PG&E MORAGA OAKLAND X115 KV REBUILD PROJECT
September 9, 2025 DEIR Public Meeting Transcripts
(edited for clarity)

AFTERNOON SESSION

00:01:34.000 --> 00:01:44.000

Tharon Wright: Okay, hello everyone, welcome to the public meeting on the draft EIR for the proposed PG&E Moraga Oakland X115 kilovolt Rebuild Project, also referred to as the MOX project. I'm Tharon Wright, Public Utilities Regulatory Analyst for the California Public Utilities Commission. I am the project manager representing the CPUC for the Environmental Review of the proposed project under the California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA. I am glad you are all here today to learn about the project and the CPUC looks forward to hearing from you. Please note that this meeting is being recorded. The PowerPoint presentation is posted on the project website and the recording will be added when it is ready. The website link has been added to the chat box. With that, I will turn it over to Hedy Koczwara with the Aspen Environmental Group, who is assisting the CPUC with the CEQA environmental review.

00:02:37.000 --> 00:02:43.000

Hedy Koczwara: Thanks, Tharon. Good afternoon, and welcome. I'm going to start by going over the meeting guidelines. All attendees will be muted during the presentation. The chat box with the icon at the bottom of your screen will be monitored, but questions are not going to be answered live during the meeting. If you do have any questions, though, please reach out anytime to the CPUC via the email address shown here, which is MOX@aspeneg.com. It's also… Comments submitted in the chat box will be accepted as an official comments on the Draft EIR, but email is preferred. And finally, at the end of the presentation, we will be accepting these oral comments so when we ask if you would like to speak, please use the raise hand feature at the bottom of your screen, and we will call on everyone in turn.

And we will give more details at the end, when we get to that point. As for the agenda of the CPUC's presentation, I'm first going to introduce the key players in the project's environmental review process. Then I will briefly discuss the public involvement to date. The environmental review process under the California Environmental Quality Act or CEQA, provides a brief project overview, and then we will get into the impacts of the environmental impact report, or EIR, discuss the project alternatives and identify the CEQA environmentally superior alternative. After that, we'll open it up to public comment. Because today, it's important that we hear from you.

The CPUC regulates investor-owned utility companies, such as Pacific Gas and Electric Company. Therefore, PG&E submitted an application for a Permit to Construct the project to the CPUC. So PG&E is considered the project applicant. In response to PG&E's application, the CPUC is the lead agency under CEQA analyzing the project impacts and making a decision on the project.

Tharon Wright, who introduced herself at the beginning, is a CPUC project manager leading this process. Here to assist Tharon and the CPUC with the environmental review is Aspen Environmental Group and that's me. I'm Hedy Koczwara, Aspen's project manager, and Grace Weeks is Aspen's Deputy Project Manager, here assisting me this afternoon. I won't get into the details here, but this

slide summarizes public involvement to date including project scoping, which happened last February and March. Tribal consultation, and then several meetings have been held with public agencies listed here.

Now we'll get into the environmental review requirements. CEQA requires environmental review of projects that require discretionary review and approval by local and state agencies. The purpose of CEQA is to inform about potential environmental effects of proposed activities And then identify ways to reduce or prevent significant avoidable environmental damage. The analysis of physical impacts to the environment has been presented in the Draft EIR that was published in August and can be found on the CPUC's project website. Again, the link is in the chat.

I'll talk later about what some of those impacts are that have been identified and analyzed in the EIR. Specific EIR chapters will be referenced in this presentation, so afterwards you can review the information in greater detail. This slide shows the CEQA EIR process. Earlier this year, a 30-day scoping period was held to gather public input on the content and scope of the EIR. The input that we received during scoping was summarized in a scoping report that's included as Appendix C in the EIR, and also published on the project website separately.

Currently, we're at the kelly green area of the slide. That is, the CPUC published the draft EIR in August, and is now soliciting another round of public comments. At the completion of this 45-day draft EIR comment period, the CPUC will prepare formal responses to all public comments, and publish a final EIR, which will be considered by the CPUC's Administrative Law Judge and Commissioners in its decision process, which is shown at the blue… at the right-hand end of the slide.

Next, we will discuss PG&E's Moraga Oakland X Project itself. This map shows the project location. The project area, as you can see, extends approximately 5 miles from the existing Moraga Substation in the eastern end, along the purplish fuchsia and light green lines, to the Oakland X Substation at its western end, which is an existing substation along Park Boulevard. The project crosses through the City of Orinda near Moraga Substation, the East Bay Hills, unincorporated Contra Costa County, across the City of Oakland, and a corner of the City of Piedmont. The sets of existing lines and towers were built around 1908 and the 1931. Therefore, PG&E's stated purpose of the proposed project is to replace existing power line equipment that has reached the end of its useful life for safe operation. PG&E's main objectives are to update the lines to meet reliability requirements and avoid future reliability issues while maintaining safe operations. The project would also accommodate the region's reasonably foreseeable future energy demands using larger conductors on the replacement circuits.

