy is here: 2024 El Camino Real Parking Occupancy Survey 1p1  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hZPt2RVrYEB6gnFIBHupzj\\_1tkSnmGZQTp87mpLywo/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hZPt2RVrYEB6gnFIBHupzj_1tkSnmGZQTp87mpLywo/edit?usp=sharing)

A volunteer led report on on-site parking is here: Snapshot ECR Canvassing 3/4/2024  
[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1A5mOhz8k4XWYwVLcuKUvEr1qgyk-0ViQ6sFw3\\_k2U-U/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1A5mOhz8k4XWYwVLcuKUvEr1qgyk-0ViQ6sFw3_k2U-U/edit?usp=sharing)

--

-- Robert  
[robert@neffs.net](mailto:robert@neffs.net)



**From:** [Serge Bonte](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** re: 4/1/24 Meeting Agenda Item 11 - Discussion of Caltrans' Repaving Project of El Camino Real, Including Replacing Existing Parking with Bicycle Lanes, and Potential Approval of a Resolution to Support this Project; CEQA status – categorically exempt.  
**Date:** Saturday, March 30, 2024 8:29:51 AM

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Honorable Mayor and Palo Alto City Council:

I am writing as a Mountain View neighbor in support of allowing Caltrans to put bike lanes and other safety improvements along the Palo Alto portion of El Camino Real.

First, since Mountain View and Los Altos will be getting bike lanes on their sections of ECR, nobody would want the bike lanes to just disappear when crossing into Palo Alto. That in itself would be unsafe.

Second, I certainly agree there are far safer parallel routes in Los Altos, Mountain View and Palo Alto. However, like many residents in our cities, I do have to navigate a portion of El Camino Real in order to reach these parallel routes. Navigating ECR always entails crossing it but also biking on a small section when intersections are not aligned (for instance El Monte and Escuela in Mountain View). Also, as more housing is built along El Camino Real, in order for these residents to reach these safer parallel routes, they will need to navigate a small section of El Camino Real (from their home to the nearest corner).

While I don't think folks will use the Caltrans bike lanes for long distances, the bike lanes and other improvements (higher visibility crosswalks, bike markings at intersections...) will greatly improve safety for all local cyclists and pedestrians who have to navigate a portion of El Camino Real on a daily basis.

Again, please support Caltrans move to add bike lanes along El Camino Real.

Sincerely

Serge Bonte  
Mountain View

**From:** [Bruce Dughi](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Please add bike lanes on El Camino Real  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 8:51:09 PM

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Hello Palo Alto City Council,

Please remove parking to make room for bike lanes on El Camino Real. I appreciate the extensive analysis but disappointed to see nothing regarding our Climate Crisis--the most existential issue of our time. Please consider green house gas reductions from a safe/convenient bicycle network. I particularly appreciate the bike lane connection to the housing element with dense housing concentrated along ECR.

I just want to thank you for all you have already done for cycling. I read your ATP grant application for E Meadow Dr and was most impressed with your willingness to remove parking there. Also, your work along Arastradero is impressive. Let's keep the momentum going in one of the most important and direct routes in town. If ECR is important to drivers, it is equally important to cyclists.

As a resident of the East Bay, the bike lanes on Dumbarton enable me to visit Palo Alto by bicycle and I love my visits. Rest assured that plenty of cyclists on my side look to Palo Alto for leadership and look forward to enjoying Palo Alto's superior bike infrastructure. Thanks.

Bruce

**From:** [Mahesh S](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Request to support resolution to promote bicycling along El Camino Real  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 7:43:31 PM

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Hello,

My name is Mahesh. While I am not a resident of Palo Alto, I was until recently a resident of Sunnyvale and would often travel to Palo Alto via VTA/Caltrain/bike to enjoy the city on the weekends. Hence, I feel obligated to send this email with my thoughts & suggestions regarding bike lanes along El Camino Real.

I learned from my friends that the Palo Alto City council meeting is scheduled for April 1st, and the council will vote upon a resolution regarding installing bike lanes along El Camino Real.

I simply want to write to you to request you to support the resolution and replace the on-street parking with bike lanes along El Camino Real.

I support pro-biking and pro-walking improvements to city design.

