

## **Expanded Community Advisory Panel (XCAP)**

January 8, 2020

Special Meeting - Summary

Council Chamber

### **1. Welcome and Roll Call**

Present: Gregory Brail, Phil Burton, Tony Carrasco, Megan Kanne, Larry Klein, Judy Kleinberg, Inyoung Cho, Nadia Naik, Keith Reckdahl, David Shen, Cari Templeton

Absent: Adina Levin, Patricia Lau

### **2. Oral Communications**

Gary Lindgren commented in early December he heard about Jefferson Avenue in Redwood City that would be a good example of an underpass and he took some pictures of this. It was installed in about 1998 or 1999. The sidewalk is out of the street area. There are two lanes each way and buildings on both sides. This is done very nicely.

Micky McClair (phonetic) stated she was glad the Group looked at the traffic impacts. She hoped the construction impacts would be looked at on Alma and any place that required construction. Those will be very disruptive to the community.

Kathy Jordan remarked about the electrification which seemed to be presented as though it would lead to more frequent Caltrain service which impacts traffic and potential closures. She advised electrification in and of itself would not be the impetus for more frequent Caltrain service. That service is dependent upon federal safety regulations going beyond the current 79 miles per hour. The impetus is mainly the separated grade crossings, which are not in place and which are dependent upon a patchwork of funding which is not in place. Grade separations are very costly at approximately \$200 million apiece and which the local community may be asked to finance in some joint sharing of funding.

Rolf Levitsky (phonetic) agreed with Ms. Jordan in that electrification does not necessarily increase activity on the rails. There would be no particular reason to close Churchill. Alternatives will be evaluated based on "facilitate movement across the corridor for all modes of transportation". To facilitate movement, you don't close a crossing that gives you 10,000 crossings a day. No mitigation or traffic study shows you can just swallow those cars. Embarcadero is currently serviceable with some waiting in the morning and evening. It only really backs up when there is a Stanford game. The neighborhood does not want all those cars dumped every day from Churchill and make it like a Stanford football game every day. The other condition to be looked at is "reduce delay and congestion for automobile traffic at rail crossings". There is a good crossing at Embarcadero and you would be increasing delay by closing Churchill.

### **3. Discussion: Review Recent Traffic Study and Discuss Submitted Questions**

Chair Naik advised Mr. Black was here to answer questions about the traffic study. Public comment would be taken after the presentation. It was possible he would come back at a future point if there were future questions that needed to be answered.

Gary Black from AECOM explained the purpose of the presentation was to answer questions that came in on the traffic study that was posted on line. There were a lot of word slides in the presentation because the presentation will be on line. Referring to Methodology slide, he noted the VISSIM Model was calibrated to existing conditions by observation to adjust the factors so the simulation replicated what was actually happening on the street. The simulation was done for the peak hours in the morning and afternoon. There was an existing analysis and a 2030 analysis. The 2030 analysis used the Palo Alto Travel Demand model which looked at growth or land use in and around the City and predicted traffic volume on various streets. Forecasting to 2030 was already done for the General Plan. He went on to explain AECOM did a peer review of a study done by T.J. Cam (phonetic) and much of the material AECOM used was from that study. Regarding traffic counts, AECOM didn't believe that more traffic counts were needed. Hexagon's count was done when schools were not in session. The numbers were pretty consistent.

XCAP Member unidentified asked what the definition of peak hour was.

Mr. Black replied peak hour was the highest hour. Morning peak hour would be the highest hour during morning commute and afternoon peak hour was the highest hour in the afternoon commute. It was one hour.

XCAP Member unidentified inquired if this was seasonal.

