Transportation Authority of Marin

DATE: June 21, 2021

TO: Transportation Authority of Marin Citizens' Oversight Committee

FROM: Anne Richman, Executive Director
Dan Cherrier, Principal Project Delivery Manager

SUBJECT: Input on NB US101 to EB I-580 Direct Connector Project Alternatives (Discussion), Agenda Item No. 6

RECOMMENDATION

Discussion Item Only

BACKGROUND

Currently, traffic transitioning from Northbound (NB) US101 to Eastbound (EB) I-580 has two signed routes. Both routes, the Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and Bellam Boulevard exits, utilize local streets designed to serve local traffic. Several years ago, TAM worked with its on call consultant team, and developed seven alternatives for a permanent connector. After detailed discussions with Caltrans, City of San Rafael, County of Marin, and the City of Larkspur, the list of alternatives was narrowed to three and more detailed analyses were performed. Costs of the alternatives ranged from $135 million to $265 million and they had varying degrees of impacts and right of way needs.

TAM successfully advocated to have the lower-cost connector placed into the voter approved Regional Measure 3 (RM3) to be administered by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). Meanwhile, in November 2018 the Measure AA Transportation Sales Tax was passed by Marin County voters, with 2% of the sales tax dedicated to the connector project to provide more robust public outreach and accelerate the project. This local commitment has allowed the project to move forward while the RM3 Program has been delayed due to legal action.

The TAM Board awarded a contract to a team led by Kimley Horn Associates at the July 2019 Board meeting for initial project work. The scope of services included an initial consideration of all the seven original alternatives as well as developing new ones thorough an extensive public outreach process, discussions with various stakeholder groups, creation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with stakeholders regarding design selection, coordination with all affected jurisdictions, visual simulations, and environmental studies. In addition, the team is to prepare several Caltrans required documents: Project Study Report, Advance Planning Study, Design Exceptions, and Project Report. The probable California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document will be an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The appropriate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document will be determined based on the environmental studies. Caltrans has agreed to be the NEPA lead agency. A determination was also made to "federalize" the project so it can be eligible for federal funds when available since it can be very difficult to utilize federal funds later if the project is not federalized initially.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

A robust outreach and management structure was created including the following:

- An Ad-Hoc Committee of various TAM Board members,
- An Executive Steering Committee (ESC) consisting of leadership from all the involved agencies including the cities of Larkspur and San Rafael, the County of Marin, MTC, Caltrans, and TAM,
- A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) with similar stakeholders to oversee technical development and analyses, and
- A Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) made up of 20 individuals from the many community groups near the project area.

Numerous meetings have occurred since January 2020 of all four groups and every group has met at least four times.

TAM staff have supplemented the formal process with several meetings with additional groups including the San Rafael City Council, neighborhood organizations, League of Women Voters, East San Rafael Working Group, Canal Alliance, Multicultural Center of Marin, Marin Conservation League, and others. The outreach has also included conversations with some affected property owners including the Central Marin Sanitation Agency and Marin Sanitary Service.

According to the current project schedule, the environmental studies will begin in mid-2022 with a signed environmental document ready in 2024. Detailed design will take around two years after that and the project should be ready to go into construction in 2026 and be open for traffic in 2029 assuming sufficient funding

There are currently nine build alternatives sand also the no build alternative. Over the last month, TAM staff have been working with the listed groups as well as the TAM Board Ad-Hoc, ESC, and SWG to gain insight as to which alternatives should not be carried forward into the environmental process.

FISCAL CONSIDERATION

The RM3 funding, if cleared from pending litigation, would only be sufficient for the low-speed options near the existing ramp at Bellam Boulevard. A final alternative selection of any of the other options will require additional funding to be secured for the project, possibly impacting the overall schedule. TAM's current contract with Kimley Horn Associates is scoped to provide full analysis of three alternatives, one of which must be the no build option. Indications are that it may be prudent to carry additional alternatives into the environmental process, which will require amendments to the current contract.

NEXT STEPS

TAM staff expects to bring the alternatives discussion to the TAM Administration, Projects and Planning Executive Committee and Board during the month of July. At that time, the Board may decide to eliminate alternatives from the full environmental analysis. The Kimley Horn Associates team will incorporate the TAM Board guidance into the Caltrans Project Initiation Document. It is possible during the preparation of the document that Caltrans may want to see an eliminated alternative be included in the environmental process.

ATTACHMENTS

Staff PowerPoint Presentation

Transportation Authority of Marin

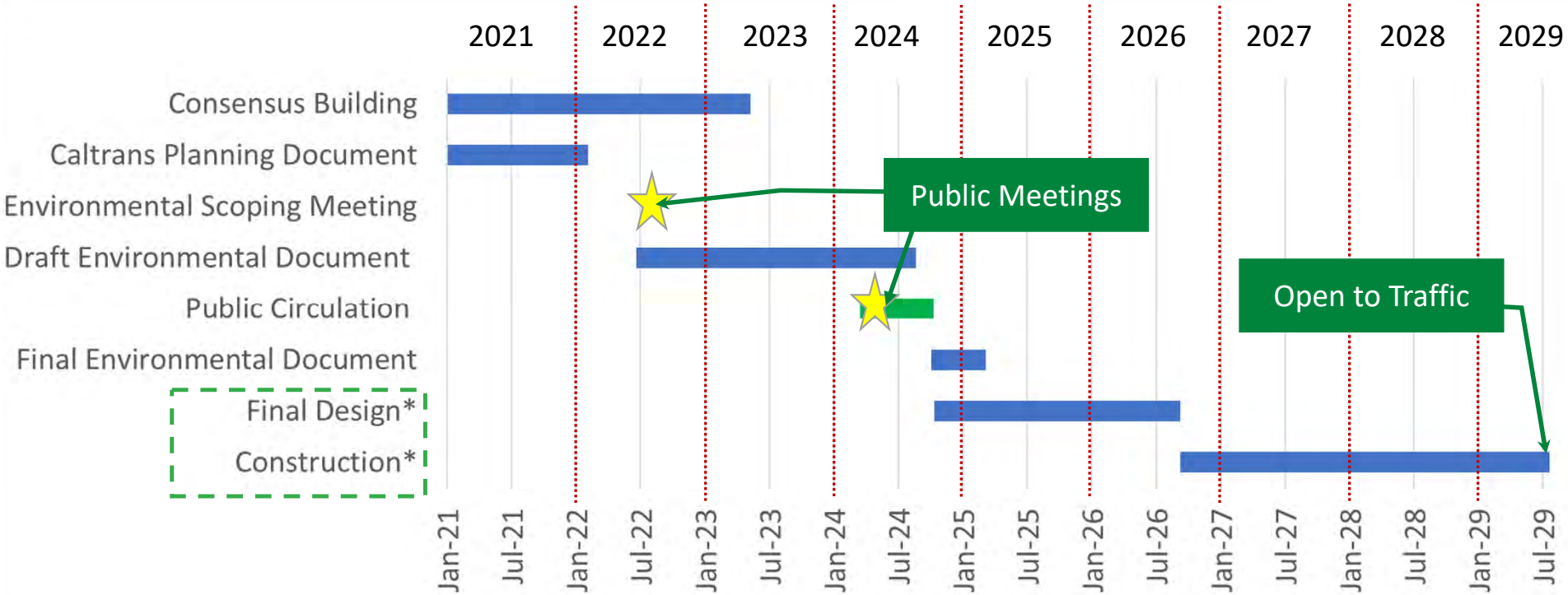
Northbound US-101 to Eastbound I-580 Direct Connector