This slide summarizes the proposed project itself. Much greater detail on the specifics are included in EIR Chapter 2 online. Right now, there are two existing parallel overhead transmission lines between Moraga and Oakland X substations, which are shown as the two parallel black lines in the diagram. Each tower along this route is double circuit, which means it contains two circuits, or lines. So there are four circuits total there now. The proposed project would rebuild all four of these circuits for the first 4 miles west from Moraga Substation, the lines would be rebuilt overhead in the same right-of-way until a transition location along Park Boulevard at Estates Drive in Oakland,

excuse me, in Piedmont. At this point, the four circuits would transition underground and would be installed underground for 1 mile in Park Boulevard and Park Boulevard Way to interconnect to Oakland X Substation. Underground construction is necessary in this one-mile segment west of Estates Drive, because of the density of residents and lack of adequate space in the overhead right-of-way. All of the existing overhead lines and towers west of the transition structures, they're marked with a dashed black lines, would be removed.

The project includes installation of telecommunication lines and some upgrades required within each substation. And finally, should the project be approved, PG&E anticipates that construction would begin in 2028.

As I stated before, CEQA focuses on physical impacts to the environment. This slide lists the many resource areas that are considered in CEQA process for the proposed project. For each of these resource areas in the EIR, it contains the following elements.

First, they will define and describe both the environmental and regulatory settings. They will establish a threshold of significance. And then each issue area will identify potentially significant impacts and recommend mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate these potential impacts.

In its Proponent Environmental Assessment, PG&E proposed Applicant Proposed Measures, or APMs, which are incorporated as part of the proposed project. The CPUC in the EIR has recommended additional mitigation if it's deemed necessary beyond these APMs to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. In addition to analyzing direct and indirect impacts,

the EIR also analyzes cumulative impacts, that is, impacts to the proposed project in combination with other past, present, or reasonable foreseeable future projects. And finally, each issue area will also analyze alternatives retained for analysis in the EIR and compare them against the proposed project and the no-project alternative, which I'll discuss later.

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For all issue areas except transportation and wildfire, the EIR concluded that all potential impacts would be less than significant, are less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures. However, for transportation and wildfire, the Draft EIR concludes that even with the implementation of all feasible mitigation measures. Potential impacts from construction of the projects would be significant and unavoidable due to blockage of roadways, trails, and evacuation routes. During construction, and the resulting noncompliance with local evacuation plans. While the project itself would have significant impacts, the EIR concluded that the project's contribution to cumulative impact would not be considerable, because the past, present, and reasonable foreseeable projects that were included in the cumulative scenario in EIR Chapter 5 are namely not in the vicinity of the roadways and trails that are proposed for temporary closure as part of the project. So I just described the project's less than significant and significant and unavoidable impacts that have been identified during construction. In addition, there are some beneficial impacts have

also been identified in the draft EIR. During operations, the project would result in a beneficial impact to wildfire risk namely because the existing aging infrastructure would be replaced with stronger, taller, and more fire-resistant structures and conductors. In addition, the one mile of the western segment of the line that would be relocated underground would also reduce wildfire, or eliminate wildfire risk. Also, the project area is susceptible to ground shaking and potential liquefaction during an earthquake so removal of those same overhead structures in the narrow existing right-of-way is also considered beneficial for geology and soils.

I discussed the potential impacts of the proposed project, but as part of CEQA, the EIR must also consider a reasonable range of alternatives. The primary purpose of which is to identify options that could avoid or substantially lessen at least one of the project's significant environmental impacts. In order to be fully analyzed in the EIR, alternatives must meet most project objectives. Avoid or reduce significant impacts of the project, and be feasible.

Examples of alternatives may include alternative routes, different structure, designs, or locations within the right-of-way, or other technologies, such as underground installation. During scoping, many comments were received requesting consideration of all underground alternatives so this slideshow here… slide here depicts the many underground root segments that were considered during the alternative screening process but did not meet the criteria, so they're eliminated from consideration.

Chapter 4 of the Draft EIR explains the rationale for elimination for each of these alternatives. EIR Chapter 4 also describes the alternatives that were carried forward for evaluation, which meet the criteria I just discussed. The No Project Alternative, the first bullet, is required by CEQA to be evaluated and describes a reasonable scenario of what would occur should the MOX Project not be approved. The other four alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIR are underground route alternatives that would be west of Manzanita Drive.

Alternative 2, the Skyline-Colton-Snake Underground Alternative. Alternative 3, the Shepherd Canyon Underground Alternative. Alternative 4, the Skyline-Ascot Underground Alternative. Alternative 5, the Estates Drive Underground Alternative.

The EIR team considered 3 underground options east of Manzanita Drive in the EIR Chapter 4, but unfortunately, all three alternatives were eliminated due to longer routes, technical feasibility concerns and much greater environmental impact. Additional details on each of those alternatives, as I said, is an EIR Chapter 4.

Next, I'm going to talk about, uh, design and environmental considerations that generally relate to all of the underground alternatives and then at the end of that, there'll be a map that illustrates the four routes that I just discussed. Um, that were fully evaluated in the EIR.

As explained, the project includes a rebuild of four circuits. Therefore, all four of those circuits would need to be installed underground in two sets of double-circuit duck banks. This is not feasible within a single roadway between Manzanita Drive and State Route 13 due to the steep, narrow, and sharply winding roads in the Oakland Hills. PG&E has stated that at least 22 feet is needed to fit both double-circuit duct bank, banks within a roadway, and many of the roadways in the area have

existing utilities already installed, which would create additional constraints. Therefore, to address technical feasibility concerns, the EIR alternatives analysis assumes that each of the underground alternatives in the area would support two circuits in a single duck bank. So, two underground alternatives would be required to be constructed in this segment to replace all four overhead circuits. That is, two of those three alternatives, Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 on the previous slide, would need to be constructed. One benefit, though, of this arrangement is that in the event of an outage within one of the roadways, the other two circuits would not be affected. In addition to the circuits themselves, to connect with relaying equipment that protects the circuits in the event of an electrical fault.