Mr. Black advised they tried not to count during unusual times like around holidays or during the summer. Traffic studies were usually looked at during "typical" conditions and were usually done between September and June. The slides Churchill Queueing AM and PM showed the results of the simulation done at Churchill at the crossing. These showed the queue lengths occurring today and what would occur with the increase in the Caltrain service based on their Business Plan. These analyses were based on nine trains per hour for existing conditions and twelve trains per hour with the Caltrain Business Plan. There were earlier statements about this being gridlocked and impossible to clear with the Caltrain Business Plan and the study found the queues would clear but they could be very long with the Caltrain Business Plan. The northbound left turn from Alma onto Churchill would take four or five cycles to clear, which is about a ten-minute wait. Within the peak hour there would not be a queue that was just continuous. With the increase in the Caltrain service the PM queue would go out to El Camino.

XCAP Member Kleinberg inquired if, for example you were heading towards Alma and you wanted to take a left turn and there were bikes or pedestrians, was the backup for waiting for pedestrian and bikes accounted for?

Mr. Black replied yes, the simulation included pedestrians and bikes based on the counts and times. What were shown were averages throughout the hour. The simulation software provided animation. He also clarified that the counts were done during a school hour. The peak hours for cars and for schools coincide in the morning but didn't coincide in the afternoon and the PM slide showed the traffic peak hour which was worse than the school peak hour. The PM hour was about 5:00 to 6:00 and there were very few bikes or pedestrians at that time, but overall, it was higher.

XCAP Member Klein asked if AECOM did any research which showed when people caught in the queues for several cycles went out of their minds?

Mr. Black answered based on their observations people started to go out of their minds if they had to wait more than 15 minutes. They are not willing to wait that long so they would go somewhere else.

XCAP Member Klein noted the diagrams didn't show a wait of more than 10 minutes, presumably doing nothing would not cause complaints.

Mr. Black responded they are probably complaining now but they would not be willing to wait and instead they would go somewhere else.

XCAP Member Kanne asked if the future assumes twelve trains, was this 2030 or electrification?

Mr. Black clarified existing assumes nine trains per hour and future assumes twelve trains per hour and asked if that was just electrification? Mr. Black moved on to the Traffic Reassignment slides and indicated there were many questions about the reassignment. Reassignment meant the pattern of traffic that was using Churchill now, if Churchill was closed, they would have to go somewhere else. To determine where traffic came from, TJKM purchased data from Streetlight which tracked cell phones which could be used to determine traffic patterns. The traffic that was crossing the railroad tracks was looked at and it figured out where that traffic came. The reassignment was done by hand using the shortest path. Summarizing the traffic study, on the diagram there was traffic going towards the school, traffic coming from the south and turning left and traffic coming from the north and turning right and traffic that is coming out of the neighborhood and going straight across.

XCAP Member unidentified asked if this was showing what happened if the Churchill intersection was closed.

Mr. Black replied the crossing.

XCAP Member unidentified continued that the red arrows showed cars that were not longer going somewhere and the green arrows showed new cars that were going somewhere.

Chair Naik added, the first number was the morning, the second number in parenthesis was in the afternoon. The two sides were eastbound and westbound drips at peak hour.

Mr. Black continued during the AM and PM peak hours, that showed the actual volume of traffic making that particular movement. The red would go away and the green is where the traffic would be added. He emphasized these were assumptions done by hand to assign traffic to the shortest path.

XCAP Member Burton asked if shortest path meant time or distance?

Mr. Black replied distance and traffic speeds on these different roads were not that different. They were all local streets. This model didn't track shortest time. The City's Travel Demand Forecasting model was not nearly detailed enough to handle a small area such as this.

XCAP Member Carrasco noted several residents commented that Caltrain's Business Plan wouldn't allow them to go beyond six or seven trains per hour before grade separation. He wondered if the model used six trains or seven trains per hour.

Mr. Black explained it was using six trains per direction in an hour, twelve trains total.

XCAP Member Carrasco asked if that allowed Caltrain to run twelve trains an hour without grade separations?

Mr. Black advised it was Caltrain's Business Plan that was used.

XCAP Member Brail asked for clarification of some of the numbers, afternoon rush hour 267 cars during the peak hour to El Camino and Oregon. What percentage increase is at these intersections?