Citizen's Oversight Committee Meeting
June 21, 2021

Project Goals and Objectives

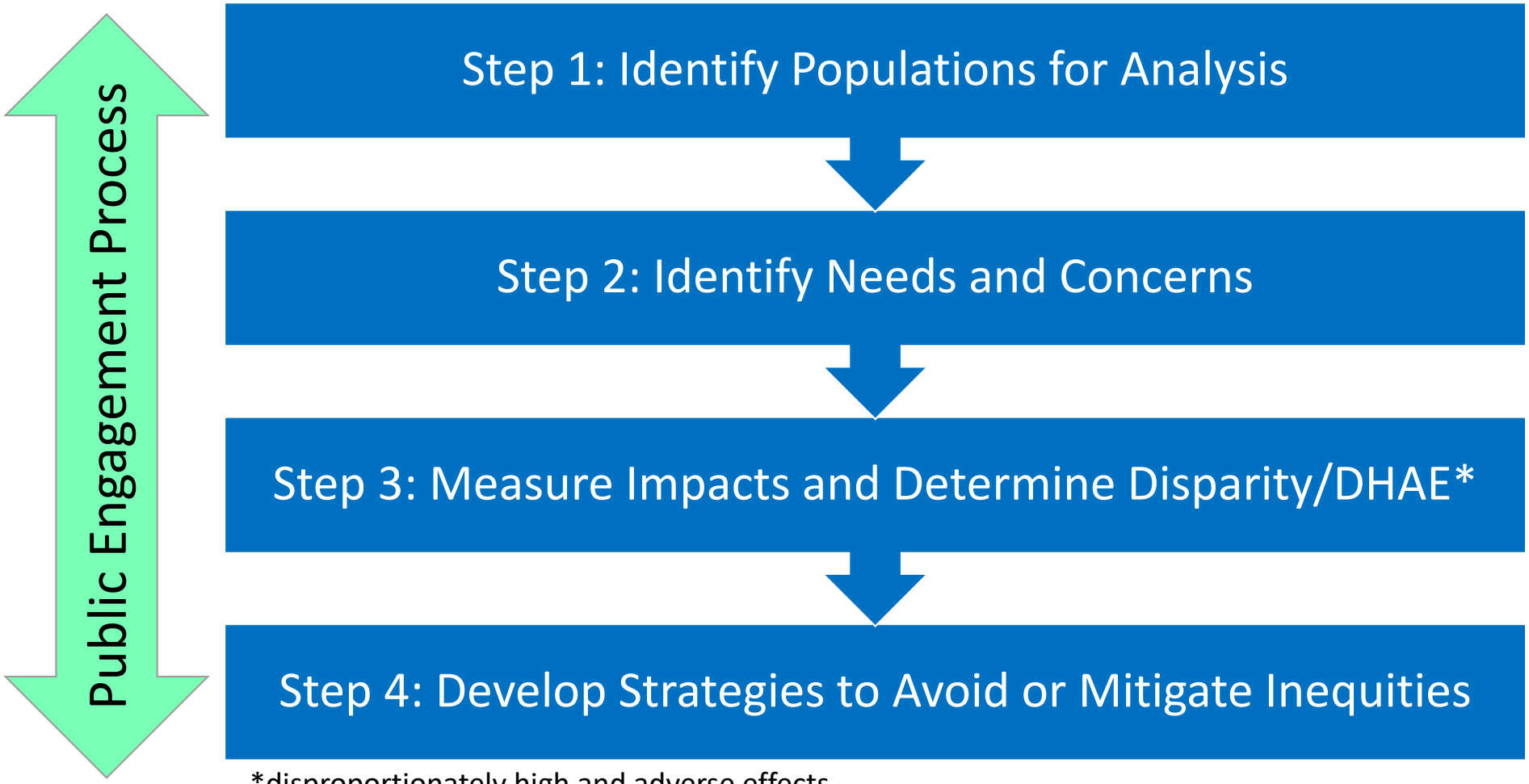
- Build a new freeway-to-freeway connection between NB US 101 and EB I-580 to improve connectivity and traffic flow for local and regional traffic
- Separate regional pass-through traffic from local traffic and reduce local traffic congestion
- Enhance bicycle and pedestrian network and local access within the project area
- Promote equity for all users, particularly members of the under-represented communities within the project area
- Project should not preclude construction of future WB 580 to SB 101 Connector

Targeted Project Schedule



* Pending Available Funding

Equity Analysis Approach



*disproportionately high and adverse effects

Public Engagement Approach

Connect

Meaningfully connect with and listen to community

Collaborate

Equip SWG and community to make meaningful contributions

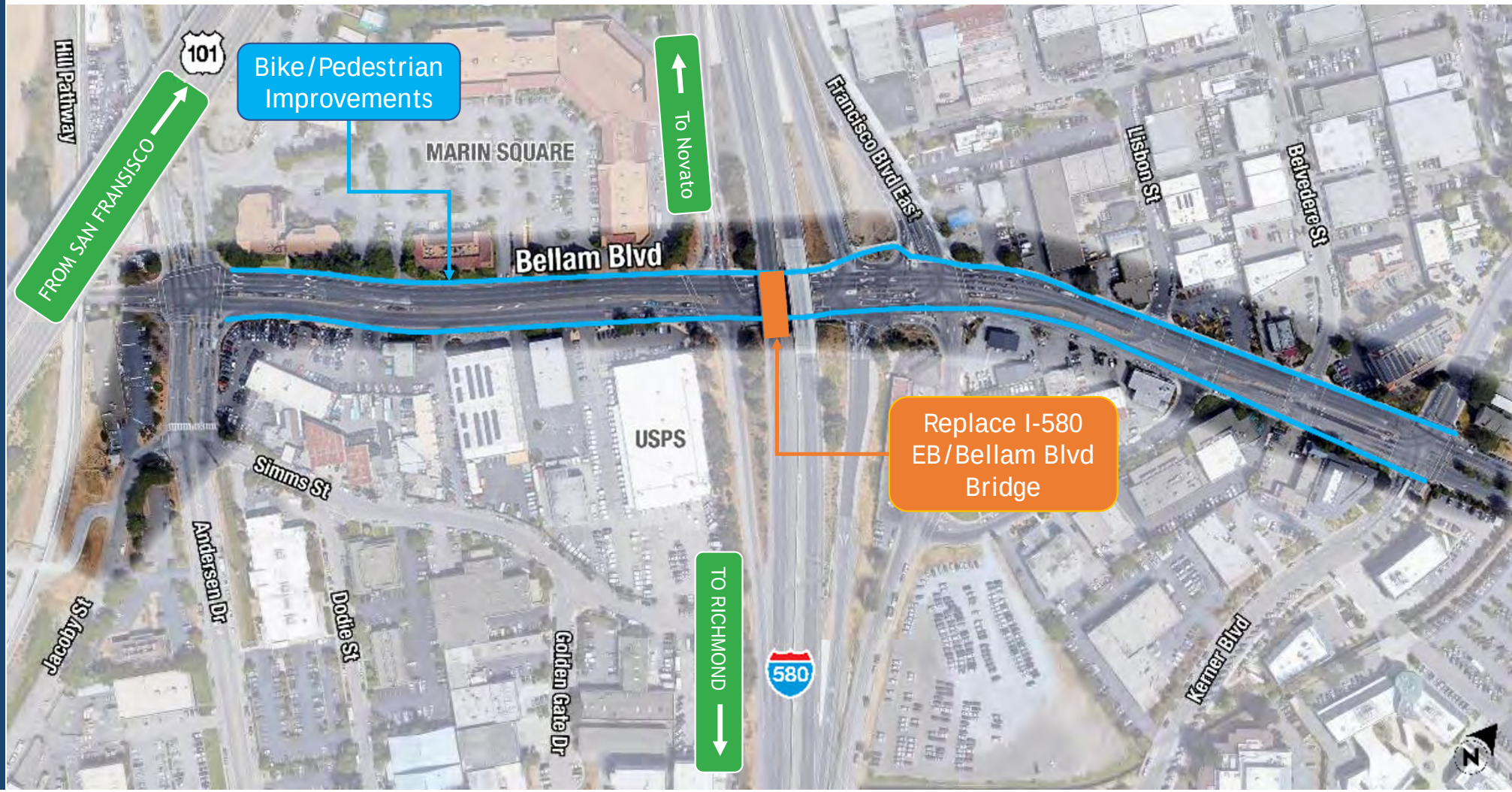
Sustain

Plan for equitable outcomes and build lasting relationships and partnerships/Tools to be effective

Steps 1 through 4

Existing Conditions

Potential Bellam Boulevard Improvements



Local Project Improvements in San Rafael

Bellam Corridor

- Remove regional traffic from the Bellam off-ramp intersection
- Replace I-580 EB Bridge and create additional space for bike/ped improvements ($11M)
- Implement safer and more accessible bike and pedestrian facilities along Bellam ($7M)*
- Complete the bike and pedestrian connection to Cal Park Path*
- Evaluate improvements along Andersen north of Bellam to provide better access to Davidson MS and downtown San Rafael*
- Incorporate placemaking, arts, and beautification elements throughout the corridor as feasible*
- Potentially replace I-580 WB SFD off-ramp exit bridge and make SFD/Andersen intersection safer for bike/ped access and improve intersection operation ($19M)