I will try to explain my arguments further below,

- 1). Removing on street parking improves visibility for on-road cars and pedestrians. There will be no blocked cars blocking the view when pedestrians are trying to cross the street.
- 2). It helps reduce the idle time spent driving around looking for parking. If the only parking I have are parking lots I'll not spend time driving around looking for on street parking. This means less cars, less pollution, less inconvenience for everybody!
- 3). But most importantly, it will help promote biking and walking. The streets will "feel" a lot safer for pedestrians (and it is safe), especially parents with young children who would otherwise be worried about their children getting hit. Walking more not only improves overall physical health, but it can help locals discover local businesses, bump into friends and colleagues on the sidewalks leading to more socializing, etc. This can have great impact towards improving one's mental health as we all need a bit of socializing in our daily routines.
- 4). I recently shifted to San Francisco. A key reason was the availability of public transportation and more bike friendly lanes. I understand it can be difficult to balance the needs of car parking demands and pedestrian safety. SF suffers from this as well. But the scale is heavily weighed down towards cars. Tilting the scale even a little bit towards pedestrians & cyclists can benefit everyone a great deal.

I hope to see the resolution pass, and Palo Alto implement more bike lanes. I always enjoy visiting the city on the weekends and walking through University Avenue and visiting places like Cafe Venetia, Ramen Nagi, etc.

Thank You,  
Mahesh S.

**From:** [Rob Schreiber](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Bike lanes and parking places  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 7:15:52 PM

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It's a tradeoff, but I think safety (I have often biked on ECR, when there isn't a good alternative) and traffic flow are more important than a small number of parking places. I hope you will approve of the plan to add the bike lanes.

Rob Schreiber

**From:** [Ian M](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Bike Lanes on El Camino Real  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 4:29:02 PM

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Hello,

I fully support adding bike lanes to El Camino Real and I'm really excited to hear about this project. Passing this resolution to remove parking for bike lanes is critical to fighting climate change and improving safety for all citizens. Biking is my favorite and preferred form of transportation. I've met so many wonderful people, and been to many great places and businesses that I would've just passed by in a car. My biggest concern when going somewhere is if it will be safe to bike there. Creating these bike lanes will provide that safety and accessibility to the many people who already bike on El Camino, and many more will follow. It will create a place people want to be, building community and supporting local businesses. Please, pass this resolution and make El Camino Real the best it can be! Thank you.

- Ian Morris



**From:** [Bilingual Montessori](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Bike lane  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 4:16:00 PM

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Dear Council,

As owner of El Camino Montessori, a bilingual preschool on El Camino Real, I fully support installing protected bike lanes along this corridor. The safety of our students, families and staff is paramount, and this plan directly enhances safety by removing parking that obscures oncoming traffic and slowing travel speeds.

Many parents bike their young children to instill healthy habits early on. However, the lack of dedicated cycling infrastructure currently forces them onto sidewalks meant for pedestrians or directly next to fast-moving traffic - both unsafe situations. The proposed bike lanes provide a protected space for families to travel to our preschool safely by bike or foot.

Crucially, removing curbside parking will vastly improve sightlines for drivers exiting our small lot or the overflow spaces kindly provided by our neighboring motel. Larger vehicles routinely obscure visibility of oncoming traffic, creating dangerous merging situations. Daylighting intersections enhances safety for all El Camino users.

The anticipated increase in active transportation aligns with our Montessori principles of nurturing the whole child through exercise, fresh air and environmental care. This upholds our philosophy far better than the current car-centric corridor.

I urge support for this safety-focused, multi-modal plan investing in our community's long-term health, economic vitality and sustainability. Prioritizing accessibility and transportation options secures a bright future for our children. Let's make the right choice today.

--

Best regards,  
Vega



**Palo Alto Academy Bilingual Montessori**

4232 El Camino Real, Palo Alto, CA 94306

(650) 739-0137

<https://www.pabilingualmontessori.com/>

*check us out on social media!*

[Facebook](#)

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**From:** [steve.rutledge](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** I oppose bike lanes on El Camino in Palo Alto  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 4:09:06 PM

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Dear City Council members,

I am a long-term resident of Palo Alto. I oppose putting bike lanes in Palo Alto. Besides taking away precious parking spots for the small businesses that line El Camino, I feel that having bikes on El Camino will be a dangerous situation, especially at corners when cars are turning right. During rush hours and lunch hour, the traffic at the corner of El Camino and Cambridge Avenue is very busy. When I try to turn left onto El Camino, it's common to have all of the lanes on El Camino full of cars in all lanes. If one lane on both sides is taken away from cars and allocated to bikes, the congestion on El Camino will be much worse. When you add in the buses on El Camino that run regularly and veer into the right-hand lanes after leaving the bus stop, you have a recipe for disaster. Will the buses see the people on bikes behind them as they veer into the right-hand lane?

Please don't allow bike lanes to be added to El Camino. Thank you.

