Expanded Community Advisory Panel (XCAP)

THIS PACKET INCLUDES:

A compilation of emails (public comments, etc) submitted to the XCAP email box, XCAP@CityofPaloAlto.org, between **May 7 and May 20, 2020 at 12:00 pm (noon)**.

Note: This PDF contains bookmarks separating each email in this compilation. If you'd like to see the bookmarks but your internet browser doesn't show them, download this PDF from your browser, then re-open it in a PDF reader (such as Adobe Reader, Foxit, etc) and make sure your bookmarks panel is open.

From:	Gary Lindgren
To:	Expanded Community Advisory Panel; Nadia Naik; Kamhi, Philip
Subject:	Getting the Word Out
Date:	Saturday, May 9, 2020 11:36:01 AM

Hi Guys,

At the May 6th meeting, a question came out, how to get the word out regarding XCAP's activities. I suggest using the online tool NextDoor.com. The city already uses this to highlight meetings and availability of reports, etc. I also suggest using the weekly Table Talk online meeting that the mayor and city manager puts on. It's only 20 minutes long and has a large audience. The two of them could promote an upcoming XCAP meeting and briefly say a few words on what will be discussed.

Take care,

Gary

Gary Lindgren
585 Lincoln Ave
Palo Alto CA 94301

650-326-0655

Check Out Possible Grade Separation Solution at Churchill or
Copy and Paste http://www.paloaltoenergy.org/churchill/

Check Out Latest Seismometer Reading
@garyelindgren

Listen to Radio Around the World

Be Like Costco... do something in a different way

Don't trust Atoms...they make up everything

A part of good science is to see what everyone else can see but think what no one else has ever said.

The difference between being very smart and very foolish is often very small.

So many problems occur when people fail to be obedient when they are supposed to be obedient, and fail to be creative when they are supposed to be creative.

The secret to doing good research is always to be a little underemployed. You waste years by not being able to waste hours.

It is sometimes easier to make the world a better place than to

prove you have made the world a better place.

Amos Tversky

From:	Gary Lindgren
To:	Expanded Community Advisory Panel; Nadia Naik; Kamhi, Philip
Subject:	Getting the Word Out
Date:	Saturday, May 9, 2020 1:23:22 PM

Hi Guys,

One more thing in getting the word out about XCAP activities. The Palo Alto Weekly has column **"Public Agenda"** every week. This is where upcoming city council and other meetings are announced. Just a brief agenda and with the Zoom numbers.

Gary

Gary Lindgren
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Amos Tversky

From:	Kenneth Streib
To:	Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Cc:	Tanaka, Greg; Lydia Kou; Filseth, Eric (Internal)
Subject:	Grade separation
Date:	Friday, May 15, 2020 6:36:32 PM

I am kind of shocked that we are still even considering grade separation, now that we are cutting essentials like police and fire. Where will we find the money? It was a horrendously expensive project to begin with. Could we put grade sep on a back burner for a few years, until we find out if the economy will even recover from this plague?

Thanks so much for your time,

Ken Streib

From: carlin otto
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Subject: Charleston+Alma Railroad Crossing
Date: Saturday, May 16, 2020 2:46:34 PM

PLEASE REMOVE the two options that entail
a raised berm (Hybrid Rail Berm) or viaduct (Rail Viaduct) !!!
These are horrible options, as SO SO SO many residents
have been telling you for years.
They both:

- spread dust and dirt to a much wider area other solutions
- are ugly and highly visible
- increase the distance of the noise to many more residences than the other solutions

Carlin Otto
231 Whitclem Court
Palo Alto, CA 94306

From:	Peggy E. Kraft
To:	Expanded Community Advisory Panel; Council, City; Transportation
Subject:	Grade separation AGAINST new underpass proposal Charleston/Alma
Date:	Saturday, May 16, 2020 11:06:20 AM

Dear Community Members,

I have reviewed the material to be presented at the next XCAP meeting on May 20th. There is a presentation of a grade separation design with an underpass at Charleston/Alma. It was designed with a two lane roundabout on Charleston Road which I am totally against. It puts a much larger amount of traffic onto East Charleston Road because it diverts onto East Charleston ALL of the north and south bound traffic on Alma that wants to turn west onto Charleston. This is ADDED traffic that never used to drive on East Charleston in the past. I cannot emphasize enough that this is ADDED traffic that we currently do not have. So our two lane residential/school/church/park corridor is now to be sacrificed for commuters which is exactly what this south Palo Alto community spent over ten years trying to change with the Charleston/Arrastradero calming project .I do not understand that after agreeing and funding the calming of this corridor that the city of Palo Alto would then decide to undo this work by dumping massive amounts of new traffic onto this residential corridor. The huge roundabout would also require the taking of private property and homes by eminent domain and forever ruin the charming neighborhood we once had. There is a COMPROMISE which is to have the underpass BUT NOT THE ROUNDABOUT. Our neighborhood should not have to allow access to all cars wanting to go West on Charleston onto our residential corridor. Those cars can use other major commute corridors that already exist for that purpose. The westbound traffic would likely be split evenly between San Antonio Road and Oregon Expressway which are designed for this type of traffic. I also believe that even during non commute hours this roundabout design will encourage more cars to use East Charleston because it will allow more traffic through more quickly then can flow now. Our neighborhood advocated for the calming and preservation of this corridor for over ten years and now the city is considering taking that away.