Mr. Black advised he only had estimates. At El Camino and Embarcadero has about 3,500 cars going through it in an hour in all directions. He explained in his business, 200 cars are a lot of cars. The volumes going straight across from the neighborhood were split between Embarcadero and Page Mill but biased a little towards Embarcadero because that is closer to Churchill than Page Mill. This reassigned traffic has to go somewhere, not just disappear. They were given the task to accommodate this traffic, not ignore it. The intersections that were defined as having impacts as a result of having this traffic added and the definition is the City of Palo Alto definition of significant impacts that are used in environmental documents. It is adding four seconds of delay to a signalized intersection to an unsignalized intersection that is causing the intersection to meet a signal warrant, and a delay increase at the unsignalized intersection threshold. There would be impacts at El Camino and Embarcadero, El Camino and Page Mill, Alma and Page Mill intersections where the ramps meet and the three stop sign intersections along Alma that provide the connections between Embarcadero and Alma. Hexagon did not agree with the analysis adding the intersections at Embarcadero and Cowper and Embarcadero and Middlefield. The following mitigations were suggested. At El Camino and Embarcadero, adding a left-turn lane resulting in two left-turn lanes going from Embarcadero to El Camino. There were many things that could be done at this intersection. A second south-bound left turn lane could be added, square off the corners of the islands which is considered to increase pedestrian safety. This design would be compatible with the plan to add cycle tracks to Embarcadero. The General Plan had queue jump lanes for

buses at this intersection. The additional lanes are necessary and there would be some acquisition there.

XCAP Member Kleinberg assumed the middle two lanes were south-bound lanes to go onto El Camino. She asked why it was decided to have two lanes turning south and two lanes to go into Stanford? Did the traffic study show that a lot of drivers went over to that intersection and turn south on El Camino?

Mr. Black answered yes. The volume of traffic turning left from Embarcadero to El Camino was very high and there would also be more traffic here with closing Churchill. He explained there many questions about the flow of traffic on Embarcadero, where it backed up, the intersection of Town and Country and the high school driveway. That intersection is not the problem, El Camino is the problem. Traffic is backing up from El Camino through that intersection and beyond. Making improvements at El Camino would help the traffic there. There were no comments received about putting signals in for the ramps from Alma to Oregon Expressway.

XCAP Member Brail asked if introducing lights there would create backups?

Mr. Black replied any time you put a light where there wasn't one, the red light would delay the traffic on Alma. That was a trade-off to allow the ramps to flow.

XCAP Member Brail inquired if overall this would be a healthy intersection, adding delays but improving turns.

Mr. Black answered yes.

XCAP Member Brail noted one of the turning movements on Oregon and at Alma looked like it added 189 cars per hour at peak hour. That intersection had much less traffic than Embarcadero so proportionately that was a lot of cars. He also related the plans seen earlier from the City Staff for intersection improvements to mitigate all of this didn't say anything about that particular intersection. At some point could it be recommended that this intersection be included in that plan?

XCAP Member Templeton asked if any other ways of maintaining traffic flow were considered other than a signal?

Mr. Black replied the stand approach was to put a signal there. The option is a roundabout.

XCAP Member Kanne inquired if a car was heading eastbound on Oregon Expressway, making a right to south of the ramp onto Alma, was that turning movement controlled by the light? Does that back up Oregon Expressway for light queueing?

Mr. Black answered that was not controlled by a signal and it would back up less with a signal or roundabout than leaving it as a stop sign.

XCAP Member Kanne encouraged making sure that turning movement worked well.

Chair Naik noted on the top left of the graphic there was one lane for cars taking the Alma underpass to get down to California Avenue. The way the signal is, the cars are stopped just past the ramp that allowed cars to go down. She asked by stopping cars there, it is impeding the constant flow of those cars from the right lane are going under the underpass and was that considered?

Mr. Black replied there was a right-turn slip lane that bypassed the signal and if the queue was long enough it would block the slip lane.

Chair Naik didn't think there was any traffic data for those intersections as well as the Embarcadero, El Camino intersection and that information would be helpful.