*Designs to be developed with the community

Alternatives Under Consideration

Existing and Future No Build Travel Times From Tamalpais Dr to RSR Bridge

(Subject to Change)

Through Bellam Blvd

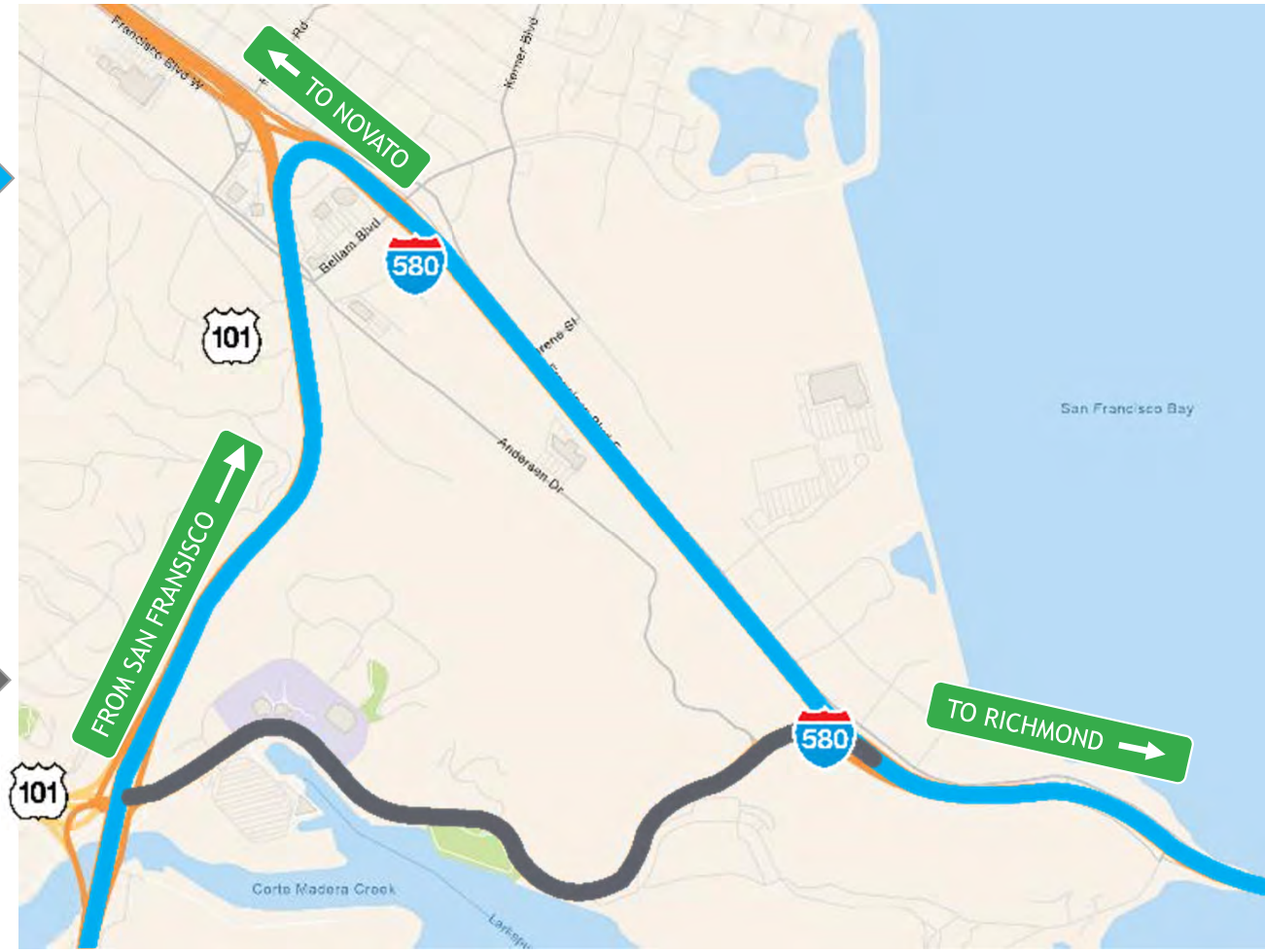
Existing: 7.6 to 16 min

2040 No-Build PM: 26.5 min

Through Sir Francis Drake

Existing: 7.0 to 14 min

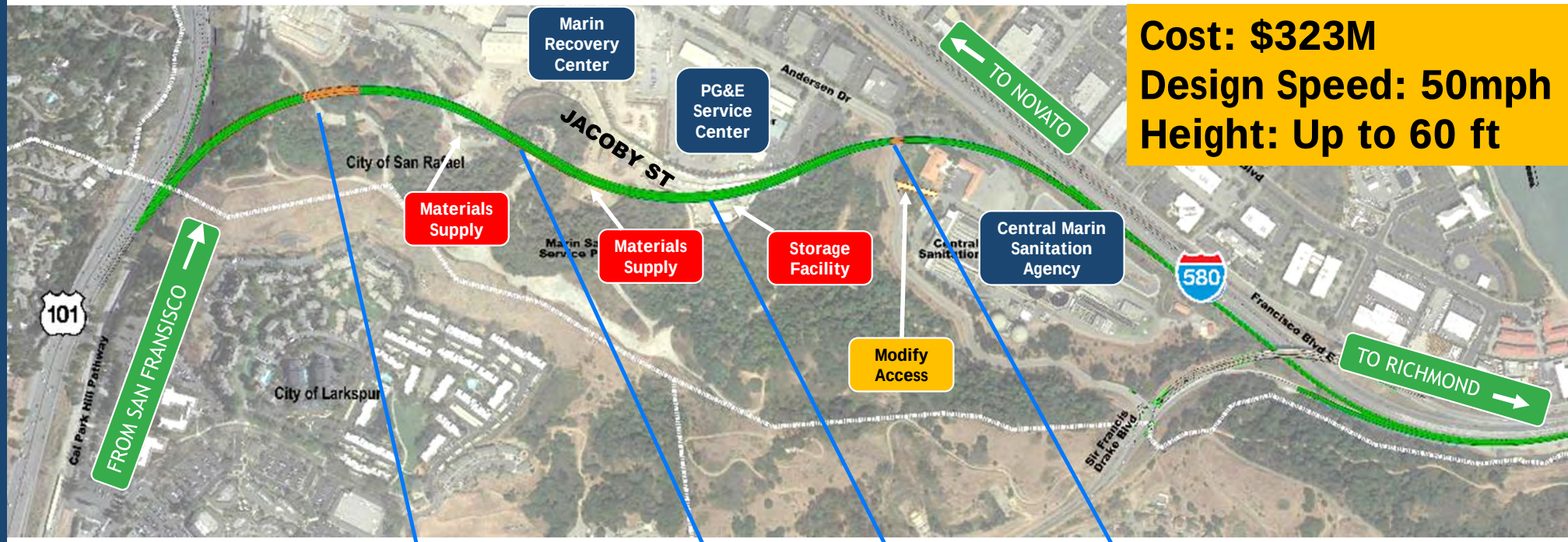
2040 No-Build PM: 27.5 min



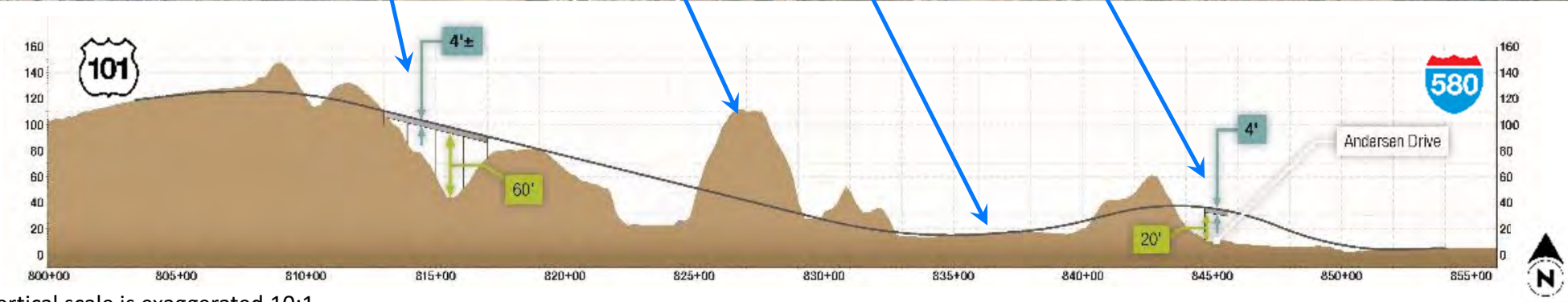
Alternatives Comparison - Travel Times

- **Alternatives 1A/1B**
  - 2040 Peak Hour Travel Time of 7.1 minutes
- **Alternatives 3A/3B/3B Mod**
  - 2040 Peak Hour Travel Time of 11.4 minutes
- **Alternatives 2/4/5/6**
  - 2040 Peak Hour Travel Time between 7.1 and 11.4 minutes
- 2040 No-Build PM: 27 min