Julie Beer  
334 College Avenue Apartment E  
Palo Alto CA 94306

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [David Sacerdote](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Please approve bike lanes along El Camino  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 3:41:58 PM

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The proposed plans aren't ideal, but are far better than what we have today, and nothing in them rules out future changes to improve safety and lower automobile use. Cyclists currently handle similar high speeds along Foothill/Juniper Serra with crashes there being rare.

As such, the Caltrans proposal for bike lanes is an improvement over the current situation.

Thanks for approving it

David Sacerdote  
3716 Starr King Circle  
Palo Alto, CA 94306

**From:** [David Coale](#)  
**To:** [Council, City; Shikada, Ed](#)  
**Subject:** Approve bike lanes on El Camino  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 9:12:35 AM

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Dear Mayor, Council members and Staff,

I support bike lanes on El Camino. As a cyclist, I have been struggling with this for a while now as my concerns are similar to many Council members – how will this really make El Camino safer? In particular, how does this address the major causes of cycling crashes (80%), the right hook or broadside crashes?

By removing parking on El Camino, this will improve visibility and sight lines for cyclist and car drivers. With the addition of protected bike lanes, this will help bring attention to motorists about the presence of cyclists in this corridor and give cyclists a safer place to ride (no door zone to worry about). This should help address the major cause of cycling crashes on El Camino.

Reducing the speed of traffic on El Camino will also make this route safer. The easiest way to address this is to reduce the width of the left two travel lanes to 10 feet. Reducing lane width has been shown to decrease speeds in these situations. The right-most lane would then have more room for the bike lanes and bus stops. As I understand it, VTA has OK'ed the reduced width of the left two travel lanes, but Caltrans is still using their old outdated guidelines of 11 feet.

Here is where Palo Alto can make El Camino even safer: Approve the removal of parking on El Camino on the condition that the left two travel lanes are 10 feet wide. This will reduce the car speed and increase width of the right lane to better accommodate bike lanes and bus stops. This additional reduction in lane width is also called for as 30% of all crashes on El Camino, from San Jose to SF (as I understand it) are in Palo Alto, so this calls for additional road treatments for safety measures in Palo Alto.

Should Palo Alto decide not to support these free safety improvements that could be completed within a year's time, Palo Alto will be liable for crashes in this corridor.

Please note again, that these improvements are free to Palo Alto and will be done in short order. While this project is not perfect, Palo Alto could never come up with other improvements, of any kind, to address safety on El Camino for many years.

Please do not miss this opportunity to make El Camino safer for all road users, support our SCAP goals and alternate transportation that will be needed for all the future housing coming to El Camino.

Sincerely,

David Coale

Barron Park

**From:** [Jane Harris](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** El Camino Bike Path  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 8:39:36 AM

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I am a long-term resident/homeowner in the Southgate neighborhood.  
I want to express my support for bike lanes on El Camino.

From my experience i find it difficult to ride my bike to many locations currently - requiring crossing the railroad, having to go well out of my way, etc. and i welcome the addition of bike lanes on El Camino. I understand it would require removing parking spaces which i know is always an issue, but i feel the safety and promotion of bicycles is more important. Hopefully there could be some handicapped parking. I understand the concern over RVs, but i don't see that as a permanent solution and frankly have had concerns about the safety of parking RVs along El Camino, especially given many of them extend into the driving lanes, not to mention we should not promote transient residency along a major transit corridor. El Camino should be used for the purpose it was intended for - transportation, not housing.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jane Harris  
230 Sequoia Ave  
Palo Alto

**From:** [Diane](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** El Camino bike proposal  
**Date:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 11:46:43 AM

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Please reject the preposterous proposal by Cal Trans to turn El Camino into a bike route. How can bikers compete with buses and mindless drivers on this highway?

How can businesses serve their customers without nearby parking? The list of negatives is long and should not be ignored.

Diane Finkelstein  
2049 Dartmouth Street  
Sent from my iPad



**From:** [Paul Machado](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Blood alley  
**Date:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 9:39:34 AM

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Would you have young bicyclists drive down one of the busiest highways in the county day and night, rain or shine. A roadway shared by buses and heavy trucks? How long would it be before a child/person dies?

CalTrans' proposal to put bicyclists in danger, especially children, does not deserve your support.

Thank you

Paul Machado

**From:** [Tim Ryan](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Bicycling on ECR  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 12:01:22 PM

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Council members I'm calling to join the chorus of local bicyclist, who feel El Camino Real in Palo Alto is unsafe. Ironically, I will miss the discussion in Council Chambers on April 1 because I will be bicycling in Spain. I have bicycle in many European countries, and all of them to me appear safer than here in the US and the Bay Area in particular.