Another possible compromise is to have a ONE LANE ROUNDABOUT on East Charleston. They exist in other neighborhoods in Palo Alto. This would at least cause less and slower traffic on East Charleston because it would discourage some of the commuters from using it to turn west. I was told that it could not be designed as a one lane roundabout because a certain amount of space/distance was needed before cars coming from the underpass and those turning east could merge onto a one lane versus a two lane roundabout. The solution is to place the one lane roundabout slightly farther down the corridor. At least with the one lane roundabout it would not require the taking of private homes and property, it would keep the residential feel of the neighborhood and it would likely encourage commuters to find other corridors to turn west on Charleston because East Charleston which would produce less and slower traffic through the neighborhood.

Since the two lane roundabout in this design is so disruptive to our residential/school/park/church corridor and it is unlikely they will design it with a one lane roundabout as compromise I am AGAINST THIS UNDERPASS DESIGN and am instead going to SUPPORT THE HYBRID OVERPASS DESIGN. The overpass design would keep the train in the same exact location and not disrupt our residential neighborhood with the taking of peoples homes and properties and adding thousands of new cars onto our residential two lane street.

In summary I am AGAINST THE DESIGN FOR UNDERPASS WITH A TWO LANE ROUNDABOUT ON EAST CHARLESTON unless they remove or design the project with a one lane roundabout and am in SUPPORT OF THE HYBRID OVERPASS DESIGN.

Thank you for your service to our community.

Best,
Peggy
Mumford Place

Palo Alto

From:	Karen Ouk
To:	Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Subject:	Objection to rail options 2 & 3
Date:	Saturday, May 16, 2020 11:01:30 PM

Hi - I am a resident at 129 Lundy lane. My backyard is up against Charleston and Alma. I am highly against the 2 below options that raise the rail up as it would be a serius invasion of privacy and noise distraction into my and all of the residents along Alma's yard.

2) Rail Viaduct (Charleston/Meadow kept at current elevation, rail raised 20 feet)
3) Hybrid Rail Berm (Charleston/Meadow lowered 5 feet, rail raised 15 feet)

Thanks,
Karen

From: Patrice Banal
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Subject: Option 4 Underpass at Charleston
Date: Saturday, May 16, 2020 10:17:53 PM

The newest option of an underpass at Charleston Road that extends all the way down to Mumford will be **detrimental to the community of Southern Palo Alto**.
Along Charleston are Bike/Pedestrian paths to Gunn, JLS, Fairmeadow, Challenger, Mitchell Park Community Center/Library, Stevenson House, Avenidas, Abilities United, Cubberly Center, and fields, Greenmeadow Center.
This plan negatively impacts homeowners, taxpayers, the elder community, those with different abilities and innumerable school children from preK to high school and a host of kids involved in dance, sports, the arts at Cubberly.
Parents will no longer be able to permit their kids to walk independently to school or activities because their path will abut a thoroughfare. This is the least family-friendly option for Southern Palo Alto.
The underpass extends way too far on Charleston, the plan is too aggressive, too close to school and pedestrian paths.
There is no reason this ramp needs to run all the way down to Mumford.
The idea of a turning lane at Wright Place was MUCH LESS INVASIVE.

The underpass at Charleston extend all the way down to Mumford is tantamount to running a ramp and freeway conduit through this neighborhood. It will negatively impact:
ALL INVESTMENTS and PROPERTY VALUE FROM ALMA TO MUMFORD ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS PROPOSED THOROUGHFARE,
as well as the streets that run parallel to East Charleston.

- Based on the rendering, the city will be forced to use eminent domain, the strategy they vowed to avoid!
- Properties directly along Charleston will need to be compensated at fair market value, now over $2.3 million EACH,
- Which will require bonds and deficit spending.
- Partial takes on land make no sense as this would 100% impact property owners' investments,
- The city must be ready to 100% compensate the owners.
- And, how will the city rehouse **within the city limits** the displaced when there is no viable alternative housing
  available within Palo Alto.
- Will the city prioritize moving the displaced into new developments in the city?
- Property values for homes on streets running parallel to Charleston will be negatively impacted, too.
- WHY WAS THERE NO SPECIFIC OUTREACH TO THE FAMILIES WHO WOULD BE DIRECTLY IMPACTED TO DISCUSS THIS OPTION.