Alternative 1A – Hillside A



Cost: $323M
Design Speed: 50mph
Height: Up to 60 ft



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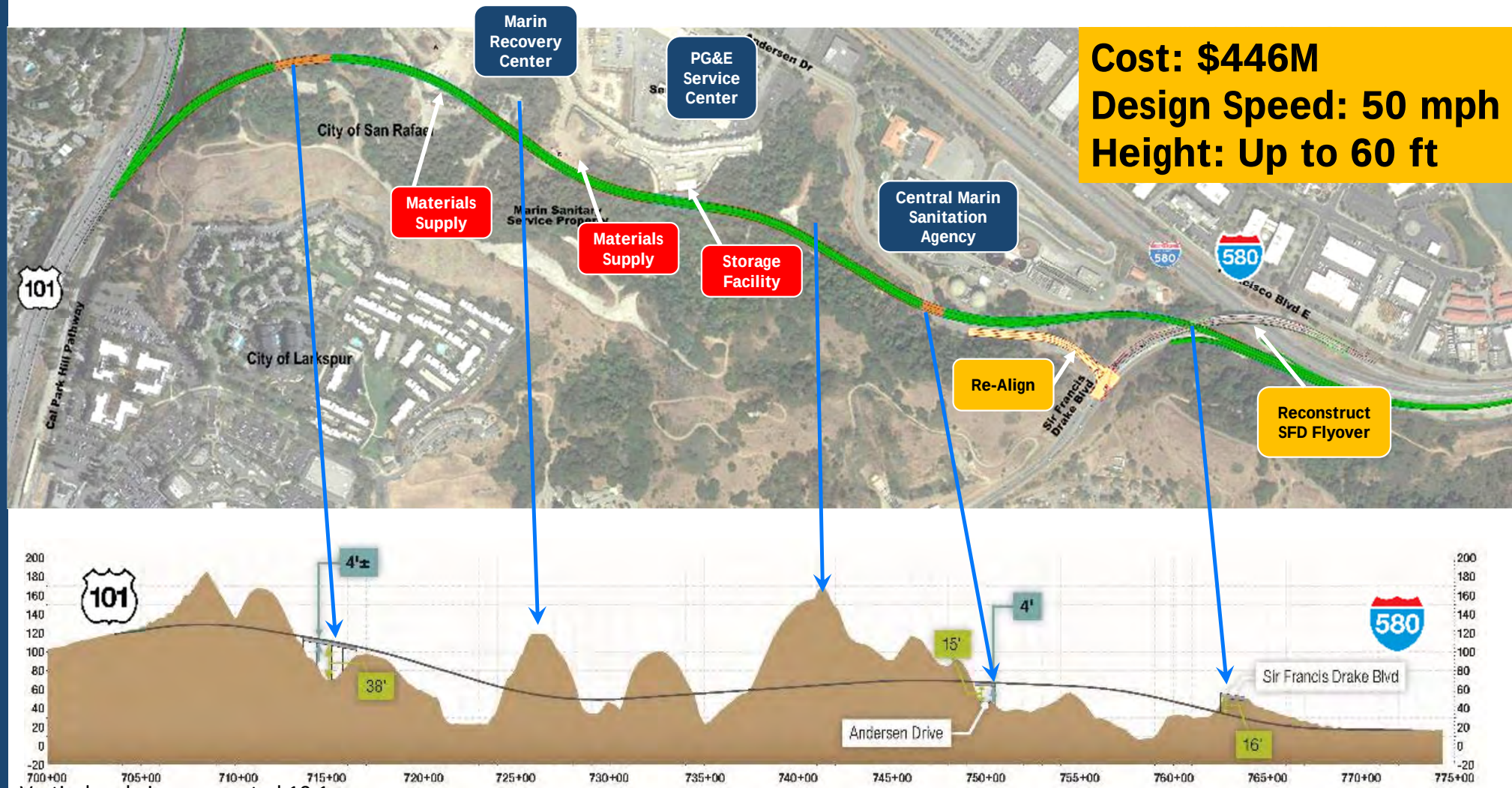
Alternative 1A: Bird's Eye View

Alternative 1A: Bird's Eye View

NB US 101 to EB I-580 Direct Connector Project

Alternative 1B



Cost: $446M
Design Speed: 50 mph
Height: Up to 60 ft

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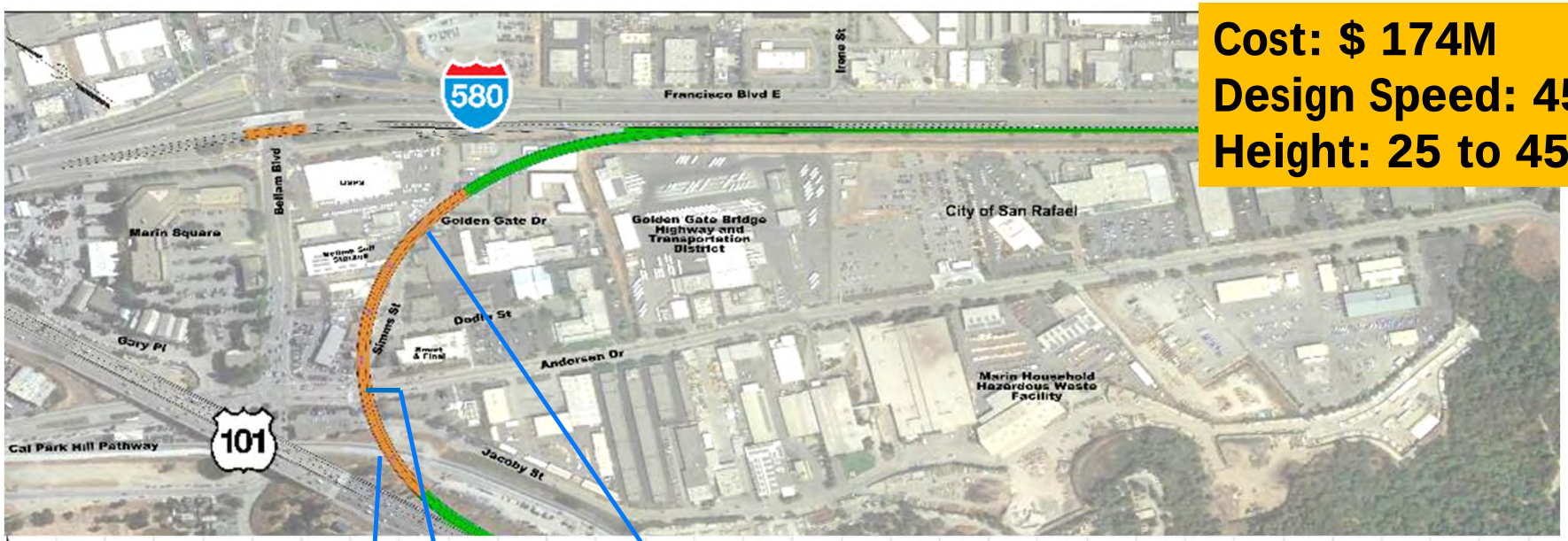
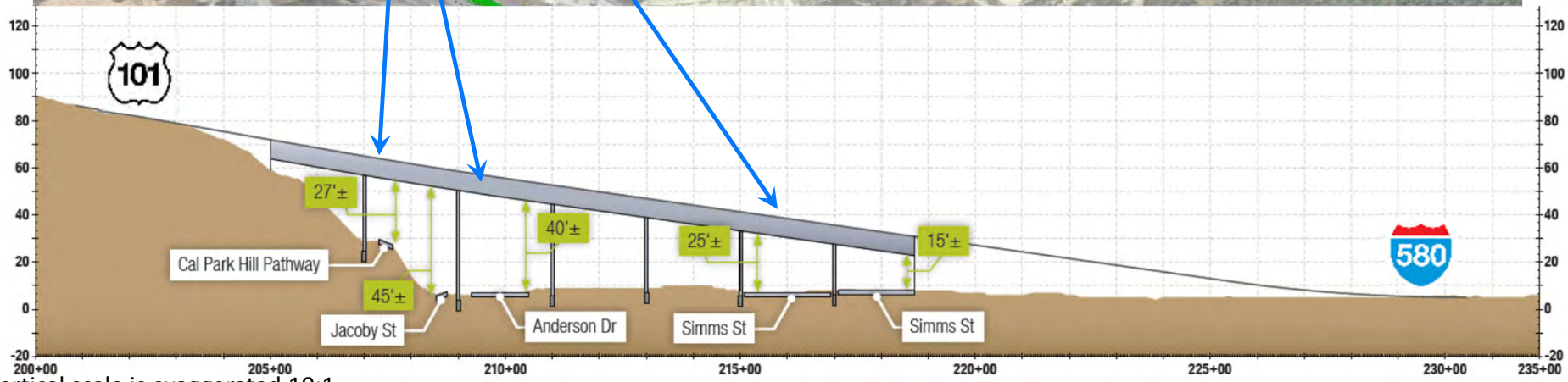
Alternative 1A/1B View at Exit from NB US 101