Mr. Black explained those numbers were buried and he will find those numbers for the Group. Moving to El Camino and Page Mill, the improvement was to add a right-turn lane which was already planned.

XCAP Member Kanne remarked the right-hand turn lane takes the sidewalk and where does the land come from?

Mr. Black replied there was a development proposal on that corner and they would be conditioned to do that improvement. It would require some right-of-way acquisition.

XCAP Member Burton indicated around this intersection there were two office buildings under construction. He asked if there was any way to factor in the demand increase because of these new office buildings.

Mr. Black reported that was included in the 2030 forecast.

XCAP Member Klein noted there would be some taking of property at Oregon and El Camino for the right-turn lane. That property is currently under construction. Is there anything going on right now with that development proposal that would inhibit that?

Mr. Black understood that would be built in conjunction with that project under construction.

XCAP Member Klein also asked for 2030 Hexagon went through the math assuming that there would be six trains in each direction per hour. The Caltrain Business Plan assumed that sooner or later there would be at least seven trains in each direction per hour. Is there a metric that could be used to add to the impacts without going through a big study?

Mr. Black answered the current traffic was reassigned. It is irrespective of the number of trains going through. What would change would be the queueing analysis. After the model is set up it isn't hard to query it with different assumptions. It would be had to rerun the model with seven trains instead of six. It is nonlinear so you can't just say it is a percentage more trains so the queue is going to get that percentage longer.

XCAP Member Klein responded he would be interested in seeing that.

Chair Naik clarified there were two ways to refer to the number of trains currently at peak hour. There is per direction and also total. Currently there are five trains in each direction, ten trains total that happen between about 5 and 6 PM. After electrification, Caltrain is moving from ten trains total an hour to twelve trains total an hour. The Caltrain Business Plan talks about adding future trains with a potential going up to twenty trains an hour because it includes assumptions about Caltrain trains and high-speed rail trains. Caltrain has permission to go up to twelve trains per hour. She also pointed out Hexagon looked at the unclearable queues at Churchill but at some point, when that many trains are running, there will also be delays at other crossings that aren't currently separated that will cause network delays.

Mr. Black advised they could use the City's travel demand forecasting model to look at the Citywide effects of more train interruptions which would start to reassign traffic. Drivers would look for shorter ways if delays became longer at their preferred crossing. That had not been looked at because delays are not so long that drivers could save time by looking for other crossings.

XCAP Member Burton observed talking about seven or eight trains in each direction may be beyond 2030 and at that point the automobile traffic may have increased beyond the 2030 plan assumptions, so rail traffic volumes and auto traffic volumes have to be consistent.

XCAP Member Carrasco followed up XCAP Member Burton's comment, using best-case scenario of twelve trains an hour, but that could go higher and he would like to see information for twelve to twenty trains.

Chair Naik responded that XCAP Member Burton's point was even though that will happen at some point in the future, if you look at Caltrain's electrification plans, it probably won't happen by 2030 or should be limited by what Caltrain might actually do by 2030.

Mr. Kamhi explained Caltrain's high-growth model was twelve trains. Moderate growth was eight, baseline was six.

Mr. Black then moved to the next slide, Alma and Embarcadero, and there were hundreds of comments about this intersection. These intersections were shown to be deficient if nothing is done. The improvement studied in the simulation was a signal at Kingsley, change Kingsley to go both directions. There were questions received about queuing too long and the simulation showed that would be okay. Would the queues already on Embarcadero cause this signalized intersection to fail? Based on observations, there are several cycles where the traffic backs up this far in either direction, but that is only occasionally and it clears usually in one cycle. It would also be possible to tie that signal into El Camino to get the most efficient operation out of it. Could this accommodate the cycle plan that has been developed? There is enough right-of-way width on Embarcadero to do this plan without any right-of-way acquisition and still to the cycle track plan. How would the driveways be accessed along there? This is a very schematic drawing and details about how to access driveways need to be worked, but it was felt adequate driveway access could be provided.