Each underground segment would require both a transition pole and a transition station, one on each end. The slide shown here are example photographs that can also be found in EIR Appendix A of a transition station and a transition pole. Transition polls are actually proposed by PG&E outside of Oakland X Substation and at Estates Drive for the proposed project but the transition station, which contains the relaying equipment, requires more space than a transition pole.

A transition station, such as shown on the left. Um, kind of looks like a small substation and requires a graded flat area with gravel and a perimeter fence. For two circuits, it accompanies approximately a quarter of an acre, and about a half an acre for four circuits.

The Moraga and Oakland X substation also have this relaying equipment, so a transition station is not required for the proposed project or for underground Alternative 5, which is east of State Route 13, and would connect into the Oakland X Substation.

Finally, the other item to explain for all underground alternatives is that even with implementation of the underground alternatives considered in the EIR, overhead components would still remain in addition to the transition station and the transition… transition poles. That is, overhead structures would remain east of Manzanita Drive, where, as I said earlier, no feasible underground alternatives were identified.

Also, the major Hayward Fault closely follows State Route 13 in the project area. An underground crossing of State Route 13 was considered and eliminated in EIR Section 4.4 due to topography and density of development in the area. So therefore, to cross State Route 13, um, overhead components, uh, would require the underground lines east of the highway to transition to overhead, cross the roadway, and then transition back to underground on the western side. These alternatives are shown on the next slide. This map shows the different alternatives and routes and configurations that have been analyzed in the Draft EIR.

I know it's a lot to digest, so I suggest looking at EIR Chapter 4 and the associated figures in EIR Appendix A. The takeaways are what I just discussed. Two of the three underground alternatives… developed between Manzanita Drive and State Route 13. These routes are shown in neon green for Alternative 2 in Skyline, Colton, and Snake; Fuchsia for Alternative 3 in Shepherd Canyon; and orange for Alternative 4 in Skyline Boulevard and Ascot Drive. Each of these alternatives would need a double-circuit transition pole or transition station on one or the other at each end, as indicated by the text boxes.

The overhead segments and crossing of the Hayward Fault and State Route 13 are shown as dashed and in yellow of the underground to overhead transition locations depending on which alternative routes are utilized, and whether the alternatives would connect back to the proposed project, or to Alternative 5, which is shown in blue, east of State Route 13.

Alternative 5 would transition underground at two double-circuit transition poles at Sims and Somerset Drives. The routes would merge and become four circuits together in Estates Drive where there's adequate width and they would eventually rejoin the proposed project underground route continuing in Park Boulevard.

Now that I've explained the alternatives themselves, EIR Chapter 4 also analyzes their potential environmental impacts. Much greater detail is provided in EIR Section 4.5. The Draft EIR found that all of the significant and unavoidable impacts that were identified for the proposed projects, which I discussed are for transportation and wildfire, would be more severe for underground alternatives, because construction would last much longer. Underground construction and roadways would obstruct traffic more severely due to trenching and vault installation. Underground construction would occur in many more locations than just at the individual overhead structure sites and all of these factors would result in overall greater evacuation risk in the event of a wildfire and more intense construction activity and disturbance to residents. In addition, there would be new, significant, and unavoidable visual impacts during operations from the Manzanita Transition Station that would be required at the eastern end of Alternative 4. That's the Skyline Ascot Alternative. And also a new significant and unavoidable impact was identified for geology and soils during operation of all of the underground alternatives due to slope stability impacts and the well-known instability of the Oakland Hills.

Additionally, total air emissions of construction of multiple underground segments concurrently would have the potential to exceed the regional emissions thresholds for nitrogen oxides, or NOx. So an air quality mitigation measure that is not recommended for the proposed project would be required to stagger construction over a longer period of time to ensure that the emissions of NOx do not exceed the Bay Area thresholds. Despite the more intense construction activities and potential for blockage of evacuation routes that I just described, underground lines were evaluated in the Draft EIR, because there are several beneficial reasons, namely, underground lines reduce the risk of lines being an ignition source for wildfire. They create fewer constraints to firefighting. Underground lines are not exposed to potential vehicle or tree fall accidents, vandalism, or failures due to weather conditions such as high winds that could result in a wildfire ignition.

And finally, visual impacts of overhead components are completely eliminated, where the lines are placed underground. This slide summarizes the potential significant impacts that I mentioned earlier, and as I have been saying, much greater detail is provided in EIR Sections 4.5 through 4.8.

While the proposed project would reduce wildfire risk substantially, the overhead structures would still have some risk of starting wildfire or inhibiting firefighting. On the other hand, underground in four circuits and two separate roadways would create severe traffic and access constraints during construction for a much longer duration. And will result in driving detours, bus stop relocations, and alternate routes, um, evacuation routes and emergency would also be

impaired. And service outages may be required to resolve conflicts with existing utilities and roadways. Also, as discussed, there will be new significant impact due to the uncertain slope stability and landslide risk. and a new significant visual impact for Manzanita Transition Station.