Alternative 1B Bird's Eye View

Alternative 2 – Simms St

Cost: $ 174M
Design Speed: 45 mph
Height: 25 to 45 Ft





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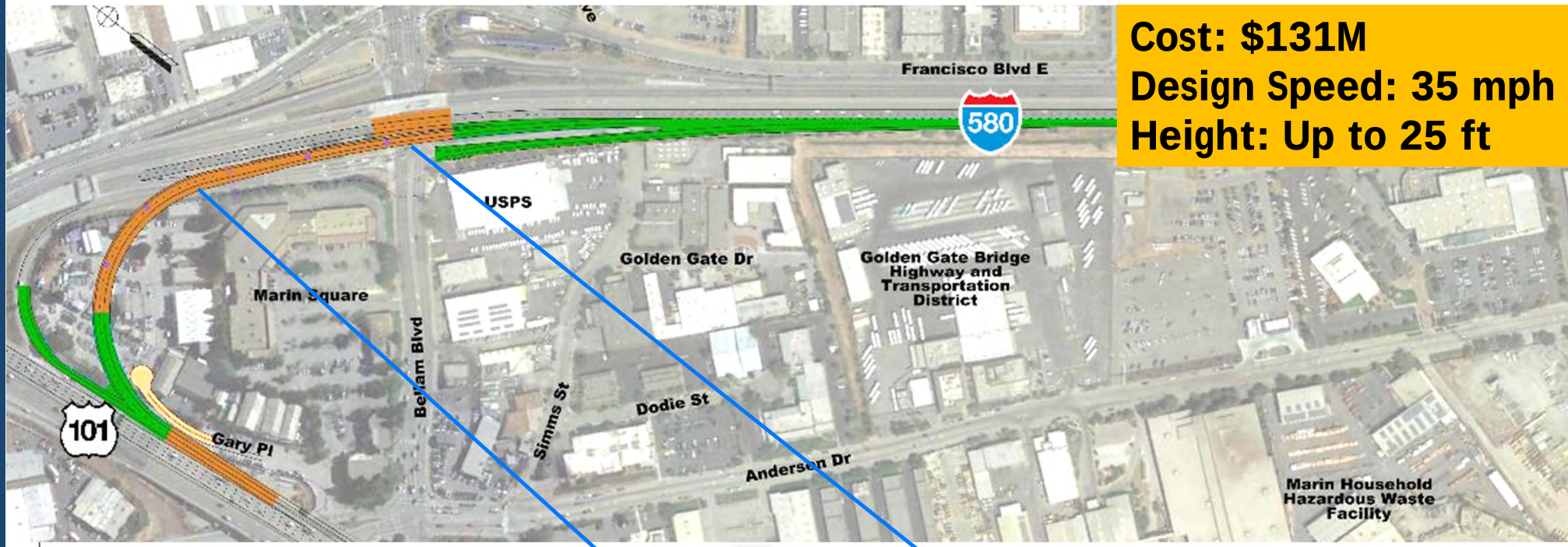
Alternative 2 View Cal Park Path

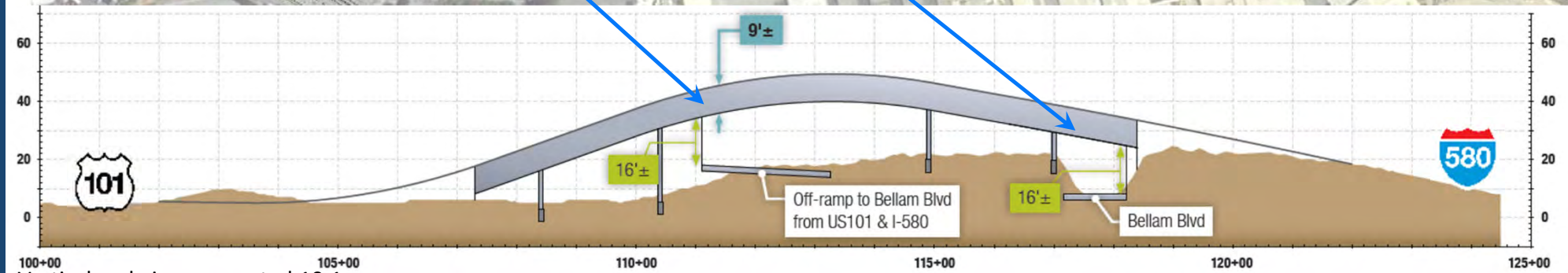
Alternative 2 View from Hill Side West/South of US 101

Alternative 2 View from Simms St (Looking West)

Alternative 3A – Low Speed A

Cost: $131M
Design Speed: 35 mph
Height: Up to 25 ft





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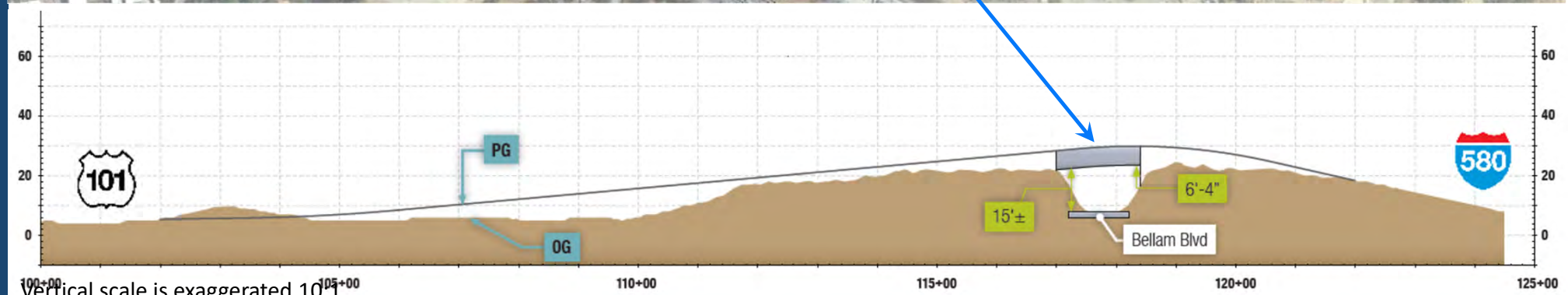
Alternative 3A Rendering

