

Appendix F: Questions and comments received during the Q&A sessions

Questions/comments received in-person during the October 16, 2024 meeting:

- For the long-term improvements that were noted in the 2017 corridor study, are we repeating for this phase what was done in the 2017 corridor study?
- Is the current project process driven by Caltrans requirements?
- Can the Ladera intersection treatments be different than the I-280 intersection treatments?
- Why are we showing two lanes of vehicular traffic at the roundabouts?
- Is the long schedule and process driven by Caltrans and Caltrans R/W? Can the process for the Ladera intersections be moved faster?
- Does the current traffic studies take into account the planned future growth in the area?
- The bike pelotons will not follow the green striping that is currently out there and will be proposed.
- When driving north on Alpine, there is a lot of signage that can be confusing for drivers.
- These improvements on the current alternatives seem similar to the improvements shown in the 2017 corridor study.
- The bus stop location at Wildwood is not the best idea.
- There is currently some flooding issues under Interstate 280 at Alpine Road that needs to be addressed.
- These improvements should do a better job of taking into account safe improvements for all modes of travel. There is potential for dangerous conflicts with bikes and vehicles with these signal installations and improvements.
- Vehicles will not follow no right turn on red signage and will cause cyclists and pedestrians to be in more danger.
- Are we able to do any short-term improvements at the Ladera intersections to improve safety for bikes and pedestrians?
- These two alternatives have not gone the proper safety analysis that is needed.
- Can we move the non-Caltrans portion ahead faster?
- What is the process of choosing between the two alternatives?
- Existing bike lanes are better than proposed, long merge. Bikes have to deal with signals and ramps that they do not currently have to deal with now.
- There is a lot of anxiety among residents about entering and exiting from Ladera intersections.
- Why add parking on Piers Lane? This will cause even more congestion and vehicles in the area.
- Is there potential to reduce speed limit along alpine?
- There are no policeman that enforce the speed limits in the area.
- Crosswalks are ignored by vehicles.

Questions/comments received online during the October 16, 2024 meeting:

- Attempting to leave Ladera during a peak time can easily take 10-15 min. Peak traffic consists of private school pick up / drop off, and normal work commute traffic. It would likely be catastrophic in a wildfire evacuation. One timid driver can hold up the line indefinitely, and many people don't know about the center turn lanes. I wish a temporary measure could be added to make escaping the neighborhood more effective now, while the long-term project is underway. I hope low roundabouts at La Cuesta and La Mesa can be a long-term option, of the kind that large trucks can drive over if necessary.

- Can there be bicycle bypasses of the intersection in the north bound lanes?
- Are you taking into account the plans for increased housing along Alpine Road for Portola Valley to meet its state housing requirements? I understand almost all of that extra housing will be along Alpine Road and not Portola Valley Road.
- Was the Portola Valley Bike Pedestrian Traffic Safety committee invited to this meeting and was the Portola Valley Town council invited to this meeting?
- There is the trail that goes under the southbound onramp for 280 that might be used too.

Questions/comments received in-person during the November 13, 2024 meeting:

