



MEMORANDUM

Public Works Department

DATE: August 25, 2021

TO: Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee

FROM: Hoa Nguyen, Assistant Civil Engineer
Robert Gonzales, Principal Civil Engineer
Helen Kim, Transportation Planner
Ria Hutabarat Lo, Transportation Manager

SUBJECT: El Camino Real Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements

RECOMMENDATION

Receive an update on the El Camino Real Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements and recommend the following two actions to the City Council:

1. Approve converting on-street parking to new protected bikeways along El Camino Real northwest of Castro Street; and
2. Support the Los Altos City Council approval to convert on-street parking lanes to new bicycle facilities along El Camino Real, between Rengstorff Avenue and Cesano Court.

BACKGROUND

El Camino Real is a historic urban highway and an important transportation corridor for residents, workers, and visitors connecting major shopping and employment destinations with freeways, neighborhood streets, and transit. The roadway extends approximately four miles through Mountain View, connecting Sunnyvale to the southeast and Palo Alto and Los Altos to the northwest (Figure 1).

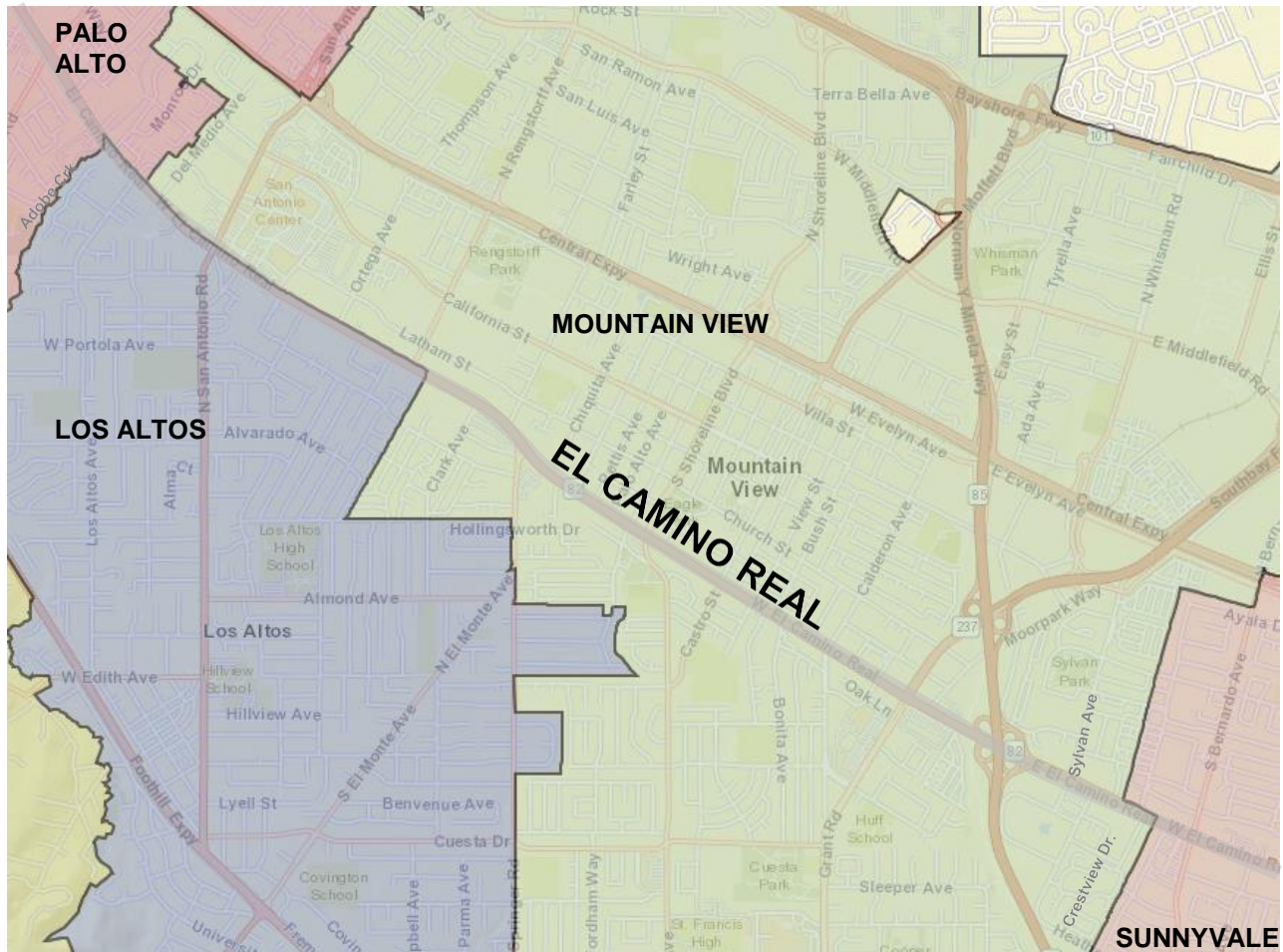


Figure 1: Area Map of El Camino Real in Mountain View

City Plans

In 2007, a coalition of cities and agencies along the Peninsula adopted the Grand Boulevard Initiative (GBI) vision. The GBI vision envisions El Camino Real as a collection of vibrant places to work, live, shop, and play, connected by multi-modal links that promote walking and transit. The Mountain View 2030 General Plan, which was approved by the City Council in 2012, reiterated the GBI vision and identified the El Camino Real corridor as a change area to be developed as “a revitalized boulevard that connects rather than divides the City, and as an attractive place to work, live, and play.”

In 2014, the City Council adopted the El Camino Real Precise Plan (ECRPP), which established mobility-related guidelines to support the General Plan vision. The Precise Plan called for wider sidewalks, interstitial pathways (paseos), shorter crossings, improved landscaping, bicycle facilities, transit signal priority, enhanced bus stops, removal of on-street parking, and transit-oriented development without a reduction in

travel lanes. These pedestrian and bicycle improvements were further developed through the El Camino Real Streetscape Plan (ECRSP), which was adopted by the City Council in 2019. Design standards from ECRSP include:

- Replacing existing on-street parking with Class IV protected bikeways and Class II bike lanes where space is constrained;
- Installing pedestrian and bicycle enhancements at intersections;
- Providing transit stop enhancements and treatments;
- Installing new signalized pedestrian crossings at Pettis Avenue, Bonita Avenue, and Crestview Drive; and