XCAP Member Kanne asked if the cycle track were one way and did they require acquisition of private property?

Mr. Black answered they were one way and no property acquisition was needed.

XCAP Member Kanne inquired about the houses on the north side between Emerson and High. The houses are close to the proposed signal light and what are the mitigations for access to those driveways?

Mr. Black advised there were no changes being made on the north side. He then continued with questions. Are more delays anticipated by having a signal on Alma at Kingsley? Since this scheme closes Churchill, so that intersection would cycle faster than it does currently. Did the overcrossing need to be widened for this? Answer is yes, this required two lanes. Two lanes are needed because when you have the signal, two lanes are needed leaving the signal to get the maximum utility out of the two lanes that go through the signal. If there was a merge point just past that, there would be a big imbalance between those two lanes and wouldn't get very good function at the signal. The volume going straight is substantial and right-turn volume isn't that high. Kingsley is currently not four lanes across and this scheme requires widening Kingsley which is currently two lanes. This does not take private property. Going from the PALY side down Embarcadero under the underpass goes from six lanes total down to three lanes and that is the current configuration. If you're going eastbound, once past the PALY driveway there is no signal until Bryant and that is where the bottle neck happens. This scheme moves the signal closer to El Camino. Even with this, couldn't cars still go up Lincoln, down to Emerson and around? The answer is yes, they could still do that. It was hoped this would provide a different way. Right now, the only way to make that connection is Lincoln to Emerson. If people were concerned that the other route still existed, it would be possible to put constraints on the other route so cars would tend not to go that way. This was designed so everyone could use this, and all the traffic was assigned to go this way. This should result in less traffic on Emerson because it would apply to the diverted traffic as well as existing traffic. Regarding movement from High to Kingsley to go south on Alma cars could use the old route. There is a variation that would tie High into the signal. With this scheme, if you're going west on Embarcadero to go north on Alma you would have to make a left turn at the signal onto Kingsley then make a right turn. There is an option to keep the existing connection to the Embarcadero ramp, go from Embarcadero to the ramp then make a right turn onto Alma. There were other design options listed on the slides.

XCAP Member Brail asked what the dominant turning activity was at this area.

Mr. Black replied the traffic southbound on Alma turning left onto Kingsley would be heavier and the right and left off Kingsley onto Embarcadero would be about the same.

Chair Naik noted there is a single lane coming underneath the underpass, this is now handling cars traveling westbound on Embarcadero who would turn on Kingsley and make the unsignalized left turn, and also now all the cars who didn't make a turn on Alma who are now coming under off of a single lane and now queueing up in the right lane to turn on Kingsley. If that queueing gets too long, it will back up the rest of the



traffic from the point of the underpass back into the Town and Country light and back into El Camino. This scheme adds all the Churchill cars who can now do that movement.

Mr. Black advised the simulation showed that wouldn't back up as far as the PALY driveway.

XCAP Member Kanne asked if the staircases at the bridge going from the pedestrian/bike sidewalk up to the sidewalk on the bridge can be maintained and could be some added on the westbound side?

Male answered those types of tweaks could possibly done but that hadn't been looked at yet. In answer to XCAP Member Kanne's question, for planning purposes square footage costs are used for bridges.

Mr. Black continued with his presentation. The next slide showed the level of service results, one for existing and one for 2030 and this is in the report. Salient points from this were the intersections with greatest problems were Embarcadero and El Camino and Page Mill and El Camino. The intersection of Embarcadero and El Camino (number 4), under 2030 with no improvement and Churchill open, there was a delay of 70.6 seconds. With the Churchill traffic reassigned in the AM and with the improvement, it is 73.6 second delay. There were many things that could be done at that particular intersection that weren't investigated. Intersection number 5, El Camino and Page Mill, in the PM the delay was 76.8 with no improvements and without the Churchill closure. With the Churchill closure and with the improvements, it is level of service F. That intersection is built out already and there was nothing else that could be done there. That would be a significant unavoidable impact of the Churchill closure.