I look forward to your response.
Thank you

Pat fester

From:	Gary Lindgren
To:	Expanded Community Advisory Panel; Nadia Naik; Kamhi, Philip
Subject:	Thoughts on Meadow and Charleston
Date:	Sunday, May 17, 2020 4:36:17 PM

Hi Guys,
I looked over the drawings that AECOM will present this Wednesday. Mostly they look good. Charleston allows all turns which for me is a requirement. But Meadow has problems. Meadow going west has the road drop down and then only allow a right turn onto Alma going north. Keep Meadow at grade in order to allow left and right turns onto Alma. North bound Alma needs to be able to turn right to east bound Meadow. Then we need a roundabout in order to go west bound on Meadow (the underpass). East bound on Meadow wishing to get on Alma (north or south) will go up to roundabout and then get on the at-grade Meadow and make desired right or left turn. Allow south bound Alma turn left onto Meadow to either continue east or use round about to go west on Meadow. Obviously this will require acquiring property, but it must be done. When the Embarcadero underpass was built, money was short I suppose, "let's just do 3 lanes, that will save" (I'm guessing here). We don't want another compromise, we need to do right the first time.
Please… Take Care,
Gary Lindgren

Gary Lindgren
585 Lincoln Ave
Palo Alto CA 94301

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Amos Tversky

From: Wilson, Sarah
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Subject: FW: XCAP Meeting - May 20, 2020
Date: Monday, May 18, 2020 11:40:28 AM

From: k jm <kjm1445@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 9:43 AM
To: Wilson, Sarah <Sarah.Wilson@CityofPaloAlto.org>; Kamhi, Philip <Philip.Kamhi@CityofPaloAlto.org>; Shikada, Ed <Ed.Shikada@CityofPaloAlto.org>; millette.litzinger@aecom.com; etty.mercurio@aecom.com; DeStefano, Peter <peter.destefano@aecom.com>; Horrigan-Taylor, Meghan <Meghan.Horrigan-Taylor@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Cc: Neva Yarkin <nevayarkin@gmail.com>; jmatlof@gmail.com; dshenster@gmail.com
Subject: XCAP Meeting - May 20, 2020

Hello,
As part of my professional role, I am tracking certain businesses in the Bay Area that will either (i) not require employees to commute anymore within the Bay Area even after COVID-19 SIP is over; or (jj) will only require a sub-set of employees to commute; or (iii) only require certain employees to commute for only certain meetings on a quarterly basis. The logical net/net is reduced ridership.

Please advise if the plans re the train are still going through and if so, how will such now be funded given the $54 billion budget deficit the state is facing. https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/17/politics/gavin-newsom-california-budget-deficit-coronavirus-cnntv/index.html

Thank you.
K Jason-Moreau

---------- Forwarded message ---------

From: **Wilson, Sarah** <Sarah.Wilson@cityofpaloalto.org>
Date: Fri, May 15, 2020 at 6:01 PM
Subject: Upcoming Virtual XCAP Meeting - May 20, 2020
To: Kamhi, Philip <Philip.Kamhi@cityofpaloalto.org>, Shikada, Ed <Ed.Shikada@cityofpaloalto.org>
Cc: Litzinger, Millette <millette.litzinger@aecom.com>, Mercurio, Etty <etty.mercurio@aecom.com>, DeStefano, Peter <peter.destefano@aecom.com>, Horrigan-Taylor, Meghan <Meghan.Horrigan-Taylor@cityofpaloalto.org>

Hello XCAP members,

Greetings! The next XCAP meeting will be on Wednesday, May 20, at 4:00 pm.

The meeting agenda is attached to this email and online here:
https://connectingpaloalto.com/presentations-and-reports/.

Like the April 22 and May 6 meetings, this will be a Zoom webinar. Early on May 20, you'll get an email from "Office of Transportation" (me) with the subject line, "Panelist for XCAP Meeting May 20." The body of the email will contain the all-important hyperlink (blue text) that says "Click Here to Join."

That is your unique link for you to join the meeting as a "Panelist." Please do not forward your link to someone else as it is tied to you. The public can join the meeting (as "Attendees") with the public information shared on the agenda/website/etc.

You are welcome to join the meeting before the start time of 4:00 pm -- as early as say 3:30 pm. We just want to make sure everyone is successfully connected and comfortable before the meeting begins. Please let me know if you have any questions about Zoom.

Thank you,

Sarah Wilson
Administrative Assistant, Office of Transportation
City of Palo Alto
Sarah.Wilson@CityofPaloAlto.org
(650) 329-2552

<2020-05-20_XCAP Agenda.pdf>

data is not available for this point, taking an extra width of approximately 0.50 m into account in bends is advisable, depending on velocity.

Due to the fact that cycling is not just about getting from A to B but can also be a relaxing and social activity, one general starting point for a design is that cyclists must be able to ride two abreast. Furthermore, from a road safety point of view it holds that parents must be able to ride alongside children. This has to be factored into the equation when calculating space for cyclists.