- Widening existing 8' wide sidewalk to 12' if a 4' easement is granted by the adjacent property owners when parcels redevelop.

Pedestrian and bicycle improvements outlined in the ECRSP are consistent with the City's Vision Zero Policy, which aims to eliminate fatal traffic collisions in the City by 2030. The improvements are also consistent with AccessMV, Mountain View's Comprehensive Modal Plan, which identified El Camino Real as a priority corridor for multi-modal transportation improvements.

Caltrans Projects

While the City of Mountain View has established a vision for the El Camino Real corridor, the roadway itself is owned and operated by the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). As such, any improvements within the public right-of-way are subject to Caltrans approval.

In 2014, Caltrans' Deputy Directive No. DD-64-R2 recognized bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation system. The Deputy Directive also noted that all transportation improvements are opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers, directing the agency to provide for the needs of travelers of all ages and abilities.

In light of this more multi-modal perspective, Caltrans released a District 4 Bike Plan in 2018, which identified Class IV protected bikeways on El Camino Real in Mountain View as Tier 1 projects. Installation of bicycle facilities through conversion of on-street parking requires approval by the respective local agency.

In 2018, Caltrans initiated work on an integrated project to repave and install Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) upgrades along El Camino Real, between Knickerbocker Drive in Sunnyvale and Sand Hill Road in Palo Alto. On June 18, 2019, the City Council expressed support for converting the parking lanes to allow for new bikeway facilities between Sylvan Avenue and Castro Street and directed staff to work with Caltrans to implement bicycle and pedestrian improvements in conjunction with the Caltrans repaving project.

ANALYSIS

Recent Funding Opportunities and Implications

In 2020, the City successfully secured \$4 million in Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Measure B pedestrian/bicycle funding to help construct pedestrian and bicycle improvements along El Camino Real in conjunction with the Caltrans repaving project. Caltrans also secured an internal grant to install pedestrian hybrid beacons (PHB) at Pettis Avenue, Bonita Avenue, and Crestview Drive as well as Class II bike lanes along El Camino Real in Los Altos. The latter bikeway facilities are contingent upon the Los Altos City Council approving parking removal north of Rengstorff Avenue in September 2021.¹

Pending Los Altos City Council approval, bikeway implementation northwest of Rengstorff Avenue would result in a gap in bikeway facilities between Castro Street and Rengstorff Avenue in Mountain View.