- This is a daily emergency, not feeling enough urgency by the team for this project:
 - 2029 timeline after starting in 2015 is “unacceptable”
 - 50-60 mile per hour traffic that does not stop when the ped crossing light goes on
 - Left on Alpine is extremely dangerous, center lane is not effective – cars slam on brakes and do not understand the middle lane
 - Roundabout seems like the obvious solution – not having traffic lights when you don’t need them will cause unnecessary waiting and congestion
- I live off Bishop Lane, life-threatening attempt daily:
 - Light at Junipero Serra and Santa Cruz Ave will stop traffic coming from downtown, but coming from the freeway is dangerous – getting into the left-hand turn lane is precarious
 - Railing on Alpine that has been increased in length is proof of the many accidents along that stretch of the road – critical that railing be improved
- In support of roundabouts – thinks they are very effective and believes that there are more ways than one to get in/out of Portola Valley (speaking of evacuation routes)
- Father of three young drivers- warned about Left turn onto alpine – extremely dangerous and echoes urgency
- Echo of urgency x2 – accidents of cars getting rear-ended when stopping for pedestrians
- Police commissioner of Portola Valley provided the following comments:
 - 63 signs between 280 exit and Alpine Road - no way for drivers to register all of these while going 35+ mph
 - Evacuation is a concern
 - Traffic safety requires three things: enforcement, engineering, education
 - Conflicting speed limit signs
- Do the two traffic simulations include the behavior of bicyclists and paths they will take?
- In the roundabout implementation, is it accurate that you’ve moved the ped crosswalk to the entrance and exists? Bad place to put crossings, traffic will be moving fast out of roundabouts.
- Chair of PV Geological Committee stated that the configuration of corridor is a safety issue; we need to prepare for earthquake/fires:
 - Don’t implement anything that will slow down traffic in an evacuation – allow for additional northbound lane
 - If you have roundabouts, consider large lanes or flat centers for emergency response vehicles to drive over
 - Keep open north entrance by 280S, the path underneath the ramp can be designed to be less steep and safer for peds and cyclists
 - For modeling, look at earthquake trigger and wildfire and population growth

- These two alternatives are less desirable than no change at all and 2017 alternative
- Is it possible to dissociate the designs – and interchange around a roundabout may be better at one location, but a light might be better at the other
- Hard to find designs on the website – now they are on the website
- South on Alpine- radius of turns is large – bikes and peds will be very vulnerable
- Prioritize cyclists – please keep it safe for bikes
- I never use those green bike lanes – I ride the old path that’s been there forever:
 - Envision a future with a dedicated bike path, 10-ft wide bike lane
 - Just make Alpine Road speed limit 20 mph
- Very difficult to imagine riding bikes with kids, envision a future where children can be able to bike to schools.

Questions/comments received on line during the November 13, 2024 meeting:

- Is there any goal to improve fire evacuation for Ladera & PV residents?
- My concern is that cars are constantly speeding on alpine and there are even a number of crashes but many families live in Stanford weekend acres and children aggregate at the bus stops along alpine. Are there any improvements to slow the speed of cars on alpine and to strengthen the safety of the walking paths?
- Is there a target speed for Alpine (traffic light vs roundabout)?
- I’d like to confirm that the dirt mounds between Alpine Road and the Alpine frontage road, which offers a sound barrier, protection from cars speeding off Alpine and privacy won’t be removed.
- How will you capture reports of near-misses or accidents? I’ve seen multiple near-misses at the intersection of 280 and Alpine, particularly when exiting 280 NB onto Alpine...cars on Alpine seem to frequently run the stop sign at 280 offramp.
- Greetings,

The current construction congestion at the 280 Alpine intersections have caused many delays and of course this was made harder with the wonderful recent pumpkin patch and upcoming Christmas tree activities near the intersection. How much more will it be constricted in the next two years?

Fire doesn’t have a set direction, just like the proposed changes will hurt the evacuation plans of Portola Valley Residents trying to get to 280, let’s not forget the Ladera and Menlo Park Residents that may have to come through PV to evacuate in case of a disaster. If roundabouts are used – they need to be flat enough for emergency vehicles to come through.

Whatever changes are made to the Alpine Road, please think about all residents in the area that might be unnecessarily delayed in their evacuation attempts. Also, if you can you let us know if the recently released Portola Valley Evacuation Plan has been incorporated in your Plan?

Hopes and Prayers are nice but proper planning can save lives.

- Please show us the traffic simulations.
- Are there plans to increase number of traffic lanes on Alpine?
- Will there be anything done for noise abatement for houses that back onto Alpine?

