



2018 City Council Candidate Questions

GRADE SEPARATION

How should Palo Alto collaborate with other cities to coordinate options and obtain more funding for grade separations from regional, state, and Federal governments.

PAT BOONE

All cities along the Caltrain line must work together in developing real solutions for the train.

ALISON CORMACK

By working closely with our elected officials at the county, state, and federal levels. A working committee of elected officials and staff would be a useful place to start.

TOM DUBOIS

We should consider a multi-city Construction Authority that spans San Mateo and Santa Clara county to fund at the County, State, and Federal level as well as manage this extremely large and complex public works project. This has worked well in Southern California to create a trench. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alameda_Corridor. The Construction Authority would have the ability to develop a sophisticated funding plan. The Cities would also be responsible for a portion which should include funding from businesses.

ERIC FILSETH

The biggest macro question on this at the moment is -- with a new incoming Governor, will there be any shift in how High Speed Rail money gets allocated? This is the most relevant pot of State money with the necessary scale.

CORY WOLBACH

First, we should team up with neighboring cities, the three counties, and Caltrain to explore not just funding sources, but also cost saving measures. For example, can we use steeper gradients for a potential trench or tunnel (which are still among the options we are considering)? Could we plan for an eventual elimination of diesel freight on the Caltrain corridor?

As Chair of the Council Rail Committee, I am pushing the City (and potentially neighboring cities) to formally ask Caltrain to study such questions and provide greater clarity. Doing so may substantially reduce costs or even enable grade separation options which otherwise are considered prohibitively expensive or technically infeasible.

I have initiated our city discussions with our state lobbyists to start looking into state funding options, and to support the broader discussions about the future of the Caltrain corridor. I have also begun outreach to our legislators to (re)engage them in these discussions. The challenge of separating all grade crossings along the Caltrain corridor is not just one a problem for Palo Alto, but for the entire Peninsula. Given the Peninsula's significance in the state and national economy, we can make a strong case that we need state and federal funding to keep our region moving.