At the time of the June 2019 Council meeting, staff limited the recommendation for converting the parking lanes in Mountain View to the segment between Sylvan Avenue and Castro Street because the parking survey indicated no adverse impacts to the surrounding land uses. Staff recommended the bikeway implementation for the Castro Street to Rengstorff Avenue segment occur at a later time when one or more of the properties that had spillover parking onto El Camino Real redevelops (with requirements to provide all parking on-site) and/or the new Pettis Avenue crossing is installed to provide a side street option for one of the parking-impacted businesses. With Caltrans installing the PHB at Pettis Avenue and taking into consideration the gap that would be created in bikeway facilities if Los Altos approves the bike lanes within their jurisdiction, staff has determined it is timely to study installing the bicycle facilities between Castro Street and Rengstorff Avenue in conjunction with the Caltrans repaving project.

¹ Northbound parking lanes between Rengstorff Avenue and Cesano Court (near Palo Alto) are located within Los Altos' jurisdiction but are adjacent to Mountain View properties.

Parking Analysis

In order to understand potential tradeoffs between enhanced safety, mobility, and mode choice resulting from bikeway implementation and parking impacts on adjacent land uses, a series of parking surveys have been conducted. In October 2018, staff conducted observations of on-street parking occupancy and off-street parking availability where on-street spaces were occupied between Bernardo Avenue in Sunnyvale and Adobe Creek in Palo Alto. For segments northwest of Castro Street, peak occupancy across different days of the week and times of day are displayed in Figure 2.

