

From:



Subject:

[EXTERNAL] Caltrans and Otis, etc.

Date:

Tuesday, May 27, 2025 3:01:53 PM

I have the impression that Caltrans turns only a deaf ear to Alameda's leadership, whether it be the Council, the Transportation Commission, the city staff, or residents. We are a residential community with a strong will to make our streets safer for pedestrians and bicyclists. The composition of our elected boards and appointed commissions reflect that goal, and the city staff labor mightily to plan projects consistent with that goal.

I urge the Transportation Commission to continue and to strengthen their efforts to convince Caltrans of the need to substantially improve Otis with the aim of improving safety, not 10 years in the future, but NOW!

Thank you for all that you do for our city,
Christy Cannon
CASA, Transportation volunteer

From:

Subject:

[EXTERNAL] Caltrans' discordant design on Otis

Date:

Tuesday, May 27, 2025 5:00:00 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm an Alameda resident and dad of two young kids. Although we don't live on Otis and our kids don't attend the elementary school by the same name, we do live a stone's throw from the recently repaved and restriped section of Encinal. That has given us a unique perspective to see what fresh pavement and straight, wide lanes do to a residential neighborhood, one which also happens to be frequently crossed by many school-bound children like my own.

What I would like to see at this Wednesday's transportation commission meeting is a fuller and more truthful accounting of the negative externalities Caltrans is foisting on the city and residents of Alameda. After all, once the asphalt has cured and the steam rollers drive off into the sunset, it's all of us who will bear the brunt of this bad design for many years.

From my vantage point, what I see is our city leadership trying to achieve balance, but Caltrans has put all its weight behind a single constituent - the car commuter. In doing so they seem unwilling to see, hear, understand, and acknowledge the ways their design hurts this community and disrupts the balance the city seeks.

Caltrans is not responsible to, and in this project acts in willful disregard of, our city's Vision Zero goal. Their insistence on four lanes of traffic demonstrates their willingness to sacrifice our lives and limbs to shave seconds off driving times.

They also don't seem to care that Otis bisects walking routes to schools and bike paths to workplaces. They don't seem to connect the dots that by making active transportation less safe, they encourage more vehicle miles traveled, exacerbating the very traffic jams they purport to care so much about.

Lastly, Caltrans is promoting road design where reckless driving is only kept in check through vigorous and omnipresent policing. Personally, I would prefer our cops do something else with their limited time. Also, unlike police who go home to their families at night, effective roadway design works around the clock.

What I've seen on Encinal, and what I fear for Otis, is that this "improvement" project will only embolden cars to travel more recklessly and at faster speeds. I urge Caltrans to listen to the feedback from our city, incorporate the lane diet, and better account for other constituents in the area.

Brian

Brian Tobin

[REDACTED]

From:



[EXTERNAL] Caltrans" State Route 61 Otis Drive

Date:

Tuesday, May 27, 2025 4:38:02 PM

Good afternoon,

As a resident of Alameda's East End and an Otis Elementary parent, I am writing to express my strong opposition to Caltrans' current plans for Otis Drive. I believe these plans will not adequately address the dangerous speeding that puts people outside of enclosed vehicles at serious risk daily. I urge you to oppose these plans and advocate for truly effective safety measures.

The conditions on Otis Drive are dangerous, especially for our children and families. Caltrans' apparent reliance on insufficient measures, such as the existing Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs), which are often part of their standard approach, is simply not enough for a four-lane road like Otis. These do not effectively slow traffic or ensure pedestrians are visible. Continuing with plans that don't fundamentally change the hazardous nature of this road is unacceptable.

Instead of Caltrans' current proposals, I urge the Transportation Commission to champion the following proven solutions:

- **A Raised Crosswalk at Mound & Otis:** This is a critical school & park crossing and will help physically slow cars.
- **Pedestrian Refuge Islands (Medians):** To create safer, two-stage crossings. (The argument that Mound or Versailles can't accommodate these due to 60-foot trucks – a concern Caltrans might raise to avoid them – is flawed; these aren't primary truck routes, and pedestrian safety must be paramount). As advocated by Bike East Bay, enacting bans on large vehicle turns here would be more appropriate.
- **HAWK Signals:** A far more effective way to stop traffic than the flashing beacons Caltrans seems to prefer.
- **Road Diet on Otis Drive:** Reducing Otis to two lanes with a center turn lane would help calm traffic and shorten crossing distances—a comprehensive safety measure likely more robust than what Caltrans is considering.

Otis Drive has already had its share of accidents, including pedestrian fatalities. Alameda can't wait for another tragedy while proceeding with ineffective plans, nor can we afford for Caltrans to ignore our traffic safety needs on Otis Drive for another decade.

We need a safer Otis Drive now, achieved through proven solutions, not insufficient gestures.