Alternative 3B – Low Speed B

Cost: $104M
Design Speed: 35 mph
Height: Up to 22 ft



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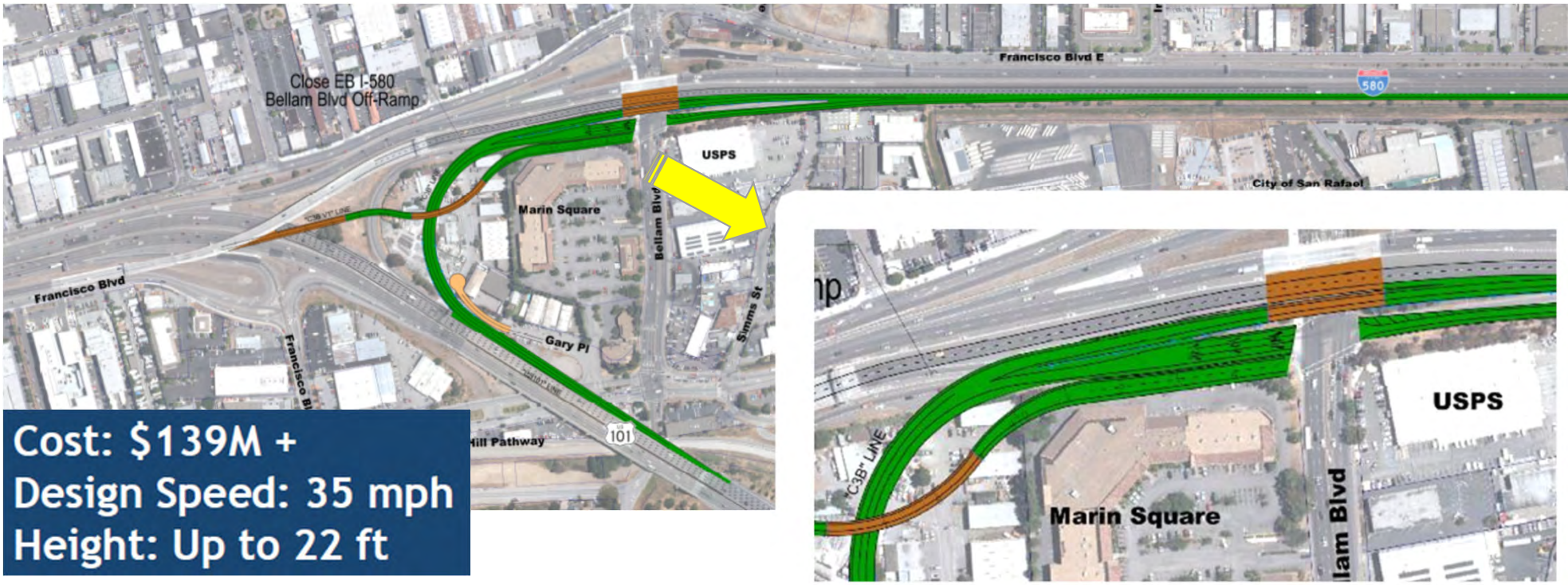
Alternative 3B Rendering

Modified Alternative 3B with New Bellam Exit



Cost: $139M +
Design Speed: 35 mph
Height: Up to 22 ft

Modified Alternative 3B - Visual Sim

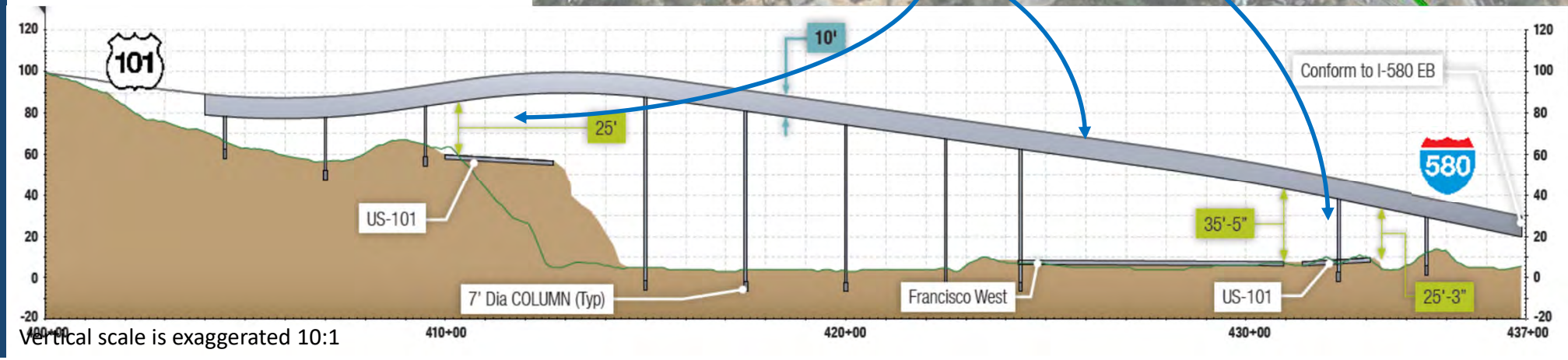
NB US 101 to EB I-580 Direct Connector Project

Alternative 4 - Swing Out

Close 580 off-ramp to Bellam

Cost: $214M
Design Speed: 35 mph
Height: 90 to 100 ft

Maintain NB US 101 off-ramp to Bellam



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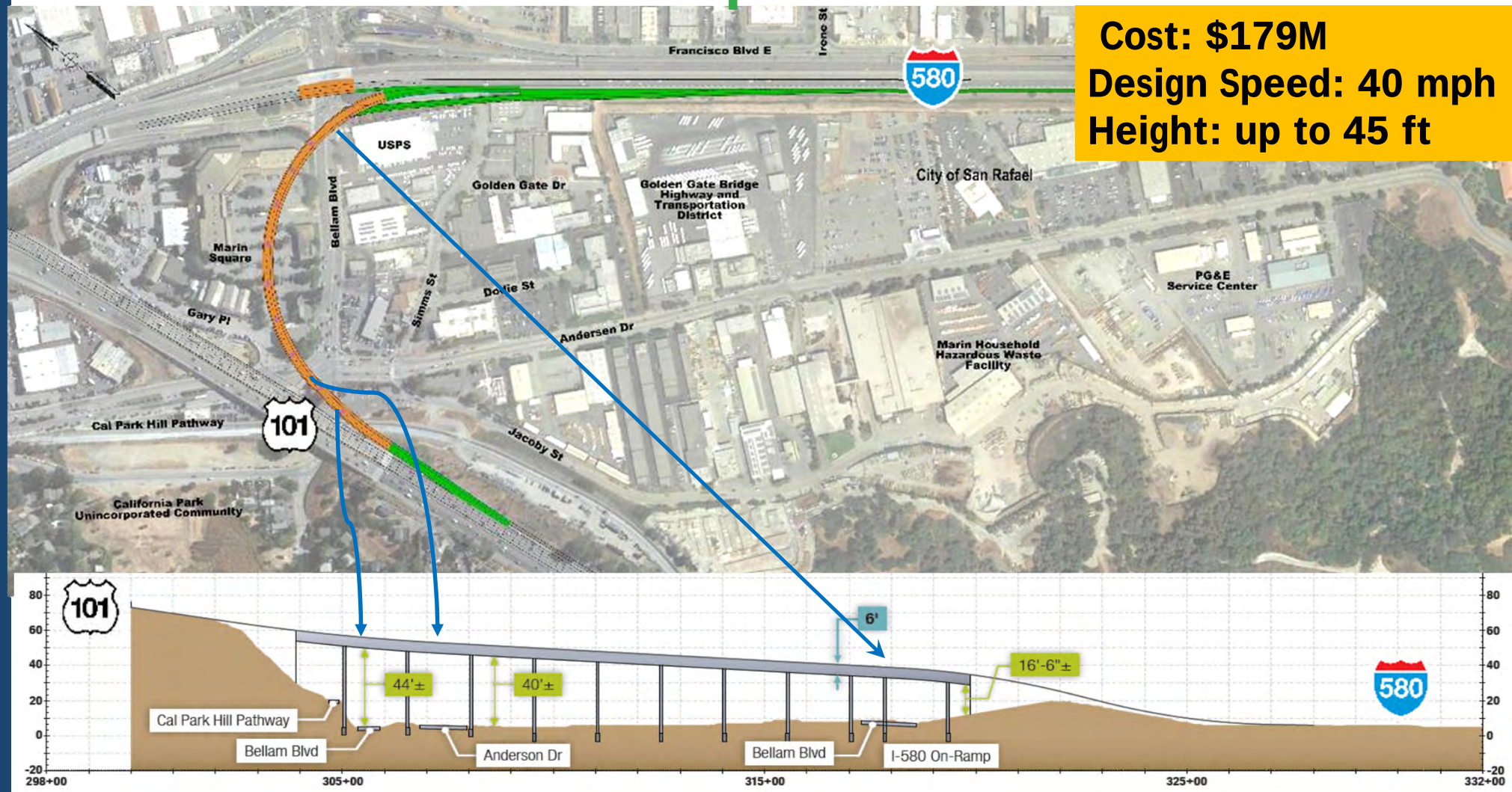
Alternative 5 – Medium Speed