- Can we consider the low curb roundabouts that larger trucks and emergency vehicles can drive over, instead of totally dismissing roundabouts entirely?
- For construction efforts, can this equipment be brought in from Sandhill?
- Before we throw out roundabouts, please consider the kinds of roundabouts that allow emergency vehicles to drive over the top. My understanding is that traffic lights are actually LESS throughput at normal times, and we already have backup into Ladera during the day (per the Woodside school studies).
- Turning circles may cause more frequent collisions until people get used to them but these collisions are much less damaging to life and property.
- Could speed bumps be added to Alpine?
- I was intrigued recently to learn about the “diverging diamond interchange” which is being installed in Vallejo (SFGate article 11/9/2024). Is that something which has been or could be considered for Alpine/280? What is the recommended way to submit this as a suggestion for consideration?
- Does the traffic light option at Ladera include responsive sensors to prevent longer backups into the community at times of high traffic exiting the community (like Woodland school drop off / pick up). Also, can sensor-controlled timing prevent long delays at times of low traffic on Alpine (like at night) so residents and visitors don’t get stuck being slower than it is even now?
- There are trails East of Ladera, unpaved. Can these trails be graded and upgraded for cars to access 280 (via added frontage roads)?
- Agree with this speaker. People speed way too fast on Alpine and it’s a danger to pedestrians, children at the bus stop, bikers, etc.
- When I took the online survey, options for La Mesa and La Cuesta were not present on question #2. They have been added now. Should I repeat the survey so that I can accurately answer the question “Where do you typically access Alpine Road from?”
- As a comment — The entrance to Ladera at La Cuesta is confusing to people from out of the area. It is not unusual that cars will turn up the wrong way or they try to enter the gas station at the Do Not Enter sign.
- I agree with the current speaker — the crosswalk at La Cuesta and Alpine is great to have the flashing lights, but cars going 60mph do not stop.
- At the last public meeting, the bicyclists in attendance strongly opposed the two concepts for RT280 interchange that pushed bikers to side paths. The 2017 study had a traffic light concept that used the existing bike lanes, but that becomes problematic for bikers. Perhaps a better concept or model that uses traffic lights is the interchange of Woodside RD and 280. The higher speeds on Woodside RD can be intimidating, but nonetheless it works OK for bikers (I’ve been going through that intersection nearly daily for 30+ years.)
- Roundabouts reduce speeds at the most dangerous part of our roads--intersections. They are also self-regulating. I lived in UK and Australia and roundabouts work great. I tried so hard to speed thru a particular roundabout in AUS only to have to slow down massively every time. It was sort of a silly game but the circle was super effective. Americans routinely accelerate thru intersections when the light turns yellow and red.
- Place a temporary construction light at La Mesa Dr.
- I witness near misses daily for cars attempting to exit Ladera, or pedestrians attempting to cross Alpine and having the cars zoom by without slowing. I’ve almost been hit many times myself. Please expedite a solution to the life safety danger at the La Mesa and La Cuesta intersections.
 - Cars also enter La Cuesta the wrong way frequently to access the gas station; please do something now and protect our safety.

- Roundabouts could be a great solution in the future, but we need something years ago. We need it now. 2029+ is too late.
- Can Tim share his contact info? (email was provided in chat)
- Roundabouts work just fine in Europe for response times. EMS in Europe has access dedicated bike paths (making the bike path large enough for a specific standard of EMS cars. Can we have a local Ladera vehicle limit for how large fire engines and paramedics can use? (to use the bike paths)
- Are all questions being recorded and available for the public?
- What is being done about the major groups of cyclists that travel through alpine road? would like to see them not only accounted for but also held accountable for their unsafe practices that make the road less safe for all.
- If traffic lights or roundabouts are used, can speed limits be [A] unified throughout Alpine and [B] the speeds lowered to 25 mi/hr to 30 mi/hr.
- Is there an option to only have improvement (roundabout or light) on the north side of the Alpine/280 interchange and leave the south side without a roundabout or light?
- Short term question. When will the guardrail on alpine near Piers be fixed since the accident trashed it and when will the eroded bike path under Junipero Serra between Sandhill and alpine be fixed?
- The bike lanes along Alpine north of 280 are so close to traffic - it seems super dangerous as a cyclist, considering cars zip around the curves and do not leave the required space to cyclists. Can a protected bike lane be created?