All over the roadways in Spain are signs advising drivers to keep 1.5 meters, or about 5 feet, away from a bicyclists by law. Let's remove parked vehicles as best we can and welcome people onto the roads, because after all, we're reducing greenhouse gas, roadway and parking lot congestion and helping people shed pounds and minimize diabetes.

Tim Ryan  
San Carlos  
Play hard ♂

**From:** [Darius Teter](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** El Camino Real paving project  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 11:55:01 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to lend my support to a proposal that will be discussed at the Palo Alto city council meeting on April 1st. As a long-time resident of Mountain View and daily bicycle commuter, I advocate for the elimination of parking spaces along key sections of El Camino Real and the creation of bike lanes instead. Although there are some alternative routes, many riders still prefer to ride along El Camino for access to businesses, schools and their jobs, particularly along the Mountain View - Palo Alto - Menlo Park commercial corridor. Unlike many urban corridors, drivers do have many parking options, typically free, on intersecting side streets and public lots all along this section of El Camino - far in excess of what is available along the thoroughfare.

Thank you for your consideration.

Darius Teter

**Darius Teter**  
Executive Director

**Stanford | Seed**  
**Stanford Graduate School of Business**  
Stanford University  
655 Knight Way  
Stanford, CA 94305  
(m) (650) 804-8466  
[dteter@stanford.edu](mailto:dteter@stanford.edu)  
[seed.stanford.edu](http://seed.stanford.edu)  
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Cover Image



**From:** [Andrew Etringer](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** A safer El Camino Real  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 11:54:17 AM

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Dear City Council of Palo Alto,

I am a long-time bike commuter (25-years) and bike enthusiast, but am somewhat new to the Bay Area. Riding a bike along El Camino Real is a real nightmare currently. I usually avoid even driving a car on that stretch of road. Anything that you can do to slow down cars and make the roadway safer for bikes and pedestrians is a great idea. I support the removal of car parking spots in favor of a well-marked bicycle lane.

Sincerely,  
Andrew Etringer

**From:** [Lisa Dusseault](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Bike lanes and El Camino Real  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 11:50:22 AM

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Hi council folks,

I write to you as a biker and as a mom of bikers. While I do drive around the area a fair amount too, I don't see driving my kids everywhere as a plan that's good for me, for them, or for the environment. Thus we have set expectations that they bike themselves to school, summer school and to friends houses; to stay active and healthy and independent.

That's why my older son was hit by a car when he was crossing El Camino Real on his way to Gunn high school last summer. It wasn't bad and he didn't report it. Neither did the driver, who may not have even known that when they turned sharply the back end of their vehicle hit a biker and knocked them over the curb and flat on the sidewalk. My son's bike needed repair, we replaced his helmet, and we checked him for concussion - but nobody reported it. We were just glad it wasn't worse.

El Camino Real is an important thoroughfare not just for drivers but also for bikers and pedestrians, going to work or to shop or to hobbies. It should be safer for all and it should encourage more multi-modal traffic. I've been a champion and supporter of Palo Alto's increased bikeability for years, and would support changes to El Camino Real in this direction too. Our move away from car-first urban planning is working and I know you must have seen good options to continue this work along El Camino Real or other places where bike support might make even more of a difference. Let's keep the momentum.

Lisa Dusseault, Palo Alto resident

**From:** [Elaine Salinger](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [katie@bikesiliconvalley.org](mailto:katie@bikesiliconvalley.org)  
**Subject:** In support of a resolution to have protected bike lanes on El Camino  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 11:44:04 AM

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Hello Palo Alto City Council Members,

We need protected bike lanes. Cycling in San Mateo County has not increased in the last 20 years because people don't feel safe riding (According to a SMC Grand Jury Report 8/23). **Please vote for the resolution to remove parking on El Camino to create protected bike lanes.**

I am the SMC BPAC chair and I am really tired of people being hit by cars. And I am really tired of our local government prioritizing the needs of cars over pedestrians and cyclists. And people are paying for this with their lives. Here is a recent Op-Ed I wrote for the San Mateo Daily Journal:

# Cyclists pay taxes too

By Elaine Salinger Mar 11, 2024 1

Peter Grace was one of the smartest, friendliest people I have ever known. In December, a driver sideswiped him while he was riding his bike and killed him. Peter was such an experienced cyclist, but he was riding in San Rafael on a badly designed road and bike path. He died because of a lack of adequate physical separation between people on bikes and cars.

What's the solution? For every dollar spent on roads, we can and should have 5 or 10 cents spent on separated bike lanes and bike infrastructure. Cyclists pay transportation sales taxes too and deserve this.