3.4 Bends and view

Horizontal bends

Bends are necessary to connect road sections with one another smoothly. The radius of a curve affects the speed at which a cyclist can ride in that location. The minimum radius of the curve (the horizontal radius) will depend on the nature of the cycle path.
The lower limit for curve radii is 5.00 m (see figure 3-4); in the case of smaller values the cycling speed will fall below 12 km/h and the cyclist will have to exert more effort to remain upright. The higher the design speed, the bigger the radius will have to be.

Research has revealed the connection between radius and cycling velocity shown in figure 3-4. Based on this figure it is possible to assert that:

- bicycle connections forming part of the basic network ought to have a radius of ≥ 10 m, fine-tuned to a design speed of 20 km/h;
- cycle routes and main cycle routes ought to have a radius of ≥ 20 m, fine-tuned to a design speed of 30 km/h.

Table 3-2. Route, design speed and radius

Route	Design speed	Minimum radius
Lower limit	12 km/h	5 m
Basic network	20 km/h	10 m
(Main) cycle route	30 km/h	20 m

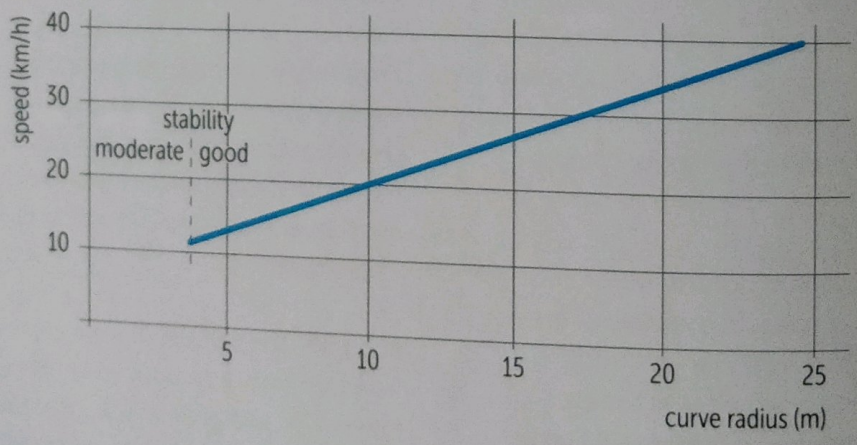


Figure 3-4. Relationship between radius and cycling speed [9]

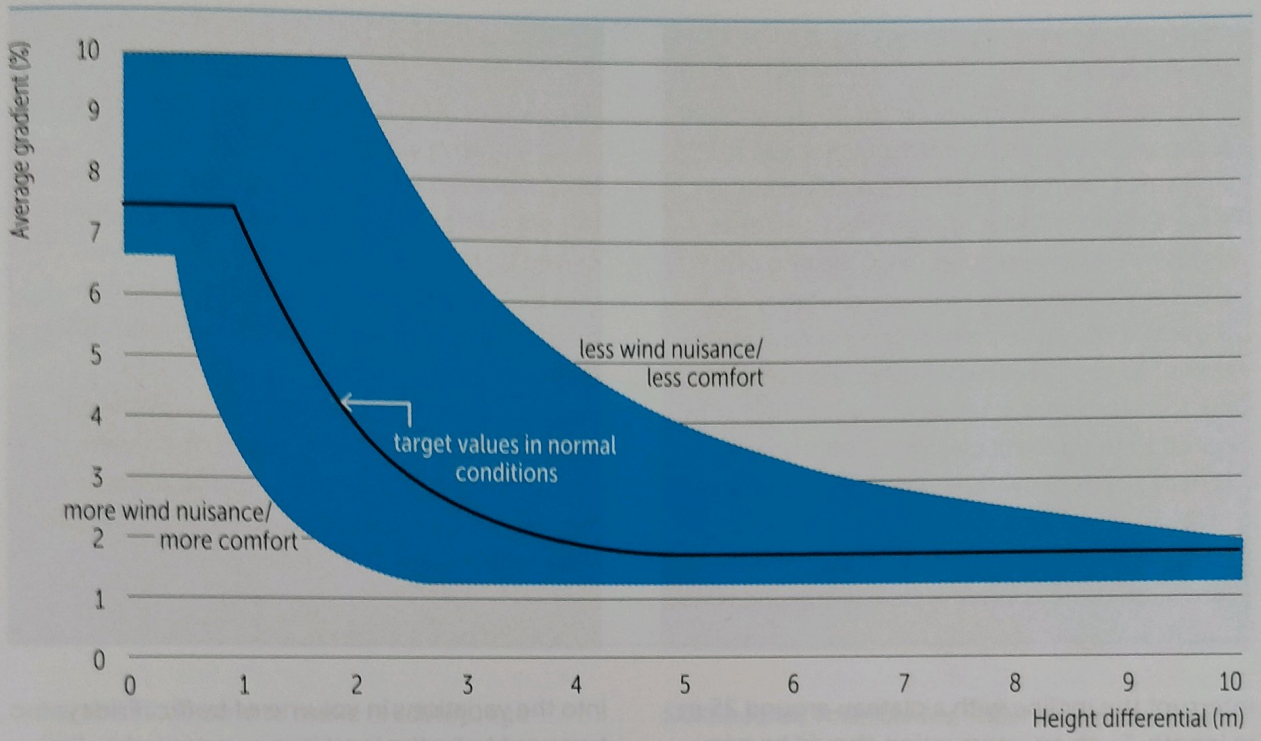


Figure 3-5. Bandwidths for gradients [8]

