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Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 4:06 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Public Comment on Item No. 6.1 Caltrain Separation Projects

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Council members,

In time for tonight's meeting, I would like to share my thoughts about the Grade Separation project - both as a Mountain View resident and as a member of the VAC.

As a resident, I would like to express my hope that the council will be able to dedicate appropriate time and resources to both the Grade Separation and the Pedestrian Mall projects. They are at the heart of Mountain View, are a gateway to the city, and will see the most pedestrian traffic by far. Mountain View values community and innovation very highly, and these are the perfect locations to demonstrate those values.

As a member of the VAC, I would like to state that we select our artists very carefully and are particularly proud to have chosen Martha Sakellariou for the Grade Separation Project. She is the only artist who proposed a **Mountain View-specific art piece**, something that, time and time again, residents have mentioned as their #1 priority in public art. Her concept includes historic artifacts and interviews with residents and her style and materials are contemporary and innovative. While having a strong concept, she is flexible regarding the execution.

Should the Grade Separation project be postponed or canceled, I very much hope that Martha's art pieces will find another location/locations in downtown Mountain View for residents to enjoy.

If the project is deferred, it is also my hope that the area will still see improvements (including art) to make it more safe and pedestrian & bike-friendly.

Lastly, I would like to suggest the following cost-reduction option:

The proposed form liners (images and patterns cast into concrete) come at a cost of \$1.3M. This is more than three times the budget for art, which is capped at \$400K. The form liners potentially clash with the artwork, and their visual impact is relatively low considering the cost.

Appreciatively,

Susi Merhar

chair, VAC

Old Mountain View resident