The benefits? It will be safer for cyclists, and drivers will be happier because they won't need to share the road. Traffic congestion will improve as more people leave their cars at home. Studies have found that mental health improves when we are outside, and property values always



Elaine Salinger

increase where there are bike lanes.

About 200 people attended Peter Grace's memorial. He had a lot of friends. If all of us asked state Sen. Josh Becker and assemblymembers Papan or Ting to write and vote for a law mandating that 5% of our road spending be spent on safety for those who bike, more people would ride, roads would be safer and less congested. How do you build political will for this legislation? By telling our legislators what we want so that more Peter Graces aren't killed. Readers, please email or call them today. It helps to repeat this two-minute action every week.

As the San Mateo County Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee chair, I am tired of seeing worthy safety projects not get funded. Safety advocates fight over tiny scraps of money. All of us use the roads, but funding overwhelmingly prioritizes cars. For example, the San Mateo County Transportation Authority approved almost \$600 million to widen Highway 101 to reduce congestion. But studies have shown that the relief is temporary and the number of cars increases because it encourages more driving. The 101 widening canceled the much-needed and long-planned Holly Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge in San Carlos and the Hillsdale Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge in San Mateo.

The Holly Street Bike and Pedestrian Bridge was ready for construction in 2019, but Caltrans prioritized the 101 widening project over the bike/pedestrian safety project. Without any feedback from the community, the project was abandoned. This is a shame because I know of six serious cyclist injuries on the existing overpass. Holly and 101 was identified as a San Mateo County Youth-Based High Injury Network and a highest safety priority area.

Holly is the only route to access the east side of 101 and the Bay Trail from San Carlos via bike or foot for several miles. Holly is also the main route to access downtown businesses in San Carlos from the Bay Trail. Are you a business owner in San Carlos? Speak up.

San Mateo's Hillsdale Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge was identified as a priority in 2007. This has been the site of many serious crashes involving cyclists, including one fatality. And like Holly, Hillsdale is part of the Youth-Based High Injury Network due to frequent crashes involving kids. According to the city of San Mateo, the 101 widening "complicated" the design of the planned/bike pedestrian bridge and now the project is on indefinite hold.

Our prioritization of auto drivers' convenience and speed at the expense of the health and safety of those who leave their cars at home or live in polluted communities adjacent to our highways needs to change. Please email or call Becker and Papan or Ting to ask that they write and vote for legislation mandating a minimum of 5 or 10 cents for bike infrastructure for every dollar spent on our roads. To make this as easy as possible for you, here is their contact info:

Becker: <https://sd13.senate.ca.gov/contact> or call (650) 233-2724.

Papan: <https://a21.asmdc.org/contact> or call (650) 349-2200.

Ting: <https://a19.asmdc.org/contact-me> or call (415) 557-2312



Do this action every week and just say: Please write and vote for legislation mandating a minimum of 5 or 10 cents for bike and pedestrian infrastructure for every dollar spent on roads. Cyclists and pedestrians pay taxes and need this.

Elaine Salinger is a retired veterinarian living in San Mateo. She is the chair of the San Mateo County Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and leads the SMC chapter of Citizens Climate Lobby. The views expressed are her own.



Elaine Salinger, SMC BPAC Chair and CCL Group Leader  
San Mateo County Chapter  
650-533-3539

**From:** [Tim Dick](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Yes to Bike Lanes on El Camino Real  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 11:42:38 AM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [tdick@startupcv.com](mailto:tdick@startupcv.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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I am a long time Palo Alto resident and bike frequently in the area. Please consider El Camino Real bike lanes as a way to improve our city and reduce traffic.

Thank you.

Timothy Dick  
[tdick@startupcv.com](mailto:tdick@startupcv.com)  
415-710-9622

**From:** [Neil S](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** safer el camino!  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 11:35:02 AM

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we need a safer el camino, i'm in san carlos and bike everyday on el camino. it's a death trap.  
please remove parking and add bike lanes.

neil shah  
san carlos, ca

**From:** [Jo Ann Mandinach](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** #11 -- El Camino Bike Lanes. Just say no.  
**Date:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 1:57:12 PM

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Dear City Council.

Just say no to replacing parking on El Camino with bike lanes because it's too dangerous for everyone -- bikes, cars and pedestrians -- and will totally destroy the businesses on El Camino by depriving them of customers who will have no place to park.

Even in progressive San Francisco merchants are suing to get the bike lanes removed because their businesses are being destroyed.

Can we afford to lose the sales tax revenue from the ruined businesses? No.