The final step in the alternatives analysis is to identify the environmentally superior alternative, which is an EIR requirement under CEQA. Therefore, the EIR team considered the project, and each alternative's ability to meet each of the stated project objectives, and compare the potentially significant impacts. The proposed project, against the significant impacts of the underground alternatives and finally, the EIR compared the environmentally superior alternative impacts to the No Project Alternative.

As discussed earlier, both the proposed project and underground alternatives would have significant and unavoidable impacts to transportation and wildfire during construction. So the underground alternatives do not reduce or eliminate any of the significant impacts of the proposed project. Rather, construction of the underground alternatives in the narrow, winding roadways would occur for a longer duration and would result in much more disruptive and severe impacts than the proposed project. While the proposed project would keep overhead structures, which do create a level of a wildfire risk, the improvement in risk levels from the current system to the rebuild system as proposed would be a substantial benefit. Therefore, the Draft EIR concluded that the project, as proposed by PG&E, would be in the environmentally superior alternative. Figure 8 from the… yeah, figure, excuse me, 4.8-1 from the EIR is shown here.

Note that although the EIR identifies an environmentally superior alternative under CEQA, it is possible that the CPUC decision makers could balance the importance of each impact area differently and reach a different conclusion. The CPUC decision makers must consider feasibility factors other than environmental impacts, such as the cost for each alternatives in reaching a final decision on the project.

And now, we will turn it over to the public comment aspect of this meeting, and so to start. The next slide will show how you can submit a comment after this meeting. Make sure to include your name, address, and phone number, so we can follow up if we have questions. And we will also add you to our mailing list. The deadline to submit official public comments is 5 p.m. on September 26, 2025.

And again, the CPUC's project website with up-to-date information and documents is listed below and this presentation is also posted there. So now, on to the oral

public comments. This slide lists our guidelines. So when your name will be called by Grace, you'll be asked to unmute your microphone. Please wait a few seconds and then state your name and affiliation, if you have one. In general, please try to stay concise, on topic, and most importantly, respect others' opinions. Given the number of people here right now, each person will have 2 minutes to speak. There will be a countdown timer indicating when your time's up.

If there's enough time at the end, we'll give everyone a chance to speak a second time, and then the CPUC is also holding a similar meeting tonight at 5 p.m. And again, this meeting is being

recorded to ensure that we capture your oral comments in full, and written comments are encouraged. Okay, the next slide.

This shows you how to request to speak and displays the countdown timer. If you want to click on raise hand, which should be at the bottom of your screen, this will put you in the queue. If you're on the phone, you can raise your hand by pushing star 9. Once Grace calls on you, then you can unmute yourself with the button on Zoom, or by pushing star 6 on your phone. She will also send you a prompt via Zoom. And so now, let's begin. Grace, you can take it away.

00:26:51.000 --> 00:27:02.000

Grace Weeks: Hello, everyone. Um, thank you for sticking around to comment. Um, I just want to remind everyone to please be respectful of your peers by sticking to the 2 minutes. I don't want to have to cut anyone off. Um, and we want to hear from everyone, so if there's extra time, uh, you can raise your hand to speak again. All right, so I see that there's one hand raised so far, so I'm going to allow you to unmute yourself and go ahead when you're ready.

00:27:21.000 --> 00:27:24.000

Jonathan Goodwin: Well, I'm assuming that's me, is that correct? Good, thank you. My name is Jonathan Goodwin.

00:27:24.000 --> 00:27:28.000

Grace Weeks: Yes, that is you.

00:27:28.000 --> 00:27:38.000

Jonathan Goodwin: Uh, sorry I couldn't figure out how to put my real name on the, uh… you know, to come up on this thing. I live in Canyon, California, uh, through which this Project passes. I actually have… two questions. One is tangential about the lines that blew up during the Tunnel Fire.

In '91, between the Temescal substation and the Moraga substations, just as to what stage they're at Um, but more, uh… pertaining to this project. I really liked the EIR, but… There's just one glaring, like crazy omission, which is the… Uh, looking at the alternative of using the Redwood Peak Tunnel to run the lines underneath. That whole tunnel. It runs from Pinehurst Road to Shepherd Canyon Road. It would be vast… should be, I would suppose, vastly cheaper, vastly safer. Uh, you know, you'd eliminate all the wildfire risk in that very, very sensitive area. uh, by running it under, you know, through an existing bore. Uh, and it would, um, it would also… the maintenance would be far easier. You know, the construct… everything would just be a big plus. So, I mean, either you didn't know about it or, you know, you withheld, um… uh, written consideration of it, I'm guessing it's the former. So, I would suggest… I sent in an email yesterday. Uh, which you may not have gotten to. But, um, giving information about this, I strongly suggest that you, um, look into this, and uh… consider this as an alternative. You know, give this… give this serious consideration, because it's… It should be a complete game changer for your project if you'd pay attention to it. Thank you.

00:29:24.000 --> 00:29:30.000

Grace Weeks: Thank you for your comment. All right, we'll move on to the next commenter, uh, Andrew, I'm going to allow you to unmute yourself. And whenever you're ready.

