

**City of Menlo Park**  
**City Council Rail Subcommittee**  
**Mission Statement**

The City Council Rail Subcommittee will advocate for ways to reduce the negative impacts and enhance the benefits of Rail in Menlo Park. The Subcommittee will ensure all voices are heard and that thoughtful ideas are generated and alternatives vetted. It will collaborate with other local and regional jurisdictions in support of regional consensus of matters of common interest related to Rail. Additionally, the subcommittee will support City Council planning efforts and decision making on Rail-related issues with information, research and other expertise.

## City of Menlo Park Statement of Principles for Rail

The City of Menlo Park City Council Rail Subcommittee works to protect and enhance the character of Menlo Park and the community's economic vitality while supporting the conditions needed to maximize the local benefits and the long-term potential of rail.

- The character of Menlo Park includes:
  - Our connected, walkable, bikeable, safe and accessible neighborhoods, parks, commercial areas and civic center
  - Our vision for:
    - The downtown and El Camino Real including improved east-west mobility for all modes of travel as detailed in the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan
    - The Bayfront area as outlined in the General Plan Land use and Circulation elements
  - Preservation of the quality of life in residential neighborhoods throughout the City
- The community's economic vitality includes:
  - The continued success of our small and large businesses
  - The maintenance of our property values
  - Rail agencies responsibly mitigating impacts of rail, including but not limited to, High Speed Rail, Caltrain, Cross Bay Transit Partners, and freight
- The conditions needed to maximize the long-term potential of rail corridors in the City including:
  - Increasing ridership and maximizing traffic congestion reduction benefits of transit
  - Improvements to connectivity; rail unifies rather than divides
  - Improvements to local transit and feeder service for first- and last-mile connections
  - Transit service during weekday peak- and off-peak hours and weekends
  - The negative physical and social impacts of rail are minimized and the positive impacts are enhanced by using context sensitive design solutions
  - Consider all reasonable alternatives including those discussed previously by Menlo Park
  - Moderate fares that encourage both high ridership and accessibility for people across the income spectrum

Implied "decision criteria" from these principles might include:

Does the alternative align with or support:

- The goals and policies of the Circulation Element?
- The vision and policies of the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan?
- The sustainability goals of the Climate Action Plan?

Whether the alternative protects or enhances:

- Connectivity to additional modes of travel/ accessibility to city locations?

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- Walk-ability? Bike-ability?
- Transit ridership and traffic congestion reduction benefits of transit?
- The economic vitality of businesses?
- Quality of life in residential neighborhoods? Property values?
- Safety along and across the rail corridors?
- Local transit opportunities? The level of transit service?

## **City of Menlo Park Council Position Summary**

The following bullet points clarify the Council's position on rail through Menlo Park.

### **Caltrain and High Speed Rail corridor**

- The City opposes any exemption or elimination of any part of the CEQA review for the High Speed Rail Project environmental review process
- The high speed rail within Menlo Park should be in a two-track envelope system, and stay within the existing Caltrain right-of-way (with very minor exceptions such as for Caltrain electrification equipment, and in very limited locations)
- No Environmental Impact Report should go forward which increases the rail corridor to greater than two tracks in Menlo Park
- The City approves of the currently approved blended system but opposes passing tracks located in Menlo Park
- The City is interested in quiet zones for the rail corridor in Menlo Park
- The City intends to pursue a grade separation project with a focus on the crossings of Ravenswood, Oak Grove, and Glenwood avenues that can be constructed independent of the blended system, High Speed Rail and any passing track scenario
- Our strategy is to work cooperatively with the blended system planning efforts while preventing an at-grade or elevated 3 or 4 track system through Menlo Park
- Support maximizing the number of Caltrain trains that stop within Menlo Park (as opposed to passing through Menlo Park)

### **Dumbarton corridor**

The City supports Dumbarton Rail, under the following conditions:

- Rail service is provided by electric trains, minimizing emissions, noise and vibration impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods and freight service levels do not increase over existing levels. Consider sound walls to minimize noise impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Minimal right-of-way acquisition is needed for the project
- The project considers and is designed to minimize impacts related to sea level rise, natural resources, and habitats adjacent to the Dumbarton Corridor, including the wetlands in the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge and San Francisco Bay
- Railroad/roadway grade separations should be provided as part of the project:
  - At Marsh Road, Willow Road and University Avenue
  - Minimizing local circulation and access impacts
  - Provide an opportunity for improved bicycle and pedestrian access and connections
- Best practice at-grade crossing safety improvements to the rail crossing at Chilco Street should be provided as part of the project, including potential for a quiet zone
- Transit service is limited to rail within the existing right-of-way owned by Samtrans along the Dumbarton corridor
- A bicycle and pedestrian pathway along the existing right-of-way is fully explored as part of the project and is not precluded unless adequately disclosed through the project development process
- A transit stop is provided within Menlo Park, with the preferred location at the intersection of Willow Road with the Dumbarton rail, as shown in the City's Circulation Element (Figure 4),

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and considering a second stop near the Belle Haven neighborhood

- The project does not preclude a future direct rail connection to the southern end of the Caltrain line at the wye junction near Middlefield Road in Redwood City
- The City supports maximizing the number of trains that stop within Menlo Park (as opposed to passing through Menlo Park)