Does it make sense to pay our \$\$\$\$\$ money to retail consultants to improve businesses while consciously destroying retailers? No, not unless you're part of PA's consultant gravy train.

Can we afford to make people waste their time and drive longer distances to run their errands? No.

Does it make sense to approve mandated housing on El Camino and then deprive the new residents of nearby resident-serving businesses? No.

I could go on but you get the picture. For too many years Palo Alto has dealt with incompetent transportation czars like Josh Mello and Jaime Rodriquez who caved on everything the bike lobby wanted -- bollards at every intersection that pushed cars into the middle of Oregon and Embarcadero because they could no longer bypass turning traffic, bus stops 3 car lengths away from major intersections that left cars stuck in the middle of major roads....

**BUT THE MAIN PROBLEM IS THAT EL CAMINO NEEDS TO BE REPAVED TO PREVENT VEHICLE DAMAGE NOW AFTER YEARS OF ALLOWING IT TO BECOME INCREASINGLY DANGEROUS AND STICKING US WITH MAJOR CAR REPAIR BILLS.**

Please get your priorities straight and tell CalTrans to STOP this virtue-signalling

nonsense and do its job by repaving EL CAMINO NOW.

Most sincerely,  
Jo Ann Mandinach  
1699 Middlefield Road  
Palo Alto, CA 94301

STOP BY AND LOOK AT THE DAMAGED STREET TREE A DRIVER RAN  
INTO TRYING TO AVOID TURNING TRAFFIC.

**From:** [Saurabh Kumar](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Caltrans" El Camino Real Bikeway Project  
**Date:** Friday, March 22, 2024 5:19:20 PM

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Dear City Council,

I support Caltrans' El Camino Real (ECR) bikeway project. I am a student at Stanford and have to cross or walk/ride along El Camino Real to access stores and businesses in Palo Alto. I am glad to see protected bike lanes on El Camino. The bikeway project has potential to help me and others make safe car-free choices when getting around our shared neighborhood.

Thank you!

**From:** [Annette Glanckopf](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Clerk, City](#); [Shikada, Ed](#); [Lait, Jonathan](#)  
**Subject:** Bike lanes on El Camino - vote no  
**Date:** Friday, March 22, 2024 1:35:07 PM  
**Attachments:** [Letter on Bike lanes on ECR.docx](#)

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Dear Mayor Stone and Council members,

Please see my attached letter with my full details on why bike lanes on EL Camino Real should be rejected. Menlo Park isn't going to do this, why should we waste this time and money? Use (or enhance) what is already established - a safer faster bike route on Park Blvd.

Annette Glanckopf

PS: I do not agree with consultant's report on the over-de\$\$\$sign needed to make this work safely for bikers.

March 22, 2024

Dear Mayor Stone and City Council members.

I want to weigh in on the topic of bike lanes on El Camino. **VOTE NO ON THIS FOLLY**. It is a disaster waiting to happen.

The logic behind creating bikes lanes from Mt. View to Redwood City on El Camino is faulty for many reasons.

1) **Menlo Park** has no plans to do so

2) **Alternative routes**: Little consideration has been given for the optimum alternative route on Park Blvd, just a few blocks off of ECR or even Bryant Street (Palo Alto's official bike boulevard).

3) **Parking**: Small businesses will suffer - just at a time when the city is trying to encourage more retail, especially small independently owned businesses. Yes, some of these businesses do have parking, but is it sufficient? I think not, especially for those customers (elderly, disabled) who want to park in front of the door on ECR. Taking out a huge number of parking spaces is a major mistake. Caltrans counts 600 vehicle parking spots on ECR, but hasn't identified where these vehicles should/could go. I understand that at least about 41 serve as dwellings for some of our neighbors.

4) **Safety**: With the numerous curb cuts, driveways, and streets on ECR, bike lanes are a recipe for disaster, especially with distracted drivers, speeders in a hurry, buses and trucks as well as numerous traffic lights. Note that on Park Blvd, there are only a handful of lights and fewer driveways, streets, etc. to hamper bikers. This Park Blvd alternative route already has bollards (Ventura and near Mollie Stones) for bike safety. This route is much safer and **FASTER** as well. ECR accident reports show that a large majority of serious and fatal accidents between cars and bikes are broadsides, indicating that these accidents occurred when bikes were crossing ECR. This plan does not at all address this real and known fact.

5) **No Answers**: There are numerous unanswered questions that need to be decided/discussed; the answers are uncertain. How do bikes and buses work together at bus stops? Will buses cross bike lanes at each bus stop; this will be a significant safety issue. What portions of the bike lanes will be Class 2? No bike user data, current or projected, has been gathered. I ask how many bikers will actually use ECR, when they realize that a faster, safer route is Park Blvd.?