The following constitutes an explanatory note to figure 3-5:

- Lower limit. Delimitation of the bandwidth 'more wind nuisance / more comfort' is based on S = 0.0333, with a maximum of 6.67% and a minimum of 1.25%. Even smaller gradients would not be worthwhile, serving as a 'false flat'.
- Target values. Starting point is S = 0.075 resulting in $L = H^2/S = H^2/0.075$. In this regard, a maximum of 7.5% and a minimum of 1.75% apply.
- Upper limit. Delimitation of the bandwidth 'less wind nuisance / less comfort' is based on S = 0.200, with a maximum of 10.0%.

In order to calculate the requisite length of an incline, the level difference in centimetres can be divided by the average gradient in percent.

If a less comfortable gradient is chosen, then this could mean certain users being excluded. Consider in this regard such groups as the elderly, children, parents with child and/or shopping. It could force them to dismount or choose a different route.

Course of the incline

Aside from the average gradient, the course of the incline plays a role. Hence an upward slope might be a little steeper at the start than it is further up. The idea here is that the speed of a cyclist's approach will enable him to proceed up the first part of the slope faster due to momentum ('free height'). A descending gradient will ensure a constant cycling speed and effort overall.

Where level differences of in excess of 5 m have to be traversed, then the recommendation is to

V2 Solitary cycle path

Function

- providing a connection for cyclists

Application

- within and outside of built-up areas
- in recreational and utilitarian cycle networks
- rapid connection between neighbourhoods, districts, etc.
- bidirectional traffic

Implementation

- siting sign G11 ('Mandatory cycle path') or sign G13 ('Advisory cycle path'): see V1
- design speed 30 km/h for main cycle network and 20 km/h for basic structure
- centre line desirable on utilitarian paths: see V5
- edge markings if unlit: see V6
- preferably asphalt or concrete surfacing
- preferably provide lighting for utilitarian paths in built-up areas
- if need be, surfaced (or partially surfaced) verge strip/pavement on both sides (0.30-0.50 m wide)

Dimensions

rush hour volume (bidirectional) (bicycles/hour)	minimum width of path (b)
0-50	1.50 m[1)]
50-150	2.50 m[1)]
150-350	3.50 m
> 350	4.50 m

1) up to 2.50 m wide a path will have a verge or pavement on both sides which can be ridden on, giving cyclists room to swerve

- centre line: 0.30-2.70 m on straight sections; 2.70-0.30 m in bends
- width of any footpath ≥ 1.00 m

Considerations

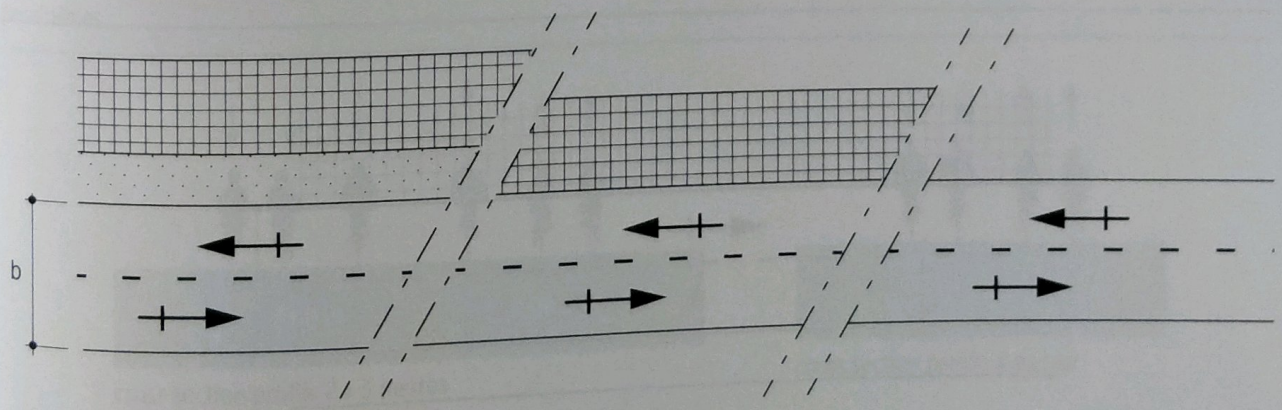
- comfortable for cyclists
- safe for cyclists
- nuisance between cyclists and pedestrians if there is no pavement or footpath
- unconducive to personal safety in the case of remote location
- nuisance due to unlawful use on the part of mopeds and motorcycles