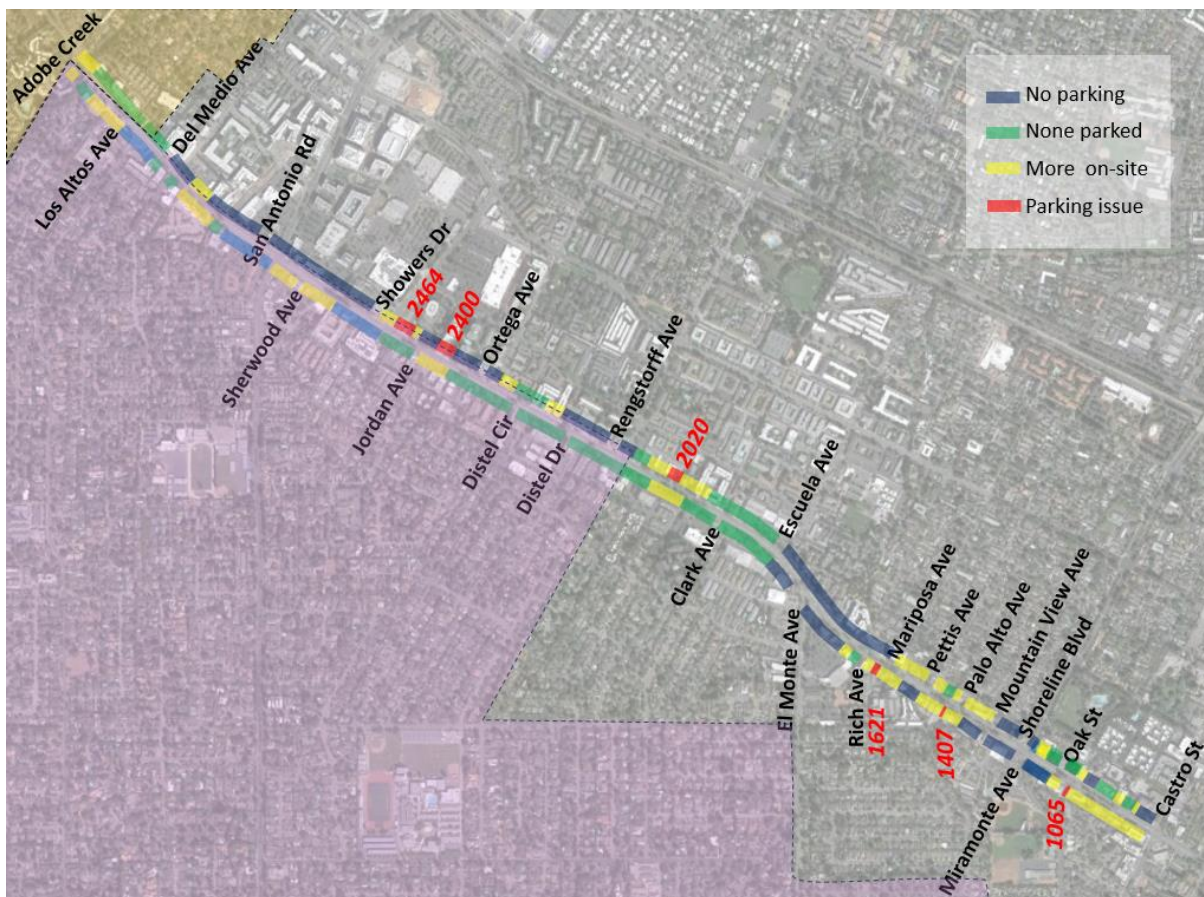


Figure 2: Parking Issues Castro Street to Adobe Creek, October 2018

Parcels shown as having a potential parking issue (red) had fewer vacant on-site parking spaces than utilized on-street spaces during one or more of the study periods. Specific locations of these potential issues are listed in Table 1. The curb length associated with these parcels represents 310', while the entire curb length between Castro Street and Rengstorff Avenue is 8,670'. Targeted follow-up surveys taken in April 2019 provided

consistent results, while a follow-up survey conducted in August 2021 indicated fewer potential issues, with just one potential issue location at 2020 West El Camino Real.

Table 1: Potential Parking Issues Northwest of Castro Street

Street No.	Land Use	Overflow Parking Timing	Cars Parked on Street		On-site Parking Spaces*	Side Street Parking Available
			2018	2021		
2464	Eating/ Retail	Weekend midday and evening	4	No parking issue	40	No
2400**	Residential	Weekday and weekend all day	5	No parking issue	17	Yes
2020	Eating	Weekend evening	6	3	25	No (paseo)
1621	Service	Weekday evening and weekend all day	2	No parking issue	8	Yes
1407	Eating	Weekday evening	2	No parking issue	0	No (future crossing)
1065	Retail	Weekday night and weekend all day	2	No parking issue	1 plus driveway	No

* On-site parking spaces represent the total number of private (off-street) parking spaces located at the given address. All addresses in Table 1 had fewer available on-site parking spaces than utilized on-street spaces.

** Additional available on-site parking may have been available for this location; however, surveyors were unable to observe it.

Community Engagement

In addition to the extensive outreach and engagement that occurred in conjunction with the ECRSP, City staff conducted a virtual community meeting related to the El Camino Real Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements project on August 4, 2021. Outreach for this meeting included:

- More than 4,000 postcards to property tenants, owners, and businesses in the vicinity of El Camino Real between Castro Street and Cesano Court;
- Door-to-door outreach to all addresses along El Camino Real in the same study segment;

- Email notifications to MyMV subscribers, neighborhood associations, and other community contacts; and
- Yard signs posted at key locations along El Camino Real.

Twenty-eight (28) members of the public attended the meeting. Feedback obtained during the meeting indicated that 82% of respondents were in favor of implementing the ECRSP pedestrian and bicycle elements, including conversion of parking lanes to bicycle facilities. Nine percent (9%) were opposed to parking conversion, and 9% were unsure or indifferent. Some respondents suggested a bike facility on a less busy road, such as Cuesta Drive or Latham Street, and some respondents were concerned about loss of public on-street parking. Respondents also expressed interest in design details of the project.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the parking analysis, which indicates minimal potential parking impacts to the adjacent land uses, staff plans to recommend to the City Council that the upcoming Caltrans repaving project include converting the parking lane into bicycle facilities from Castro Street to Rengstorff Avenue in addition to the segment from Sylvan Avenue to Castro Street. Staff will also be recommending that the City Council support the Los Altos City Council in taking action to approve converting the parking lane into bike facilities on El Camino Real northwest of Rengstorff Avenue.

NEXT STEPS

On September 14, 2021, the City Council will be requested to approve the terms of a cooperative agreement with Caltrans to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian improvements into the upcoming repaving project for El Camino Real, including the City's cost share and the use of the Measure B grant funding. As part of this, Council will consider approving a resolution to remove all on-street parking on El Camino Real from Sylvan Avenue to Rengstorff Avenue when Caltrans installs the bicycle facilities as part of their repaving project.

Staff will continue to work with Caltrans on the design of the bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Caltrans is expected to repave El Camino Real and install the bicycle and pedestrian improvements in 2023.

HN-RG-HK-RHL-DS/BW/6/PWK/959-08-25-21M-1

cc: PWD, APWD – Skinner