00:29:40.000 --> 00:29:49.000

Andrew Jeffers: Yes, uh, my name is Andrew Jeffers. I own property near Shepherd Canyon between Cerrone Court and, uh, say or drive, and the two towers. Are in my parking area on some easement. Uh, towers EN15 and EN17. And as I carefully read the… impact report, I realized the proposal is to move those towers uh, essentially west. And unfortunately, on those diagrams, they don't show the actual location of one's home uh, moving… moving the towers substantially west places them directly, uh, 15 feet from the front of our deck, and uh… in our garden, and I'm wondering what kind of alternatives could be… could be placed in this situation. It looks like one could move them almost any other direction. And it would be far superior.

Also, I have a question about the wildfire risk. Certainly in Northern California, there's a very expensive project to underground, many of these lines. In areas that seem substantially less risky than this area now. So the undergrounding, to me, seems vastly superior. It's commensurate with what's being done already. And I'm disappointed that that isn't really an active. Real active consideration.

Secondly, I think that. Overall… Uh, the wildfire should be… should be addressed.

And third last point is, would it be possible to put these less essentially the circular tubular poles. In place of these extremely large structures. Thank you very much.

00:31:44.000 --> 00:31:59.000

Grace Weeks: Thank you, Andrew. I don't have any more hands raised at this time, but we'll give it a few more minutes. Okay, it looks like we have no further comments, so at this point, we're going to wrap everything up. Um, again, here is the information for how and when to provide comments on the draft EIR, as well as our project website link which is also in the meeting chat. Um, we will be accepting comments through September 26th. Um, thank you for joining, have a wonderful rest of your day!

EVENING SESSION

00:00:03.960 --> 00:00:08.780

Tharon Wright: Hello, everyone. We'll just give it about a minute here, and we'll go ahead and get started. Great. Hi, everyone. Welcome to the public meeting on the draft EIR for the proposed PG&E Moraga Oakland X115KV Rebuild Project, also referred to as the MOX project.

I'm Tharon Wright, and I'm a Public Utilities Regulatory Analyst for the California Public Utilities Commission. I am the project manager representing the CPUC for the environmental review of the proposed MOX project under the California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA.

I am glad you are here today to learn about the project, and the CPUC looks forward to hearing from you. Please note that this meeting is being recorded. This PowerPoint presentation is posted on the project website, and the recording will be added when it is ready.

The website link has been added to the chat box. With that, I will turn it over to Hedy Koczwara with the Aspen Environmental Group, who is assisting the CPUC with the CEQA environmental review process.

00:01:43.510 --> 00:01:46.050

Hedy Koczwara: Thanks, Tharon. Good evening and welcome. I'm going to start by going over the meeting guidelines. All attendees will be muted during the presentation. The chat box with the icon at the bottom of your screen will be monitored, but questions are not going to be answered live during the meeting. If you do have questions, however, you can reach out anytime to the CPUC via the email address shown here, which is mocks at aspeneg.com. It was also put in the chat. Comments submitted in the chat box will be accepted as an official comment on the draft DIR, but email is preferred.

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I won't get into the details here, but this slide summarizes public involvement to date, including project scoping, which was last February and March, tribal consultation, and several meetings have been held with the public agencies listed here. Now we will get into the environmental review requirements.

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Chapter 3 of the draft DIR describes the baseline setting and methodology and potential impacts for each environmental issue area. To reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels, the EIR recommends implementation of mitigation measures for the 12 issue areas that are listed in the first bullet. For all issue areas, except for transportation and wildfire,

the EIR has concluded that all potential impacts would be either less than significant or less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures. However, for transportation and wildfire, the Draft EIR concludes that even with implementation of all feasible mitigation measures, potential impacts from construction of the project would be significant and unavoidable due to blockage of roadways, trails, and evacuation routes during construction, and resulting noncompliance with local evacuation plans.

While the project itself would have significant impacts, the EIR concluded that the project's contribution to cumulative impacts would not be considerable. This is because the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects included in the cumulative scenario in EIR Chapter 5 are namely not in the vicinity of the roadways and trails that are proposed for temporary closure.

I just described the project's less than significant and significant and unavoidable impacts that have been identified during construction, but in addition, some beneficial impacts have also been identified in the Draft EIR.

During operations, the project would result in a beneficial impact related to wildfire risk, namely, because the existing aging infrastructure would be replaced with stronger, taller, more fire-resistant structures and conductors. In addition, one mile of the western segment of the line would be relocated underground, eliminating the wildfire risk in this area. Also, the project area is susceptible to ground shaking and potentially liquefaction during an earthquake, so the removal of one mile of overhead structures in this narrow existing right-of-way in the western segment is also considered beneficial for geology and soils.

I discussed the potential impacts of the proposed project, and as part of CEQA, the EIR must also consider a reasonable range of alternatives. The primary purpose of which is to identify options that could avoid or substantially reduce at least one of the project's significant environmental effects. In order to be fully analyzed in the EIR, alternatives considered must meet most project

objectives, avoid or reduce significant impacts of the project, and be feasible. Examples of alternatives may include routes, different structure designs or locations within the right-of-way or other technologies, such as underground installation. During scoping, many comments were received requesting consideration of all underground alternatives. So the slide shown here depicts the many underground route segments that were considered during the alternative screening process, but did not meet these criteria, so were eliminated from consideration.

Chapter 4 of the Draft EIR explains the rationale for elimination for each of these alternatives. Chapter 4 also describes alternatives carried forward for evaluation, which meet the criteria that I just discussed. The No Project Alternative, listed in the first bullet, is required by CEQA to be evaluated, and it describes a reasonable scenario of what would occur should the MOX Project not be approved. The other four alternatives in the Draft EIR are underground route alternatives that would be west of Manzanita Drive.