Cost: $179M
Design Speed: 40 mph
Height: up to 45 ft



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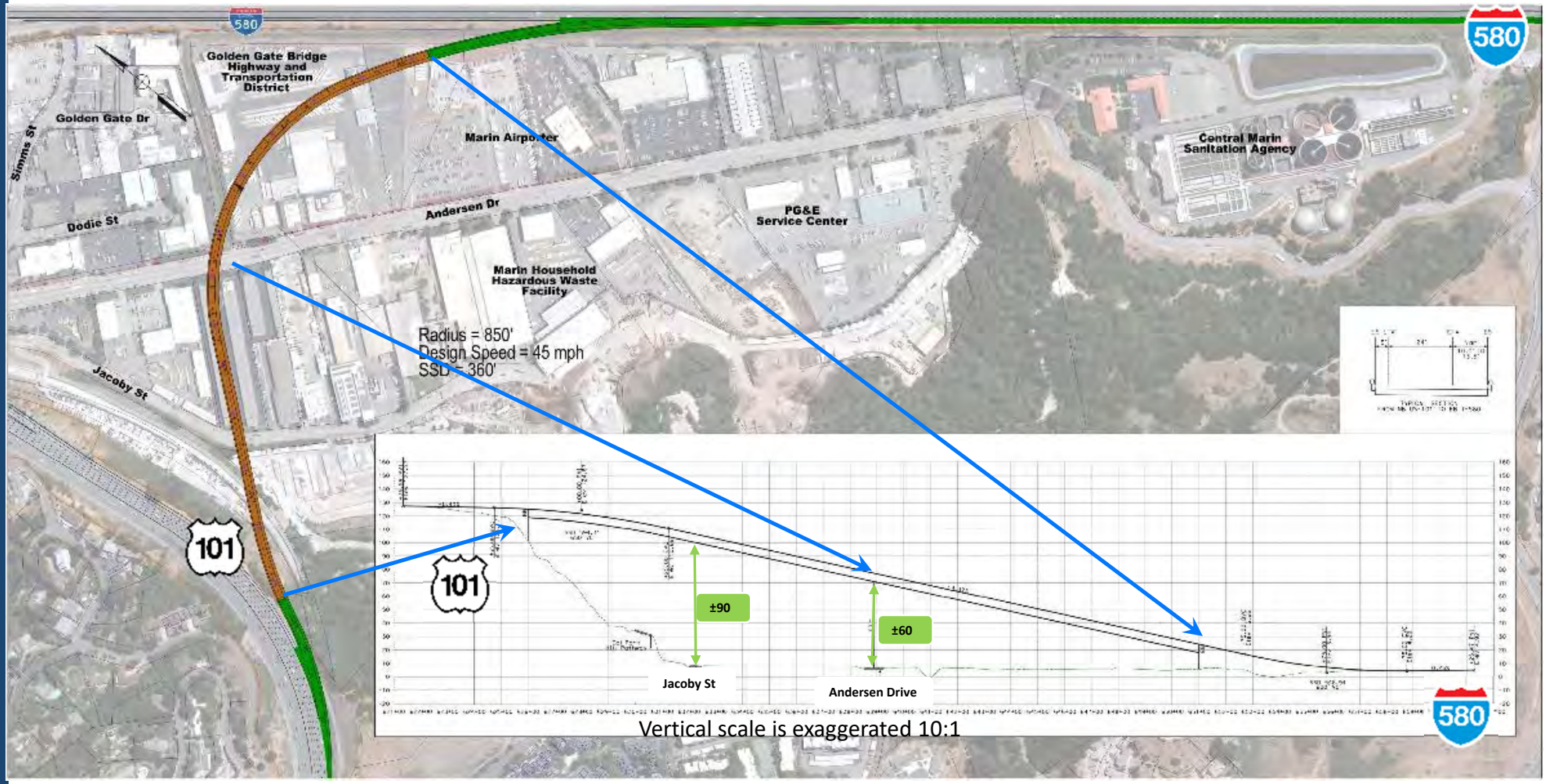
Alternative 5 (Medium Speed)

Alt 6 - Andersen Dr Mid-Way Concept



Alt 6 - Andersen Dr Mid-Way – Visual Sim

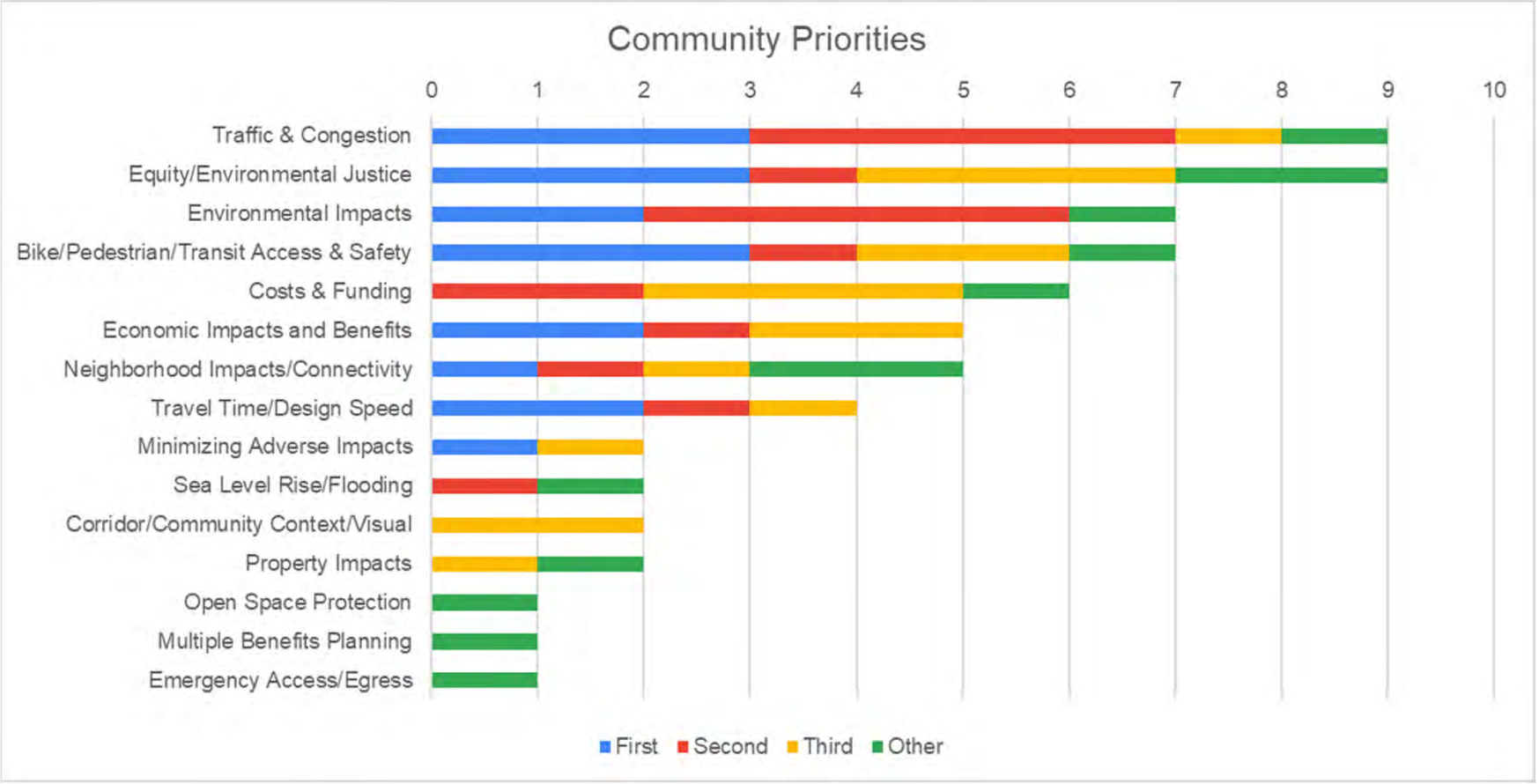
Alternatives Summary Table

Alternatives	Naming	Design Speed (mph)	Preliminary Cost	EB 580 Off-ramp to Bellam Closure?
1A	Hillside A	50	$292M	
1B	Hillside B	50	$379M	
2	Simms St	45	$168M	
3A	Low Speed A	35	$138M	
3B	Low Speed B	35	$114M	√
Modified 3B	Low Speed B Modified	35	$139 M +	
4	Swing Out	35	$225M	√
5	Medium Speed	40	$189M	
6	Andersen Mid-Way	45	$255M +	

