

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk
County of Santa Clara
110 West Tasman Drive, First Floor
San Jose, CA 95134

From: Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board
1250 San Carlos Avenue
San Jose, CA 94070

Project Title: Subsurface Utility Exploration for the Palo Alto Grade Separation Project (Churchill Avenue, Seale Avenue, Meadow Drive, and Charleston Road Crossings)

Project Applicant: Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board

Project Location - Specific: Churchill Avenue, Seale Avenue, Meadow Drive, and Charleston Road crossings of the Caltrain Corridor

Project Location - City: City of Palo Alto **Project Location - County:** Santa Clara

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The proposed project consists of temporary subsurface utility investigation activities to support ongoing design and engineering of the City of Palo Alto Grade Separation Project (Grade Separation Project). Work would occur at 13 locations within the existing developed transportation corridors associated with Churchill Avenue, Seale Avenue, Meadow Drive, and Charleston Road crossings. Activities would include utility designations services and air-vacuum potholing – activities to verify the location, depth, size and material of existing underground utilities. The utility investigations will be conducted in accordance with applicable encroachment permit, traffic-control, and notification requirements. Potholes would be restored following the completion of investigation activities. The purpose of this project is to collect information needed to support utility coordination, engineering design, and utility relocation activities associated with the proposed grade separation improvements. Beneficiaries include Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (Caltrain), the City of Palo Alto, utility owners, and the public.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board

Exempt Status (check one):

- ☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: CEQA Guidelines 15306, Class 6 Information Collection
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why the project is exempt:

The proposed project consists of temporary subsurface utility exploration activities, including utility designation services and utility potholing, to support future design of the Palo Alto Grade Separation Project. Utility investigations would occur at the Churchill Avenue, Seale Avenue, Meadow Drive, and Charleston Road crossings to identify the location, depth, size, and material of existing underground utilities. Utility potholing is anticipated to begin as early as November 2026 and is expected to require approximately three days of field work within an overall work window of approximately five to ten days. The utility investigations would generate temporary diesel exhaust emissions, minor dust, and equipment noise associated with air-vacuum excavation and supporting vehicles. Because the work would be localized and limited in duration, these temporary effects would not result in a significant environmental impact.

Following completion of field investigations, pothole locations would be backfilled and restored to pre-project conditions.

The project would not result in the construction of permanent facilities, removal of vegetation, or changes to existing land uses. Additionally, the utility investigations would be conducted in accordance with applicable encroachment permit, traffic-control, and notification requirements. Information collected through these investigations would be used to support engineering design, utility coordination, and future project development. The project meets the criteria for a Class 6 exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 and does not trigger any exceptions listed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Michael Tauchen

Phone number: 650.730.4847

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?
☒ Yes ☐ No

Signature:  Date: 10/05/2026 Title: Deputy Director

☒ Signed by Responsible Agency

☒ Signed by Applicant

Date Received for filing at OPR: 10/05/2026

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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PROJECT LOCATION: City of Palo Alto - Churchill Avenue, Seale Avenue, Meadow Drive, and Charleston Road crossings of the Caltrain Corridor

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

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NAME OF PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING PROJECT:

Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board

NAME OF PUBLIC AGENCY CARRYING OUT PROJECT:

Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board

EXEMPTION STATUS:

Categorical Exemption

REASON WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT:

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LEAD AGENCY CONTACT PERSON:

Michael Tauchen
Deputy Director, Environmental Compliance
(650) 730-4847

Signature:  _____

Date: 10/05/2026