Chair Naik noted in 2030 there was a possibility that Meadow and Charleston would be separated which could have a network effect to could improve Page Mill.

Mr. Black responded these were pretty far away from Page Mill and he didn't know what kind of effect this would have on Page Mill. This could be looked at closer to see if that would make a difference.

Ms. Cotton Gaines brought up the slide showing the flyer listing future outreach meetings.

#### Public Comment

Yung Jo (phonetic) lives in the Southgate area. She encouraged any measures taken for grade separation at Churchill would not irrevocably destroy or degrade the neighborhood characteristics. The closure at Churchill was supported by more than 500 Palo Alto residents who signed a petition which was submitted to the City Council several months ago.

Female speaker was strongly against the closure at Churchill. She asked if there was a study of what would happen to traffic with a true grade separation at Churchill? She encouraged looking beyond 2030 for the impacts as traffic gets worse overall.

Neva Yarkin remarked that former mayor Pat Burt advised the City has no money so she asked why five new options were being considered all with questionable costs?

Male speaker supported the mitigations proposed by Hexagon. There has been two years of data brought to the Committee. Referencing this data, there are 9,000 cars a day at Churchill, 84 percent were traversing from Alma to El Camino or El Camino to Alma. Over 60 percent of traffic passing through Churchill, passes by Embarcadero because Embarcadero is broken.

Barbara Hazlett stated she lives on Emerson Street, on the north side of Embarcadero. Traffic on Embarcadero is currently extremely heavy and noisy. She is interested in the other options Mr. Black mentioned for the El Camino/Embarcadero intersection and also wanted to know what could be done to clear queues off of Embarcadero.

Cari Yarkin (phonetic) voiced approval of the traffic lights at Alma off of Oregon to connect the on and off ramps and the traffic light on Alma at Kingsley. Currently it is very difficult for cars to get in and out of their driveways on Churchill east of Alma during peak hours. If Churchill is not closed that situation will be worse.

Dexter Girton noted some of the long trucks eastbound on Embarcadero Road trying to make the sharp turn onto Kingsley are unable to make that turn. To make that turn, trucks swing as far as they possibly can into the Kingsley lane near parked cars and the truck wheels go up onto the curb. There are also many bicycles in that area from the high school.

Male speaker is concerned about the walkability and safety of the area and would like to see more consideration for that as traffic mitigations are looked at. There are also concerns about the level of service at the Yuma signals which are not shown in the diagrams.

David Kennedy stated he saw planned cycled tracks along the side of Embarcadero Road and would like more information about that.

Eduardo Jack asked about the grades on the level of service chart, A was better than F. He also commented with all the improvements, Item Number Five did not get better. Mr. Black noted there were about 3,000 cars on Embarcadero and there would be about 150 cars added. The overall capacity of El Camino and Embarcadero needs to be kept in mind, so it was still only 5 percent more cars added.

Female speaker noted Alma and Embarcadero is an unusually intricate intersection and if more traffic is added through other mitigations, a better network delay diagram is needed with a picture of the entire traffic flow. Regarding safety, there are many children dropped off on the Embarcadero slip road and even with traffic calming and all the mitigations shown, there will be a huge impact on the safety in this area.

Steve Carlson (phonetic) remarked there are big questions about future growth. There are no numbers in Palo Alto's projection for 2030. Caltrain's projection of growth by 2040 is 40 percent increased population density along the corridor which is driving their medium and high-growth scenarios for trains. He hoped Palo Alto was using

numbers that matched Caltrain's. At what levels of growth do the queues at Embarcadero and Alma become unacceptable? What looks like it may work at that intersection in 2030 may not work in 2040.

Aileen Lee felt the closure at Churchill was the most cost effective and safe option for that crossing.

XCAP Member Kleinberg asked about Item Number Five, the average was 3,500 cars per hour in either direction.

Mr. Black advised the question was the total volume going through the intersection of El Camino and Embarcadero. The 3,500 was an estimate in the highest hour, the total in all directions.