Finally let's consider the **greater good**. The daily car, bus, and truck traffic is significant on ECR--in the high thousands--while bike traffic would be in the hundreds at best. ECR parking is also used as dwelling spaces. Should we inconvenience the far greater number, when there is an alternative route that is faster and safer.

Please take a strong stand against Caltrans and refuse bike lanes on El Camino.

Annette Glanckopf, Midtown resident



**From:** [Eric Nordman](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Please improve safety in Palo Alto  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2024 4:41:46 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from [eric.nordman12@gmail.com](mailto:eric.nordman12@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Council members:

I support a resolution to remove parking on El Camino Real (ECR) and install bike lanes. This is a rare opportunity to get safety improvements for **no additional cost to the city**. As other cities are making safety improvements on ECR, Palo Alto would look foolish to decline safety improvements.

It's been argued that Park Blvd is a better place to bike than ECR. This is probably true for those like me who live east of ECR but not so for those west of ECR. If one wanted to go to a store six block away on ECR it would be much longer to cross ECR, go three blocks to Park, ride 6 blocks and then ride 3 blocks back on Park.

The situation is even worse for those living on ECR. To get anywhere, they need to take a lane on a road with 3 lanes of traffic in each direction often going well over 35 mph. Alternately, they could ride on the sidewalk as many do now. Neither are safe options. Not everyone can conveniently choose to avoid stores on ECR. Even with today's unpleasant and dangerous conditions, many people find they need to ride on ECR.

I looked at research into safety. One large study (17,000 fatalities and 77,000 severe injuries) showed that it was **not only bicyclist safety that is improved**. They concluded: "More specifically, our results suggest that improving bike infrastructure with more protected/separated bike facilities is significantly associated with fewer fatalities and better road safety outcomes for all road users."

The safety improvements are not small. For example, between 1990 and 2010 **the overall road fatality rate in Portland dropped by 75%**.

This makes intuitive sense. Removing parking improves sight lines for all users and narrower travel lanes helps to control speeding.

Palo Alto's SCAP calls for increased active transportation trips from 19% to 40%. This simply cannot happen without new, much safer bicycle infrastructure.

This paving project doesn't address all safety issues as it's limited to what can be done with paint. After this project, the **city should work with Caltrans to further improve safety**, especially crossing safety as many kids need to cross ECR to get to school.

Please pass a resolution to remove parking on El Camino Real (ECR) to enable bike lanes to be installed.

Sincerely,

Eric Nordman

Member of PABAC since 2012 and currently vice chair

**From:** [Lawrence Garwin](#)  
**To:** [Lauing, Ed](#)  
**Cc:** [city.council@cityofpaloalto.com](mailto:city.council@cityofpaloalto.com); [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Bike Lanes Along El Camino Real.  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2024 12:38:36 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)

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Ed,

I appreciate your personal reply.

I agree that bicycle lanes deserve substantial physical protection, not just road stripes or hollow plastic bollards.

At the 3/10/2024 public meeting, Caltrans officials told me that improvements beyond different road striping would not be available immediately after the initial repaving, but would be likely thereafter.

I believe more bicycle traffic is not a problem, but part of the solution. Slowing cars and increasing motorists' awareness of bicycles through signage, street markings, and enforced driver responsibility will increase bicyclists' safety.

To further address your question, below are some suggestions that I made to Caltrans officials directly at the 3/10/2024 public meeting at Palo Alto High School and to Caltrans and the City of Palo Alto via the webform at:  
<https://us.openforms.com/Form/1328d991-d30a-4ca1-b9f7-9e364540e959>

Please do not let the lack of an immediate great solution stand in the way of a better solution for the time being.

Thank you.

Lawrence Garwin

Caltrans State Route 82 El Camino Real Bikeway Project Feedback Shared with Caltrans and City Staff in person on 3/10/2024 and via web form:

I suggest a 2-4' tall concrete barrier between the car lane and the bike lane, rather than just hollow flexible plastic bollards, to provide real protection from distracted drivers wandering out of their driving lane.

How about bike lanes to the left of right turn lanes to avoid the obvious and dangerous conflict?

Please create a bike friendly environment on El Camino Real. This includes encouraging or requiring bicycles to ride outside of the Door Death Zone, which is the 4 to 5 foot strip alongside parked cars, where opening car doors may impact cyclists or cause them to swerve in front of or into motor vehicles, likely causing the cyclist's death.