Alternative 2, Skyline-Colton-Snake Underground Alternative. Alternative 3, Shepherd Canyon Underground Alternative. Alternative 4, Skyline-Ascot Underground Alternative and Alternative 5, Estates Drive Underground Alternative.

The EIR team considered three underground options east of Manzanita Drive in the EIR Chapter 4, but unfortunately, all three alternatives were eliminated due to much longer routes, technical feasibility concerns, and much greater environmental impacts.

I'm next going to talk a bit about design and environmental considerations that generally relate to underground alternatives, and then there will be a map at the end that illustrates these four routes that were fully evaluated in the EIR. As explained, the project includes the rebuild of four circuits. Therefore, all of these circuits would need to be installed underground in two sets of double-circuit duct banks. This is not feasible within a single roadway between Manzanita Drive and State Route 13, due to the steep, narrow, and sharply winding roads in the Oakland Hills.

PG&E has stated that at least 22 feet is needed to fit both double-circuit duct banks within a roadway, and many of the roadways in the area have existing utilities already installed in them, which could create additional constraints. Therefore, to address technical feasibility concerns, the EIR alternatives analysis assumes that each of the underground alternatives in this area would support two circuits and a single duct bank. That is, two underground alternatives would be required to be constructed in this segment to replace all four overhead circuits. One benefit of this arrangement, though, is that in the event of an outage within one of the roadways, the other two circuits would not be affected.

In addition to the circuits themselves, to connect with relaying equipment that protects the circuits in the event of an electrical fault, each underground segment would require both a transition pole and a transition station, one or the other, at each end.

The slide here shows example photographs of each that can be found in EIR Appendix A. Transitions poles are proposed by PG&E outside the Oakland X substation and at Estates Drive for the proposed project itself. A transition station, which contains the relaying equipment I discussed,

and requires more space than a transition pole, as you can see, it looks like a small substation and requires a graded flat area with gravel and a perimeter fence.

For two circuits, it occupies about a quarter of an acre and about a half an acre to accommodate all four circuits. The Moraga X, or excuse me, the Moraga and Oakland X substations also have as relaying equipment, so a transition station is not required for the proposed project or for Underground Alternative 5 that would be east of State Route 13 and would connect into Oakland X substation.

Finally, the other item to explain for all underground alternatives is that even with implementation of the underground alternatives considered in the EIR, overhead components would still remain in addition to the transition station and poles that I just discussed. That is, overhead structures would remain east of Manzanita Drive, where no feasible underground alternatives were identified. And then also, the major Hayward Fault follows… closely follows State Route 13 in the project area. An underground crossing of State Route 13 was considered and eliminated in the EIR Section 4.4 due to topography and density of development in the area.

Therefore, to cross State Route 13, overhead components would be required, and the underground lines east of the highway would have to transition to overhead, cross the roadway, and transition back to underground. These alternatives are displayed on the next slide.

This map shows the different alternative routes and configurations that have been analyzed in the EIR, and I listed earlier. I know it's a lot to digest, so I suggest looking at EIR Chapter 4 and the associated figures in EIR Appendix A. The takeaways are what I just discussed, that two of the three underground alternatives would need to be developed between Manzanita Drive and State Route 13. These are the routes shown in neon green for Alternative 2 in Skyline, Colton, and Snake; fuchsia for Alternative 3 in Shepherd Canyon; and orange for Alternative 4 in Skyline Boulevard and Ascot Drive.

Each of these alternatives would need a double-circuit transition pole or a transition station, one or the other at each end, as indicated by the text boxes. The overhead segments and crossing of the Hayward Fault and State Route 13 are shown as dashed and in yellow, east of the underground to overhead transition locations. Depending on which alternative routes are utilized, and whether the alternatives would connect back into the proposed project, or to Alternative 5, which is shown in blue, east of State Route 13.

Alternative 5 would transition underground at two double-circuit transition poles at Sims and Somerset Drives. The routes would merge and become four circuits together in a state's drive, where there is adequate width, and would eventually rejoin the proposed project underground route continuing in Park Boulevard. Now that I've explained the alternatives themselves, EIR Chapter 4 also analyzes their potential environmental impacts.

Much greater detail is provided in EIR Section 4.5. The Draft EIR found that all significant and unavoidable impacts identified for the proposed project, those are the transportation and wildfire impacts that we discussed earlier, would be more severe for the underground alternatives because construction would last much longer.

Underground construction and roadways would obstruct traffic more severely due to trenching and vault installation. Underground alternatives would occur in many more locations than just at the individual overhead structure sites. All these factors would result in overall greater evacuation risk in a wildfire, and more intense construction activity and disturbance to residents.

In addition, there would be new, significant, and unavoidable visual impacts during operations at the Manzanita Transition Station that would be required at the eastern end of Alternative 4, the Skyline-Ascot Alternative, and there would also be a new, significant, and unavoidable impact for geology and soils during operation of all of the underground alternatives due to slope stability impacts and the well-known instability of the Oakland Hills.