XCAP Member Brail noted the numbers on the chart were in each direction.

XCAP Member Cho asked when doing a traffic study, what was the typical period of projection?

Mr. Black answered this study looked at 2030 because that was the forecast year of the City's General Plan. The City has no forecast of growth beyond 2030.

XCAP Member Klein remarked when talking about numbers of growth it is not enough to talk about Palo Alto because a lot of traffic on these streets is cut-through traffic that doesn't originate or end in Palo Alto. Controlling growth in Palo Alto won't work to diminish the traffic numbers unless there is cooperation from the surrounding communities.

Mr. Black advised when working on a Caltrain project, they require a projection to 25 years in the future.

#### **4. Discussion: Prepare for Update for City Council on January 21, 2020**

Chair Naik advised the update she will be giving City Council will be recapping what the Group has done. New ideas were heard, they were voted on, whet through the threshold, recommending three ideas to go forward. XCAP Member Reckdahl will be giving a technical conceptual view of the three ideas. Council will then decide if they want to move forward with any of those ideas and spend more money to get experts to look at those ideas.

XCAP Member Carrasco related that it seemed the public sector would cost 30 to 40 percent more and he wondered if that was an important issue.

Char Naik felt the Group's role is not to figure out what can be done to reduce cost overloads.

Mr. Kamhi pointed out that a lot of what drives the costs are federal laws and regulations.

XCAP Member Cho asked what the status was on the Churchill additional option and the two Meadow roundabouts.

Chair Naik responded it would depend on City Council's decision on those options. She will present the Group's report and there will also be a staff analysis to accompany that report which will include the comments that AECOM had on those options and an estimate of the costs to do further studies on those items.

## **5. XCAP Member Updates and Working Groups Updates**

XCAP Member Kanne stated the measurable criteria group met and attempted to come up with measurable criteria. They listed some questions for each criterion for discussion.

Chair Naik advised that this group was looking at what existing measurements are already in things like the Comprehensive Plan and the Palo Alto Rail Study. Are there any existing numbers that could be used to apply the criteria the Council has given the Group? There is one question for City Council, questions for staff, question for the consultants about metrics and things that would be helpful when trying to understand what is measurable in the criteria.

XCAP Member Templeton shared A through J referred to the title of the document on the grid.

Chair Naik responded on the website there was a fact sheet page and the last document lists all of the options using this measurable criterion and those letters referred to those lettered criteria.

XCAP Member Brail indicated connectivity was one of the requirements other than traffic impacts. There is the possibility of additional bicycle and pedestrian connectivity depending on the option chosen. Is the Group allowed to do that because Caltrain owns the right-of-way? Could bicycle and pedestrian connectivity be a measurable impact?

Chair Naik remarked these questions were about current metrics about connectivity the Group didn't know about and where that information could be obtained. She advised the Comprehensive Plan has maps called noise contour maps which show current decibel levels of existing noise corridors including Caltrain and the 101. It is known from talking to the City Manager that at this level of engineering there isn't going to be enough specifics about what type of noise can be expected with the various types of grade separations. The best point of reference is that Menlo Park is a little more advanced and the next level of engineering would match what the Group is looking for. In looking at their reports, there is no information on noise and vibration. The challenge will be not having that level of detail, the Group might say they have looked at the Comprehensive Plan and that says there can't be more than a specific number of decibels in a noise corridor so whatever potential mitigations being looked at for any of the alternatives should not exceed that number in the Comp Plan.

XCAP Member Carrasco commented the traffic report seemed very generic that modeled cars mainly. Palo Alto has been moving in the direction of pedestrian and bicycle priority and he didn't see that as a priority in these studies.

XCAP Member Burton thought model share splits could be built into the City's 2030 Plan.

XCAP Member Burton remarked he and XCAP Members Levin and Lau were on the Caltrain committee. They hoped to have an answer about what happens to the right-of-way that might be freed up by removing the tracks. Caltrain does own that there they felt there would need to be a conversation with Caltrain and the City Attorney about that, so there is no answer for that currently.