I think bike boxes before intersections should go in front of straight-through motor vehicle lanes, or at the front left corner of right turn lanes, so folks can turn right without waiting for the light to turn green to let the bicycles across. And cyclists invariably move to the right, back into the bike lane, immediately after the intersection, or even earlier, as soon as they're clear of cars turning right. This route could be marked in dashed green to make it clear to everyone where to expect the cyclists.

As a cyclist I would use the box in front of the straight through car lane unless there were no stopped cars; in that case, once the light goes green, I'd be at risk of speeding cars "not seeing me" and running me down from behind in the first few seconds after the light changes before I can get over to the right in or after the intersection. In this case, I'd likely pull forward on my bike and into the left edge of the right turn lane so cars can turn right and speeding straight through cars wouldn't hit me.

Please work with the City of Palo Alto and/or Stanford University to find a place for live-in vehicles that have parked on El Camino Real to park nearby; not all of our local workers can afford the local rent.

Use paint with glass beads for reflectivity, not a thermoplastic dashed path, for bike lane markings across intersections, as thermoplastic markings are punishingly bumpy on cyclists with high pressure tires and no suspension (typically long range commuters).

In each direction under the University Ave/Palm Drive bridge, there are three 12' lanes with a 36' RoW. How about narrowing at least two of the lanes and adding a narrow, non-protected bike lane just for that section, so there's not a gap in the bikeway that sends bikes into dangerous conflicts with cars on the ramps to and from University Ave/Palm Drive? VTA says they're happy with two 10' lanes and an 11' curb lane; that leaves 5' for a bike lane with no parked cars, so there's plenty of width. Alternatively, how about sharrows on the on and off ramps that cross Palm Dr/University Ave.?

Consider:

Right turn from El Camino onto Page Mill perhaps separate from straight-through lane.

On Mar 21, 2024, at 11:15 AM, Lauing, Ed <Ed.Lauing@cityofpaloalto.org> wrote:

Thanks for your input. The "protected bike lines" here don't physically protect cyclists from a swerving care or a cyclist falling through bollards into traffic lines. Plus we will be significantly increasing bike traffic. How do we address these problems?

**Ed Lauing**

**Vice Mayor**

(650) 329-2571

[Ed.lauing@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Ed.lauing@cityofpaloalto.org)

[www.cityofpaloalto.org](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org)



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**From:** Lawrence Garwin <lawrencegarwin@yahoo.com>

**Sent:** Thursday, March 21, 2024 11:07 AM

**To:** city.council@cityofpaloalto.com; Council, City <city.council@cityofpaloalto.org>

**Subject:** Bike Lanes Along El Camino Real.

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Dear Mayor, Council Members, and Palo Alto City Staff,

I support bike lanes on El Camino. As a cyclist, I have been struggling with this for a while now as my concerns are similar to many Council members – how will this really make El Camino safer? In particular, how does this address the major causes of cycling crashes (80%), the right hook or broadside crash?

By removing parking on El Camino, this will improve visibility and sight lines for cyclist and car drivers. With the addition of protected bike lanes, this will help bring attention to motorists about the presence of cyclists in this corridor and give cyclists a safer place to ride (eliminates the Door Death Zone). This should help address the major cause of cycling crashes on El Camino.

Reducing the speed of traffic on El Camino will also make this route safer. The easiest way to address this is to reduce the width of the left two travel lanes to 10 feet. Reducing lane width has been shown to decrease speeds in these situations. The right most lane would then have more room for the bike lanes and bus stops. As I understand it, VTA has OKed the reduced width of the left two travel lanes, but Caltrans is still using their old outdated guidelines of 11 feet.

Here is where Palo Alto can make El Camino even safer: Approve the removal of parking on El Camino on the condition that the left two travel lanes are 10 feet wide. This will reduce the car speed and increase the width of the right lane to better accommodate bike lanes and bus stops. This additional reduction in lane width is also called for as 30% of all crashes on El Camino, from San Jose to SF (as I understand it) are in Palo Alto, so this calls for additional road treatments for safety measures in Palo Alto.

Should Palo Alto decide not to support these free safety improvements, that could be completed within a year's time, Palo Alto will be liable for crashes in this corridor.

Please note again, that these improvements are free to Palo Alto and will be done in short order. While this project is not perfect, Palo Alto could never come up with other improvements, of any kind, to address safety on El Camino for many years.

Please do not miss this opportunity to make El Camino safer for all road users.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Garwin

**From:** [Lawrence Garwin](#)  
**To:** [city.council@cityofpaloalto.com](mailto:city.council@cityofpaloalto.com); [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Bike Lanes Along El Camino Real.  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2024 11:07:43 AM

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Lawrence Garwin