Combination possibilities

- footpath

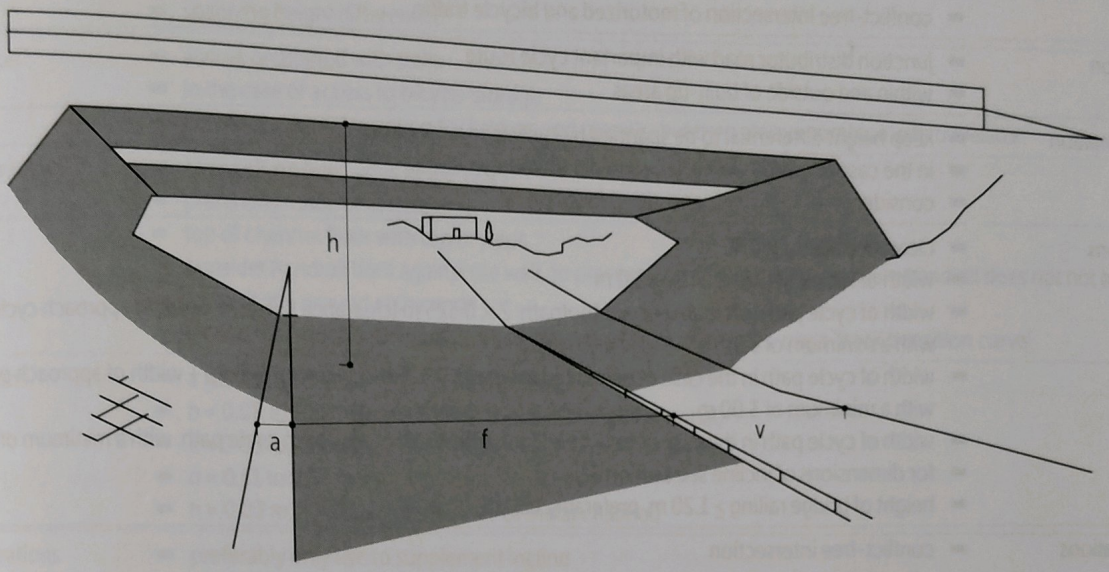
Alternatives

- solitary cycle/moped path: see V3



V51 Cycle underpass

Function	▪ conflict-free intersection of motorized and bicycle traffic
Application	▪ junction distributor road with important cycle route ▪ within and outside of built-up areas
Implementation	▪ cyclists preferably at ground level; where this is not possible, raise carriageway for motorized traffic by about 2.00 m, thereby reducing the height differential to be spanned by cyclists ▪ make maximum use of daylight: in the case of separating carriageways, a central opening in the overhead structure can allow extra light ingression ▪ no high plants near entrance to underpass ▪ lighting in underpass should be vandalism-resistant (recessed) ▪ no corners/niches ▪ walls recede towards top ▪ straight course: exit must be visible upon entering underpass ▪ inclines before and after underpass should not give people with malicious intent the opportunity to conceal themselves (no plants, no corners and suchlike) ▪ consider combining with pavement for pedestrians ▪ outside of built-up areas, consider combining with fauna tunnel
Dimensions	▪ width of cycle path in the absence of footpath: 2 × 0.625 m (clearance closed wall) + width of approach cycle path, with a minimum of 3.50 m ▪ f: width of cycle path in the case of one-sided footpath: 0.625 m (clearance closed wall) + width of approach cycle path, with a minimum of 3.00 m ▪ width of cycle path in the case of two-sided footpath: width of approach path, with a minimum of 3.00 m ▪ width of footpath (if present): v > 1.00 m ▪ h > 2.50 m ▪ a = 0.5 m ▪ for dimensions of incline see section 3.5 ▪ underpass floor 2% on an incline (drainage)
Considerations	▪ conflict-free intersection (safe) ▪ multiple approach routes possible ▪ cyclists on lateral connections often have to take a detour in order to get on the route of the underpass ▪ unimpeded view through underpass ▪ good lighting situation ▪ shorter inclines than in the case of bridge (due to smaller height differential) ▪ usually no groundwater problems when raising intersecting road ▪ phased construction will be necessary in current situation ▪ lack of personal safety ▪ vulnerable to vandalism
Combination possibilities	▪ tiered incline
Alternatives	▪ cycle bridge (less beneficial for cyclists than a tunnel): see V52 ▪ crossing with traffic light control system


h
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From:	Arnout Boelens
To:	Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Cc:	Reckdahl, Keith; nicole.zoeller@gmail.com
Subject:	Bike pedestrian Underpass design comments
Date:	Tuesday, May 19, 2020 12:21:29 PM
Attachments:	bicycleTunnel.pdf

Dear members of XCAP Rail committee,

I would like to provide some feedback for the design of the bike/pedestrian tunnel for option 4: Underpass. I attached a number of relevant pages of the Dutch design manual for bicycling, but these comments are relevant to any kind of bike/pedestrian tunnel.