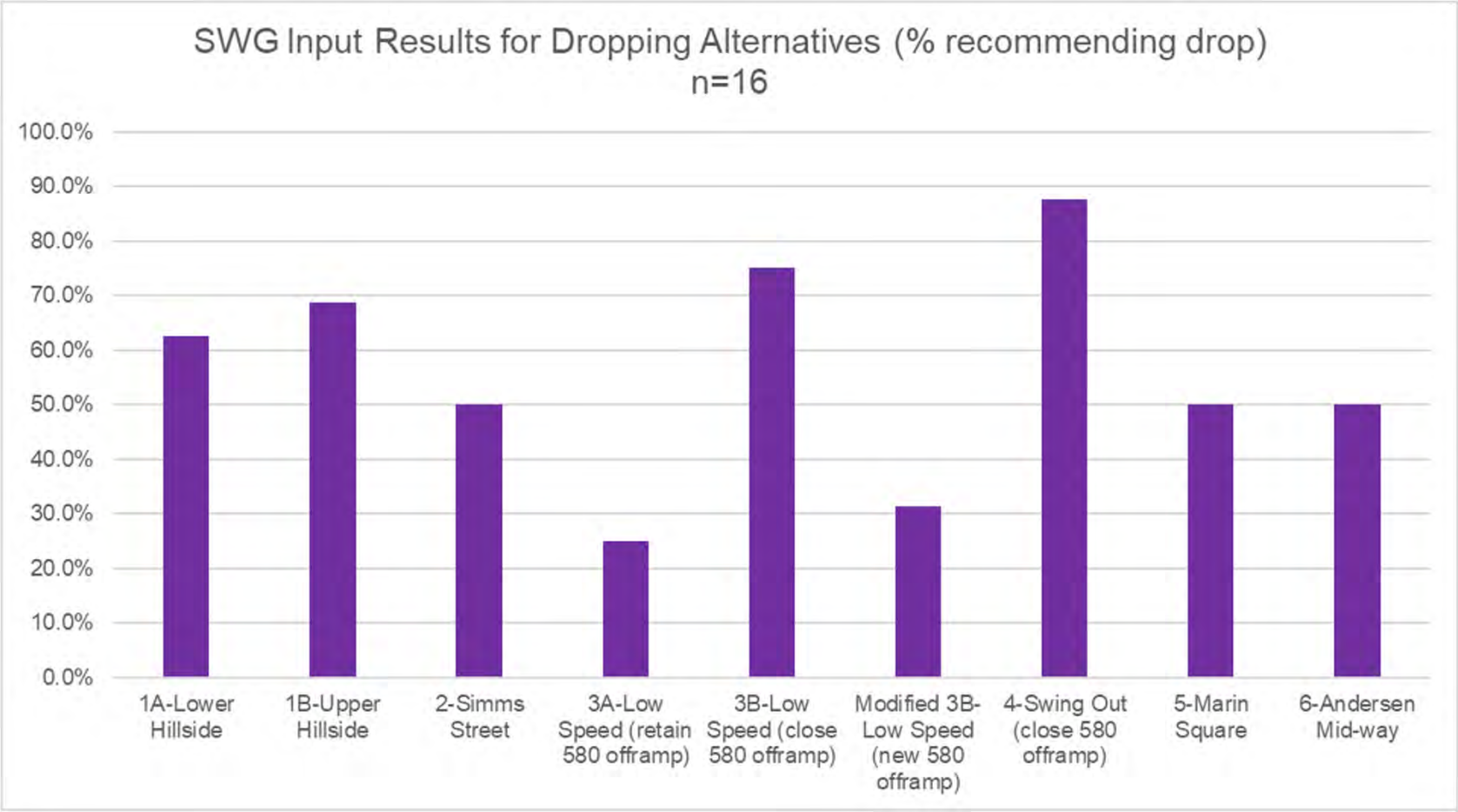
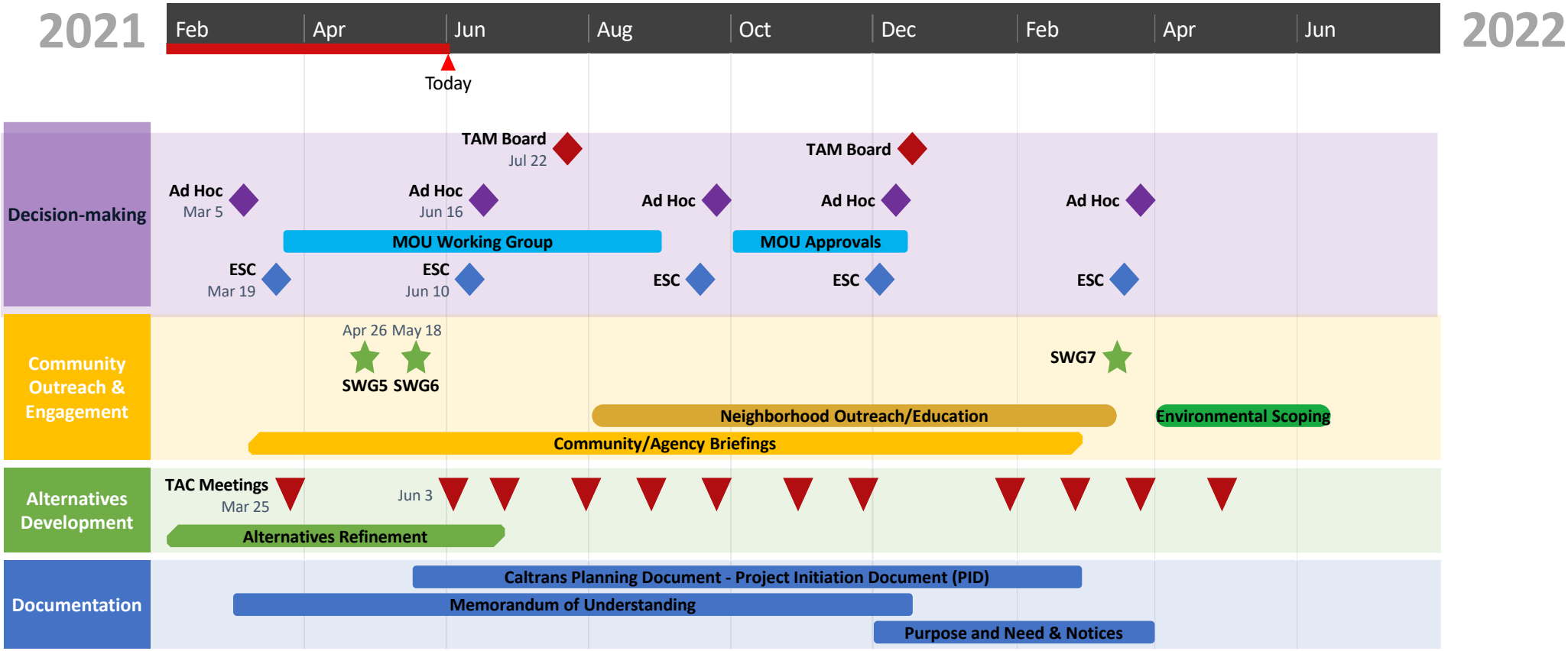
Summary of SWG Meeting #6

- Alternatives Discussion
  - SWG priorities for the project
  - SWG recommendations regarding alternatives to drop

Question 1 - What are your priorities for the project?



Question 2 - Which alternatives do you recommend dropping from further consideration?



TAM 101-580 Near-term Planning Roadmap