Sincerely,

Allan

East End Resident of Alameda

Otis Elementary Parent

From:

Subject:

Date:

[EXTERNAL] Otis Dr safety

Tuesday, May 27, 2025 5:02:18 PM

Dear officials,

This is a public comment on City of Alameda Transportation Commission meeting agenda item 6-A, the Caltrans' State Route 61 Otis Drive/Doolittle Drive/Broadway Preventative Maintenance Project.

Caltrans staff need to abide by their own design standards and widen the bikeway.

As well, the letter to you from Robert Prinz, Bike East Bay's director of advocacy has many excellent recommendations. I do hope that you will press Caltrans to make these adjustments in their plans.

Pedestrian and cyclist safety is very important to me and I think to most other Alamedans. Please work for the safety of the pedestrians and cyclists and even drivers.

Thank you for your time,

Catherine Egelhoff

From: [Tang, Jeff](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: [Kevin Barrett](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Otis Drive (SR 61) Proposed Work and Future Road Diet
Date: Tuesday, May 27, 2025 12:47:40 PM

Hi,

I saw the proposed Caltrans Presentation for the Transportation Commission meeting tomorrow on 5/28. I noticed one thing missing in the Presentation. Was their work on Otis Drive proposed between Mound Ave and Broadway? I did not see a page that depicted that work in the Presentation. I'm concerned about my gutter being fixed to provide enough slope to the drainage inlet; I've previously contacted Caltrans about a ponding issue in front of my house due to the flat slope. Also, I noted that on Page 18, there is a proposed Road Diet Project in the 2028 State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), which seems promising, as a resident at 2815 Otis Drive. While I note the bicycle lanes in both direction, is parking along Otis, incorporated as part of the bicycle lane? We have previously noted to Caltrans and the City in the past, that the width along the stretch of Otis (at least between Mound and Versailles) is undersized and not appropriate in its existing condition of 4-lanes of traffic. What would be the proposed lane widths in a road diet? A road diet with bike lanes will provide more safety when accessing our parked vehicles.

Jeff Tang
2815 Otis Drive

From:

Subject:

Date:

[EXTERNAL] Public comment on item 6A

Tuesday, May 27, 2025 5:07:27 PM

TC Members,

At your next meeting you'll be receiving a report on Caltrans' Otis Drive long-haul-trucking-over-safety design plan. While the item is not an action item, I want to encourage the Transportation Commission to not quietly accept or approve the proposed design.

Street design plans represent a series of choices that reflect the values and priorities of the designers. When done in accordance with local planning efforts and long-term visions, they align to support the community they are supposed to be designed to support.

Unfortunately, Caltrans has decided to ignore the will of the California State legislature, Local leaders and our community in order to bulldoze a plan that was outright rejected by Alameda Staff and leaders the last time they presented it.

To be clear, the City of Alameda, its elected officials, appointed transportation advisory commission and city staff have worked diligently over the past 15 years to identify the local transportation priorities and street use guidance for our city. These include:

- Making our neighborhoods safe for families to walk to school
- Focusing truck traffic on key streets while maintaining a local, residential focus on non-commercial corridors
- Reducing the incidence of high-speed, overbuilt traffic sewers and increasing the quality of life of households that live on streets that are identified to carry higher volumes of Traffic

Caltrans' proposed design achieves none of these adopted goals and goes so far as to proposed prioritizing sending 65' tractor-trailers down streets like Versailles, which are not identified as official truck routes in Alameda, over bare-bones pedestrian safety upgrades.

Caltrans staff is choosing to prioritize trucks on small local streets over the livability and safety of the people who live there. These are the choices the designers have made.

Sure, they promise to come back in 10 years and listen to the community at that time. But there is zero reason to believe them. They choose to not listen this time, why would they the next? We've seen this cartoon before, they'll gladly pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today.

While you are not an official approval for this project, you are not powerless. You do not have to quietly accept and add your passive stamp of approval to this project. I encourage you to direct staff to agendaize an item at the next City Council meeting recommending that the City Council formally send a letter objecting to this project's design, outlining (as staff as done so effectively) all the points in the process that the city asked Caltrans Staff to

collaborate with the community, providing benefits instead of choosing to further engrain harm.

The people who live on Otis have been asking the City for help for decades, the families who attend Otis have highlighted safety concerns for decades. This was an opportunity for Caltrans staff to choose to hear them and design streets that met the need for the people who travel on them, as well as the people who live by them and those who need to cross them.

Tomorrow night, you can be the voice of all those people and make it clear that the City does not agree with Caltrans staff's choosing to deprioritize community safety in Alameda. Ask the council to join you. Make it clear that these designs are out of sync with our city and our priorities for safe neighborhoods and safe streets.

Best,

John Knox White
Former city councilmember