Additionally, total air emissions of construction of multiple underground segments concurrently have the potential to exceed the regional emissions threshold for nitrogen oxides, or NOx. An air quality mitigation measure that is not recommended for the proposed project would be required to stagger construction over a longer period of time to ensure that emissions of NOx do not exceed thresholds. Despite the more intense construction activities and potential for blockage of evacuation routes that I just discussed, underground alternatives were still evaluated in the draft EIR because of several beneficial reasons. Those are, one, underground lines reduce the risk of lines being an ignition source for wildfire. They create fewer constraints to wild… excuse me, to firefighting.

Underground lines are not exposed to potential vehicle or tree fall accidents, vandalism, or failures due to weather conditions, such as high winds, that could result in a wildfire ignition. And finally, visual impacts of overhead components would be eliminated where lines are placed underground.

This slide summarizes the potential significant impacts that I mentioned earlier, and much greater detail is provided in EIR Sections 4.5 through 4.8. While the proposed project would reduce wildfire risk substantially, the overhead structures would still have some risk of starting wildfire or inhibiting firefighting. On the other hand, undergrounding four circuits in two separate roadways would create severe traffic and access constraints during construction for a much longer duration, and would result in driving detours, bus stop relocations, and alternate routes.

Evacuation routes in an emergency would also be impaired. There would also be service outages likely required to resolve conflicts with existing utilities and roadways. Also, as discussed, there would be new significant impact due to the uncertain slope stability and landslide risk, and a new significant impact for visual resources identified at the Manzanita Transition Station for Alternative 4 only.

The final step in the alternatives analysis is to identify the environmentally superior alternative, which is an EIR requirement under CEQA. Therefore, the EIR team considered the project and each alternative's ability to meet each of the stated project objectives, and compared the potentially significant impacts of the proposed project against the significant impacts of the underground alternatives.

And finally, the EIR compared the environmentally superior alternative against the No Project Alternative. As discussed earlier, both the proposed project and underground alternatives would have significant and unavoidable transportation and wildfire impacts during construction, so the underground alternatives do not reduce or eliminate any of the significant impacts of the project. Rather, construction of the underground alternatives and the narrow, winding roadways would occur for a longer duration, and would result in much more disruptive and severe impacts than the proposed project.

While the proposed project would keep the overhead structures, which create a level of wildfire risk, the improvement in risk levels from the current system to the rebuilt system, as proposed, would be a substantial benefit. Therefore, the Draft EIR concluded that the proposed project by PG&E would be the environmentally superior alternative.

Figure 4.8-1 from the Draft EIR in EIR Appendix A is shown here. Note that although the EIR identifies an environmentally superior alternative, it is possible that the CPUC decision makers could balance the importance of each impact area differently and reach different conclusions. The CPUC decision makers must also consider feasibility factors other than environmental impacts, such as costs associated with each alternative, when reaching the final decision on the project.

Now we will enter, the step in the… or the stage in this meeting for public comments. To start, the next slide… We'll show how you can submit a comment after this meeting. Make sure to include your name, address, and phone number so we can follow up if we have any questions, and also add you to our mailing list. The deadline to submit official public comments is 5 p.m. on September 26, 2025.

Again, the CPUC's project website with up-to-date information and documents is listed in the chat and on the slide. The presentation is also posted on the CPUC's project website. Now, on to the oral public comments of this meeting.

To start, let's talk about some of the public comment guidelines. When your name is called by Grace, you'll be asked to unmute your microphone. Please wait a few seconds, and then state your name and affiliation, if you have one. And in general, try to be concise, stay on topic, and most importantly, respect others' opinions. Given the… given the number of people here tonight, each person will have 2 minutes to speak. There'll be a countdown timer indicating when your time is up. If there's enough time at the end, we will give everyone a chance to speak for a second time.

And again, this meeting is being recorded to ensure we capture your oral comments in full, but written comments are encouraged. And then finally, this slide, the next slide. There we go, shows you how to, how to request to speak and displays the countdown timer. If you want to click on raise hand, which should be at the bottom of your screen, this will put you in the queue. If you're on your phone, you can raise your hand by pushing star 9.

Once Grace calls on you, you can unmute yourself with the button on Zoom, or by pushing star 6 on your phone. Grace will also send you a prompt via Zoom. And now we can begin. Grace, you can take it away.

00:26:51.520 --> 00:26:52.460

Grace Weeks: Thanks, Hedy. Hello, everyone. Thank you for sticking around to comment, and thank you for being respectful of our 2-minute timer. Like Hedy said, we want to hear from everyone. So I'm going to call on you, and at that point, you'll be able to, unmute yourself. And please state your first and last name and affiliation, if that is applicable. So, I see that, Pete, you have your hand raised. I'm going to allow you to unmute yourself now.

00:27:24.570 --> 00:27:25.800

Pete Retondo: Mike, can you hear me?

00:27:26.150 --> 00:27:26.700

Grace Weeks: Yes.

00:27:28.210 --> 00:27:29.440

Pete Retondo: Hello, can you hear me?

00:27:29.750 --> 00:27:31.170

Grace Weeks: Yes, we can hear you.

00:27:31.390 --> 00:27:34.299

Pete Retondo: I'm Pete Retondo. I live… in a place where I can actually look out my window and see these towers across Highway 13. I've been here for 25 or more years and hope to be here for somewhat longer, although the wildfire that this overhead line reconstruction might cause will probably, at some point, cause me to lose my house.

