

July 1, 2025

Alicia John-Baptiste, Chair
MTC Regional Network Management Committee
Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Subject: Funding Support Request for the Quarry Road Connection Project (Palo Alto)

To Chair John-Baptiste and Committee Members,

On behalf of Stanford University, I am requesting funding support for the Quarry Road Connection Project - a strategic investment in sustainable, efficient, and equitable transit for our region.

The Palo Alto Transit Center (PATC) is the mobility hub of Palo Alto and has the second highest Caltrain ridership on the corridor. SamTrans, Santa Clara Valley Transit Authority (VTA), and Dumbarton Express all run buses to the PATC to complement Caltrain service and connect Palo Alto to San Mateo County, Santa Clara County, and the East Bay, respectively. Additionally, Stanford's publicly-accessible Marguerite shuttle service and other private shuttles provide last-mile connections from the PATC to campus facilities for employees and visitors.

In total, roughly 600 buses serve the transit center daily. Transfers from Marguerite shuttles account for approximately 40 percent of Caltrain daily boardings at the transit center.

The station is also a significant source for bicycle trips on Caltrain, with Palo Alto being the second highest bicycle ridership stop along the Caltrain corridor. Bicycle equipped passengers at the PATC are estimated to be between 750-800 per day, pre-COVID.

The Quarry Road Connection Project will enable significant transit and safety improvements via a new linkage between the Palo Alto Transit Center and El Camino Real along Quarry Road. The new transit roadway will allow buses and shuttles to exit on to El Camino Real faster, reducing bus transit times by an estimated 5-8 minutes per trip. It will also help reduce congestion within University Circle and along University Avenue. In addition, the project will enhance bicycle and pedestrian paths at the intersection of Quarry Road and El Camino which will improve safety and access to downtown Palo Alto, nearby public playing fields, Stanford University, Stanford Hospital, and Stanford Shopping Center.

Key project benefits include:

- **Faster Transit:** Shortens bus and shuttle trips by 5–8 minutes each—translating to improved service reliability and reduced wait times for riders, in addition to cost savings for transit operators.
- **Decongestion:** Diverts roughly 59% of bus traffic away from University Avenue, easing gridlock and lowering emissions.
- **Improved Safety:** Adds dedicated pedestrian and bicycle paths with safer crossings at El Camino Real, enhancing access and promoting active modes of transit.
- **Sustainability:** Supports Caltrain electrification and increasing transit demand, aligning with regional climate goals.

In November 2024, Measure D was passed overwhelmingly with approximately 74 percent support from Palo Alto voters. This measure approved undedicating a small portion of El Camino Park needed for the project's implementation, demonstrating strong community and agency backing. The project is supported by various goals and policies outlined in the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan, emphasizing the improvement of transportation infrastructure and multimodal connectivity. The Quarry Road Connection Project has strong broad-based support from the transit agencies that use the PATC, bicycle and pedestrian organizations, Stanford Health Care, Stanford Shopping Center and the City of Palo Alto.

Thank you for considering this impactful investment in this transformative project that will not only benefit Palo Alto commuters, but the region as a whole.

With regards,



Robert Reidy
Vice President



OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION
250 Hamilton Avenue, 5th Floor
Palo Alto, CA 94301
650.329.2520

July 7, 2025

Alicia John-Baptiste, Chair
MTC Regional Network Management Committee
Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Support for Funding – Quarry Road Transit Connection Project, City of Palo Alto

To Chair John-Baptiste and Committee Members,

On behalf of the City of Palo Alto, I am writing to express support for funding for the Quarry Road Transit Connection Project.

This project represents a critical and timely investment in Palo Alto’s multimodal transportation infrastructure. It is designed to create a dedicated transit connection between El Camino Real and the Palo Alto Transit Center (PATC) via a new roadway through a currently passive portion of El Camino Park. The project responds to the region’s urgent need for efficient, sustainable transportation solutions that reduce vehicle congestion and enhance access for transit users, cyclists, and pedestrians alike.

This location is a mobility hub for Palo Alto and the Bay Area that serves the highest-performing bus transit services in both Santa Clara County (VTA 522/22) and San Mateo County (SamTrans ECR). The current bus route configuration causes out-of-direction travel and congestion that has a significant impact on service efficiency for these important lines in both counties.

The Quarry Road extension is projected to reduce bus transit times by 5–8 minutes per trip, alleviating congestion at the University Avenue/El Camino Real interchange and University Circle. The proposed direct route would streamline regional and local bus and shuttle service, improving reliability and reducing emissions in the heart of one of the Bay Area’s most significant mobility hubs and Caltrain’s second highest ridership station, including the second highest station for passengers with bicycles.

The proposed Quarry Road Transit Connection Project would advance numerous Comprehensive Plan policies and programs, as follows:

- **Policy T-1.11** Encourage continued enhancement of the Caltrain stations as important transportation nodes for the city.
- **Program T1.11.1** Collaborate with Stanford University, VTA, Caltrain and other agencies to pursue improvements to the Palo Alto Transit Center area aimed at enhancing the

pedestrian experience and improving circulation and access for all modes, including direct access to El Camino Real for transit vehicles.

- **Program T3.10.3** Provide safe, convenient pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections between the Stanford Shopping Center/Medical Center areas and housing along the Sand Hill Road/Quarry Road corridors to Palo Alto Transit Center, Downtown Palo Alto and other primary destinations.
- **Program T3.10.4** Pursue extension of Quarry Road for transit, pedestrians and bicyclists to access the Palo Alto Transit Center from El Camino Real. Also study the feasibility of another pedestrian and bicycle underpass of Caltrain at Everett Street.
- **Policy T-8.2** Coordinate with local and regional agencies and Caltrans to maintain and improve transportation infrastructure in Palo Alto, including the Multi-Modal Transit Center.

Importantly, this project has garnered strong local support, as shown by the successful November 2024 vote by Palo Alto residents (74% approval) to undedicate a small portion of parkland—approximately 0.33 acres—necessary for implementation. This rare civic endorsement reflects the community’s recognition of the project’s transportation benefits that align with the policies noted above and with the City’s broader mobility and Sustainability and Climate Action Plan goals.

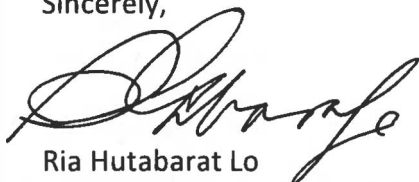
In addition to the core transit connection, the project includes substantial pedestrian and bicycle safety enhancements, including new high-visibility crossings, pedestrian and bicycle refuge islands, green bike lane markings, and curb extensions. These features will improve connectivity between Downtown Palo Alto, Stanford University, Stanford Medical Center, Stanford Shopping Center, El Camino Park, and surrounding neighborhoods while strengthening the regional active transportation network and promoting sustainable, car-free travel for thousands of users daily.

Furthermore, the project has been developed in close coordination with key stakeholders, including Stanford University, Caltrain, VTA, SamTrans, AC Transit, and Dumbarton Express. This level of collaboration ensures that the project serves both local and regional transportation objectives. The improvements are consistent with the City of Palo Alto’s Comprehensive Plan and broader MTC policies promoting integrated, multimodal transportation systems.

For all these reasons, I urge the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to fund the Quarry Road Transit Connection Project. This capital project will yield outsized benefits in transit efficiency, safety, and multimodal access, while helping to meet the mobility needs of Palo Alto, the growing Caltrain ridership, and the broader Bay Area region.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to building a more connected, sustainable, and accessible Bay Area.

Sincerely,



Ria Hutabarat Lo
Chief Transportation Official