* A first recommendation would be to have the bicycle/pedestrian tunnel at Churchill, and not Kellogg. To encourage bicycling and walking it is important that cyclist/pedestrians have the most direct route possible, which is over Churchill Ave. Car drivers do not spend extra energy when they take a detour, but cyclist and pedestrians do.

* The plot on the first page shows the turn radius of a bike as a function of speed. At the bottom of the tunnel, bikes will have picked up quite some speed (easily 30 km/h (20 mph)), so any curve would need to be bigger than about 15 m (50 ft). The corner of the Kellogg Tunnel with the Embarcadero bike path has a very sharp corners which would be a bad idea.

* The second page shows comfortable gradients. I could not guess the gradients from the renderings, but just something to keep in mind.

* Typical bicycle lane width. I could not find a breakdown of pedestrians/ bicycles in the traffic report (only the 400 cyclists and pedestrians in total), but it seems like we're looking at a lot of cyclists. To prevent the mess that is the California Ave and Embarcadero tunnels, this would mean it is advised to have a bike path with a width of 15 ft, and a separate sidewalk for pedestrians of at least 3 ft. The current designs seems to be mixed use and too narrow.

* Last two pages show typical design advice for bike tunnels. One important piece of advice is "no (blind) corners". Sharp corners are difficult to navigate for older riders and people with cargo bikes/trailers, they are dangerous because of poor visibility and because bikes will have gained a lot of speed at the bottom of the downward slope.

A more general question about bidirectional bicycle paths/tunnels is how to access them. Bikes and pedestrians will have to cross the street because it is a bidirectional path, and I did not see any infrastructure to accommodate that in the Meadow underpass design.

We'll try to attend tomorrow's meeting (5/20) as well.

Kind regards,

Nicole, Arnout, & Ava Zoeller Boelens

From: Patrice Banal
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Subject: charleston mumford option
Date: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 9:40:52 PM

Hi Keith,
In the email and attachment sent out for the option number 4 for Charleston/Mumford :
On Charleston Road Partial Underpass Layout figure 8A the roundabout is depicted on East Charleston Rd. swelling out well before the Charleston/Mumford intersection so it is less invasive to the neighborhood and school, elder traffic at Carlson.

On pg 74 in the appendix the roundabout is shown directly at the intersection of Mumford and Charleston, highly aggressive and invasive as it impacts safe routes to school-1 block away at Carlson intersection., etc.
For more accurate commentary, which is the **correct layout?**.

Is there another report that details the proposed **scope of work including potential property takes by parcel number, which is precisely what the city said they would work to minimize**?
Given the impact of Covid-19, is there a new timeline on deciding on a choice?

Thank you for your prompt reply.
Would love to know prior to the meeting tomorrow.
Best,
Pat

From:	gmahany@aol.com
To:	Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Subject:	comments on XCAP meeting 06 MAY 2020
Date:	Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:42:48 AM

Hello XCAP committee members
My take on the Churchill crossing, is no mater what the final outcome, is keep Churchill open to bicycles, pedestrians and skate boards even if it is closed it to cars, buses, and trucks.
I also want to say I find encouragement in the XCAP committee's members awareness that there can be improvements to P.A. vehicle traffic flows with intelligent designs to the rail crossings.
Gary Mahany

From: Jon Moeller
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Subject: Meadow and Charleston Underpass designs
Date: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 8:39:39 PM

The underpass options presented for these intersections are completely unsuited to the neighborhoods they're adjacent to. They disrupt common neighborhood walking and biking routes and divide the community in an unacceptable way.

--

--

jon moeller

From:	YORIKO KISHIMOTO
To:	Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Subject:	Rail crossing
Date:	Wednesday, May 20, 2020 11:40:35 AM

Dear hard-working XCAP chair and members:

COVID-19 shelter-in-place mandates have turned our world upside down, but one upside outcome is our community and employers learning that much can be accomplished on-line and how much cleaner and healthier our air and lives are with dramatically less driving.

My brief comments at this point:

* Please continue to think big-picture and try to REDUCE car traffic volume and speed citywide. Prioritize ways people can get around for local trips (under 1-3 miles) by foot or bike and how to make their trips safer and more pleasant.

* Please don't push problems from one neighborhood to another, but reduce overall problem.

* Follow Comp Plan goal of lots of walkable routes everywhere (not closing streets), not a suburban model of cut de sacs and expressways which only encourage yet more car traffic

* Reducing car traffic will mean fewer tough choices, less concrete poured, lots of money saved.

I want to thank Megan Kanne for serving as our representative from Professorville/University South and am concerned that there will no one from this neighborhood vs. several from Churchill area.

