
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 12:37 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Comment re: Caltrain Grade Separation Projects

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Dear City Councilmembers,

Yesterday I received a notice that city staff will provide some updates on the Caltrain grade separation projects at the City Council meeting on Tuesday, 1/24. The notice advised that we could email the council with comments/questions in advance of the meeting, hence my email now.

The issue I want to raise regards the noise from the train horns. I realize that this is more the purview of Caltrain, not the City Council, but it is an important component of the overall project nonetheless, and it is a concern that I want to make sure has the attention of all involved in decisions regrading the project.

Some years ago, I attended one of the early community kick-off meetings regarding the project (grade separation, transit center upgrades, etc.), held at the Historic Adobe Building. I asked at that time whether the elimination of the at-grade crossing would obviate the need for the trains sounding horns when approaching or leaving the transit center. The answer I got was yes, that the horns would no longer be needed. Unfortunately I can't remember the gentleman who responded to my question, nor his affiliation, but he was involved in the project planning in some capacity.

At any rate, I am very keen to see that the use of the train horns goes the way of the passenger pidgeon once the at-grade crossings have been eliminated. The horns have become FAR louder than they were when I first moved into my Old Mountain View home, close to the downtown transit center, in the late 1990s. Remarkably, some of the horns are so loud now, I can hear them from Cuest Park. When one is actually at the train station, the sound is ear-splitting. The noise is highly obtrusive inside my home, so much so that I upgraded all the doors and windows in my house (which were already double pane windows), at considerable expense, to new windows that provide better sound control. They help, but the noise is still unpleasant, and so much worse when we are outside.

So, in brief, my question is whether the elimination of the use of the train horns is in fact planned for, once the at-grade crossings are gone.

I'm happy to raise the question with Caltrain directly, if that is your recommendation, but in that case, I would appreciate a good contact there.

Many thanks,

Steve Harris

[REDACTED]