XCAP Member Klein thought all the questions regarding the measurable criteria were okay except the first. He didn't think it was appropriate for the XCAP Group to ask the City Questions.

Chair Naik explained the question for the City Council was one of the criteria is, is the option fundable with feasible sources. The question for Council was, what level of funding is feasible and is there more guidance on the topic based on the City's recent tax discussions. This question could be held until a later date.

XCAP Member Klein did not want that question asked right now.

Chair Naik noted these questions, except the first question will be submitted to staff and the consultants.

## **6. Action: Update XCAP List of Questions**

Ms. Cotton Gaines commented the questions were not printed out because it seemed like there were new questions added and not actual changes to the list of questions except for one. Some of the questions may have been addressed by now and some may only be relevant for the technical engineering conversation. It was hoped the list of questions could be pared down to the questions most salient for the decision-making process that is needed between now and April.

Chair Naik asked Ms. Cotton Gaines to forward all the questions submitted to the Group Members. For today's discussion, she asked members to think about when some official recommendations will need to be made, what the areas are that haven't been covered that the Group would like more information about to help guide the kinds of questions that staff and other experts can answer and also the agendas and schedules going forward. She asked that the questions be limited to the existing seven alternatives to get through some of the basics. The process is, the Group will be making recommendations for an alternative in the case of the viaduct, the trench, the tunnel but not the closure of Churchill, so the consultants can do deeper studies on those. Ms. Naik noted she still wanted to understand the Stanford station discussion. Because the consultant showed that would be removed, and the questions she submitted were very specific around that, which is are there any lease agreements or something the Group needed to know about in terms of the removal of the station? In going through the Caltrain Business Plan, the Stanford station was not discussed

anywhere. This is notable for two things. Caltrain is only looking at operations, so it makes sense they wouldn't think about the Stanford station. Second, Stanford is underwriting much of the work Caltrain is doing on the Business Plan. She questioned if there was some understanding between the City and Stanford or Caltrain and Stanford or PAUSD.

XCAP Member Klein stated he thought there needed to be a preliminary cut of questions.

XCAP Member Brail suggested the questions fell into several categories such as, something the members needed to know to make a decision, something members want other people to know so they can make the same decision, something already known, something there will not be an answer to.

Chair Naik remarked the way the questions were originally presented was in a spread sheet that had everyone's name with their questions. She suggested members look up their names and decide if they want to cut some questions, keep some questions or add new questions. Questions should be aimed at what is needed to make a decision.

XCAP Member Klein inquired if once a person cuts down his or her questions, that will be submitted to staff and consultant, even if it would require a lot of work.

Chair Naik replied there would be a review. She proposed starting with the traffic section to eliminate some of those questions.

XCAP Member Cho suggested some of the questions could obviously be eliminated without discussion.

XCAP Member Reckdahl asked what a pulse network was.

Chair Naik answered it was something that showed the entire network delays.

XCAP Member Carrasco advised it was a train term, when trains come to a station at the same time and are coordinated and scheduled that way.

It was agreed the following questions would be kept: 5, 12, 29, 30, 36.

Chair Naik encouraged everyone to go through the remaining questions in order to eliminate those not necessary before the meeting next week.

XCAP Member Brail encouraged asking for a traffic study with more trains.

## **7. Staff Updates**

Ms. Cotton Gaines explained Sebastian Petty could come on January 22 of 29.

Chair Naik suggested January 29 with a 4:00 start.

Mr. Kamhi gave a short report on the Dumbarton meeting he attended. The FTA is very invested in this. The different transit modes they are considering are regional

rail, light rail and an automated rubber-tired vehicle, an automated bus. There is a new agency called Cross Bay Transit Partners leading this.

Ms. Cotton Gaines explained the Town Hall meetings would be set up like the larger community meetings done in the past.

Mr. Kamhi explained he will be hosting the Word on the Street. This is intended to hear comments. It is not focused on rail separation. It is focused on all transportation.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 7:09 PM.