Thank you for all your work,

Yoriko Kishimoto

From: Karen Kalinsky
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Cc: Council, City; Shikada, Ed
Subject: RE: Proposal for Meadow Underpass at Train Crossing -- XCAP May 20, 2020 Agenda
Date: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 11:34:38 AM

To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel (XCAP)
CC: City Council, Ed Shikada, City Manager
RE: Proposal for Meadow Underpass at Train Crossing
Date: 5/20/2020

I would like to thank XCAP, Elizabeth Alexis, and the City Council for consideration of the additional option for an Underpass at Meadow and Charleston. I was very glad to see that AECOM's analysis and response included two quite different implementations of the underpass at Meadow versus the underpass at Charleston. This makes sense to me since Meadow is a considerably narrower street.

SUMMARY: I am in favor of the proposed Meadow Underpass at Alma and the train tracks. I propose a "press to cross" bike and pedestrian crosswalk with flashing lights for E. Meadow at Bryant.

I have lived on E. Meadow for 36 years and bought my home with the knowledge that we live close to the train and its associated noise. I appreciate that for all the train crossing proposals the electrified train engines and the elimination of need for train horn noise and warning bells at grade crossings will significantly reduce rail noise.

Since I live on Meadow, I will respond only to the AECOM renderings for Meadow, and leave responses to the Charleston proposal to those neighbors who are more directly affected by it.

A) Regarding weighing the 4 alternatives for Meadow currently on the table:
Trench, Hybrid, Viaduct, Cars/bikes/peds Underpass

i. I feel that the Hybrid and Viaduct options offer no advantage versus the Underpass. The Hybrid alternative would be more costly, noisier, more visually unpleasant to the residents who live close to the tracks, and require 4 years of disrupting traffic along Alma. The Viaduct option has similar impacts but at twice the cost of the Hybrid, with much greater negative visual impact; although construction period would be shorter (2 years) and much less disruptive to traffic during construction.

ii. On the other hand, the Trench might do more to reduce noise and would offer considerably improved visual impact of the train traffic. However to my mind, the significantly greater cost, the extended road closures, the 6 year construction period, but most especially the long-term maintenance & drainage impacts, make this a less desirable choice for the Meadow crossing. I am seriously concerned that the local (or city-wide) taxes, fees & special assessments would be rejected by the majority of neighborhood residents. If the Trench requires right-of-way acquisition from CalTrain/Union Pacific for pumping stations, that might not even be possible.

iii. If I understand correctly, the Meadow Underpass would be less costly and would require a shorter construction period than the 3 choices above, and the visual impact would be no worse than it is today. There is no getting around the fact that the trains will run more frequently. I appreciate that the Underpass has well-separate underpass lanes for bikes and pedestrians. The downside is that there would have to be property acquisition of the apartment building at 3553 Alma St, which has 14 apartments (which would be a serious impact to renters who would have a hard time finding other Palo Alto places to live), plus some driveway and sliver acquisitions. All of the proposals involve difficult trade offs and compromises. **I favor the Underpass as my first choice, but hope that the planners can either find a way to avoid acquisition of the apartment building at 3553 Alma, or find replacement housing at comparable**

rents for these tenants.

B) E Meadow street crossing for bikes & pedestrians

My husband and I frequently use our bikes to get around town, and appreciate the concern for the safety of cyclists as well of pedestrians for crossing E. Meadow -- when there would presumably be a more steady stream of traffic to and from the Underpass at Alma. AECOM noted the need for a safe crossing for Peds/Bikes at Ramona or Byrant and offered "e.g., a raised crosswalk with flashing beacons or a roundabout."

i. A safe crossing for bikes makes more sense at Bryant St, since Bryant is designated as a Palo Alto Bike Route and a Peninsula Bikeway.
ii. A roundabout is not a very good solution (see complaints about roundabout at E Meadow and Ross Rd). A bike lane merging with a car lane into a single lane is not very safe for bikes, and while a roundabout can serve to slow cars, it offers no way to protect pedestrians crossing E. Meadow.
iii. A raised crosswalk would be good for pedestrians, but not very convenient for wheelchairs, cyclists, or strollers.

iv. E. Meadow is a commute route to three public schools-- JLS Middle School, Fairmeadow Elementary School, and Gunn High School -- so there is considerable bike and ped traffic at the busy hours to/from school. The traffic light and crossing guard at Waverley provides the primary crossing point. School children going to JLS and Fairmeadow coming from the "Circles" on the South side of E Meadow, turn right and do not need to cross E Meadow since the schools are on the right side of the street. High school students (typically on bike) coming from the "Circles" would have to cross at E Meadow to turn left-- which I propose be at Bryant, which is a Bike Route.

v. **I propose a "push button" crosswalk with flashing signals to cross at Bryant.** We frequently bike to Mountain View and find the "push button" crosswalks across San Antonio Rd at Miller Ave (near California St) and at Loucks Ave (near Chef Chu's) to be very safe and convenient. When a pedestrian or cyclist pushes the button, lights flash for drivers at the side of the road and in the pavement of the road along the marked crossing. An audible track is played "cross with caution, etc."

Thank you for all your efforts to include community input,

Sincerely, Karen Kalinsky
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