And… Sorry, Hedy, I hate to say this, I'm an architect, I have 50 years of experience in construction and reviewing plans, and I just think this report is inadequate and irresponsible when it comes to evaluating the underground alternatives.

What I would request is that a bona fide engineering firm that doesn't work for PG&E develop a specific plan that's actually realistic, that doesn't take a cue from PG&E objections to actually analyze the cost and feasibility for the CPUC. This report reads like a hit job.

On the alternative to underground these lines, especially when it comes to the wildland portion that you haven't even really addressed at all the major problem is that you do not consider catastrophic wildfire to be an actual environmental problem to be mitigated. You're only talking about the relatively trivial construction environmental hazards. You have a whole litany of those. I think that is the major problem with this report and needs to be addressed.

00:29:22.400 --> 00:29:23.760

Grace Weeks: Thank you, Pete. We'll head on to our next raised hand. Ella, I'm gonna allow you to unmute yourself.

00:29:35.160 --> 00:29:35.910

Ella Matsuda-Friends of Sausal Creek: Hello?

00:29:37.530 --> 00:29:39.070

Grace Weeks: Well, go ahead when you're ready.

00:29:39.420 --> 00:29:44.000

Ella Matsuda-Friends of Sausal Creek: Hi, my name is Ella Matsuda. I'm a botanist with Friends of Sausal Creek. We are a nonprofit that's collaborated with the City of Oakland for over 30 years to manage 20 habitat restoration projects in public parks. So we are concerned about potential impacts to the federally threatened and state-endangered pallid Manzanita, which is found in Huckleberry Preserve and along Manzanita Drive. There are only about 2,000 of these plants remaining, they grow only in the hills of Alameda and Contra Costa counties. We have permits to propagate this species, so if any are pruned or affected by the project, we would be grateful for the opportunity to salvage plant material to propagate in our nursery. We run the only nursery specializing in locally sourced native plants from the Sausal Creek watershed, growing thousands of plants each year, and local plants have been shown to establish significantly more successfully in restoration projects, so we request consideration if you're purchasing plants for any revegetation or remediation efforts.

We're also concerned about construction waste endangering the water quality for open community members, as well as resident rainbow trout and other wildlife that rely on the creek. Excess sediment from the replacement of towers and undergrounding along Park Boulevard can cover trout nesting sites, clog their gills, and make them more susceptible to disease. We regularly find debris from construction sites in the creek, and have documented numerous fish kills caused by tools covered in paint and concrete being cleaned into storm drains. So we encourage construction crews to dispose of these materials properly and avoid storm drains to protect Oakland's water quality.

And thank you for considering our concerns.

00:31:12.790 --> 00:31:13.849

Grace Weeks: Thank you, Ella. Alright, I'm gonna go ahead on to our next commenter. Lauren, I'm gonna allow you to unmute yourself.

00:31:26.840 --> 00:31:35.340

Lauren Wilson: Hi there, my name is Lauren Wilson, and I'm a resident of Oakland. I live about 200 feet away from the proposed project path. And I understand that this is a… necessary, improvement. And I appreciate the… community engagement that has been involved, and the opportunity for public comment and engagement on this project as it has moved forward. Being a necessary upgrade to the system, I believe it also has to balance the cost to ratepayers and the impact on the community. Undergrounding is a massive cost to ratepayers, and is a huge disruption and displacement to the communities, in the surrounding environment, and so I believe that the project as proposed here is the best pla- the best plan and the best path forward, and, I, hope this is the direction that the CPUC continues to move. Thank you.

00:32:32.990 --> 00:32:34.220

Grace Weeks: Thank you, Lauren. Moving on, our next commenter, I believe, Eric, please state your first and last name, and I'm going to allow you to unmute yourself.

00:32:49.810 --> 00:32:53.600

Eric Olofsson: My name is Eric Olofsson, I live in Canyon, and one thing that, I think my associate has brought up is that there's a railroad tunnel that goes from Shepherd Canyon over at the middle of Shepherd Canyon, all the way into Canyon. And this, if… if PG&E were to use this old railroad, tunnel, which is just plugged on both ends, I think it's intact for the most part. It could be used to completely avoid having the towers over the steep part of the hills in Oakland and, that you could run the electrical right into that tunnel, bring it out into Canyon, and then from there, I don't know, you might have to put it on towers going to the Moraga substation, but that seems to be a fairly decent solution, could save a lot of money, could avoid fire danger, etc., etc. Could avoid, aviation, effects as well, because I know the… the FAA was concerned with the height of some of the towers going over the hills. So, that's just my suggestion, is that that be an alternative, added to this, DEIR. I don't know how you could do that.

If you'd have to amend it or whatever. But, that would be my suggestion, that, using the railroad tunnel could save PG&E and the taxpayers a lot of money. That's all I have to say.

00:34:35.730 --> 00:34:36.739

Grace Weeks: Thank you, Eric. I don't see any more hands raised, but we'll give it another minute. And I do see one phone call, listener. Just as a reminder, if you wanted to raise your hand, you can dial star 9, that'll raise your hand, and then star 6 would unmute yourself.

All right, everyone, looks like we have no more commenters, so we're going to go ahead and close this meeting. Again, here's the info for how and when to provide comments on the Draft EIR, as well as our project website link, where the recording of this meeting will be available.

And as a reminder, we will be accepting comments through September 26th.

Thank you everyone, for joining, and have a wonderful rest of your evening.