

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

### **THIS PACKET INCLUDES:**

A compilation of emails (public comments, etc) submitted to the XCAP email box, [XCAP@CityofPaloAlto.org](mailto:XCAP@CityofPaloAlto.org), between **June 3 and June 17, 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:** [pellson@pacbell.net](mailto:pellson@pacbell.net)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Charleston & Meadow Partial Underpass  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 3, 2020 4:05:34 PM

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Dear XCAP Members,

I am going to focus on the East Meadow and Charleston crossings because others have done a good job commenting on Churchill.

**Exhibits and Renderings of Ped/Bike Connections Are Unclear**

Ped/bike connections for the partial tunnel are very unclear in the drawings. I am used to reading plans, and I can't figure out certain components on both Charleston and Meadow. That does not comply with criteria council laid out at the beginning of this process for evaluating alternatives. Two Tier One and one Tier Two **Adopted by City Council Criteria for Evaluation of Alternatives** are relevant to bike/ped connectivity and local access. It is not possible to evaluate ped/bike safety and comfort because the renderings of these facilities are unclear and inconsistent.

**Relevant Bike/Ped Tier 1 Criteria: Most Important**

- East-West connectivity: facilitate movement across the corridor for all modes of transportation
- Ped/Bike circulation: provide clear and safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists seeking to cross the rail corridor, separate for automobile traffic

**Relevant Bike/Ped Tier 2 Criteria: Also Important**

- Local access: maintain or improve access to neighborhoods, parks, schools and other destinations along the corridor while reducing regional traffic on neighborhood streets

Whatever design we pick must have excellent bike/ped connectivity, safety, comfort. Meadow and Charleston are school commute corridors, a residential arterial, a collector street, connectors from thousands of south Palo Alto homes to public schools, parks, our only south PA library, a shopping center, community centers as well as private learning and recreation facilities. Further, these are the only two grade separated crossings south of Oregon Expressway in Palo Alto.

Here are just a few of the questions the renderings raised for me. Motor vehicle access is pretty clear. The analysis and design work to date seems to prioritize motor vehicle LOS. This is inconsistent with Comprehensive Plan goals policies and programs (See list of these below). Bike connectivity is even less clear than ped connectivity.

- 1). How will a bicyclist on Alma traveling either direction connect to the ped/bike bridge turn onto East Meadow WB or Park Blvd? Likewise, how does one turn off these cross streets to get to Alma? (This will matter for people who live on Alma.)
- 2). Will there be any signals? Where will they be? What is their purpose? This was another detail that was inconsistent between renderings, drawings, reports and exhibits.
- 3). During the morning school commute time, there are often packs of 20 or more student bicyclists who collect behind traffic stops. Please insure that bike facilities have sufficient capacity and sufficient turning radius to handle this bike volume as well as two-way ped/bike traffic without

creating bike/ped conflicts.

4). Was the design team given Walk & Roll maps to help them understand what the designated school commute routes are in this area? Students don't just travel along Charleston and Meadow. They must also cross the roads at multiple locations. These crossings must be protected. (See Comp Plan goals, programs and policies below). Here are links to the relevant school site school commute route maps:

Fairmeadow <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/72344>

Hoover <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/72348>

JLS Middle School <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/72349>

Gunn High School <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/72347>

5). At the meeting, the engineer mentioned that they might be able to take away some of the current designed bike capacity. Please note that middle school and high school bike counts continue to grow and adult commuters are also increasing in number. (See secondary school bike counts. <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?t=61556.7&BlobID=74257> ) Plan for more bicyclists. Please clearly separate pedestrian and bike components of the facilities for comfort and safety of all.

### **The Comp Plan Prioritizes Safety**

The auto LOS improvements on Charleston with the two-lane roundabout astonished me. Any grade separation option is likely to induce traffic, but if a two-lane roundabout significantly increases capacity, it will be critically important to understand how the design maintains school zone speeds (20mph) on Charleston where so many younger students must cross to get to:

- Hoover Elementary School
- JLS Middle School
- Fairmeadow Elementary School
- Challenger School
- Mitchell Park CC and library
- Cubberley Community Center
- Playing fields on both sides of Charleston

6). Ditto for East Meadow.

7). There are bike/ped destinations on both sides of Charleston. The roundabout will disgorge cars roughly 600' before the school zone begins, so it must be designed to moderate speeds (of cars coming off Alma Expressway) to 20mph. This is demanded by the Comprehensive Plan (relevant goals, policies, and programs pasted below) and Muni Code

***10.56.035 Twenty miles per hour school zones speed limit.***

*It is determined and justified pursuant to California Vehicle Code Section 22358.4(b)(1) that twenty miles per hour shall be the prima facie speed limit on the road segments shown below at a distance within 500 feet from or of the school grounds while children are going to or leaving the school, either during school hours or during the noon recess period.*

8). The roundabout on Charleston is designed with two lanes. I asked the Hexagon consultant about the possibility of reducing its capacity to one lane He said he had tried it and the experiment resulted in "gridlock." I see no mention of this experiment in the reports. Where is the data and information about the assumptions he made when he did the analysis? I worry that a two-lane roundabout might both induce auto trip increases and increase speeds right near Carlson, an important school commute crossing/bike/ped route. I want to understand this better. The size of the roundabout also will have

significant visual impacts on the abutting neighborhood area. It also will affect the number of homes that have to be taken. The decision not to use a single-lane roundabout should be very carefully considered, given Council's Adopted Criteria.

9). The existing Bryant Bike Boulevard/Meadow crossing is uncomfortable for peds and bikes. Can this plan provide a solution to create a gap in traffic for bike/peds there?

**10). How does the plan address relevant City of Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Goals, Policies, Programs:**

Goal T-1: Create a sustainable transportation system, complemented by a mix of land uses that emphasizes walking, bicycling, use of public transportation and other methods to reduce GHG emissions and the use of single occupancy motor vehicles.

Policy T-1.3: Reduce GHG and pollutant emissions associated with transportation by reducing VMT and per-mile emissions through increasing transit options, supporting biking and walking, and the use of zero-emission vehicle technologies to meet City and State goals for GHG reductions by 2030.

Goal T-3: Maintain an efficient roadway network for all users.

Policy T-3.2 Enhance connections to, from and between parks, community centers, recreation facilities, libraries, and schools for all users.

Policy T-3.3 Avoid major increases in single-occupant vehicle capacity when constructing or modifying roadways unless needed to remedy severe congestion or critical neighborhood traffic problems. Where capacity is increased, balance the needs of motor vehicles with those of pedestrians and bicyclists.

Policy T-3.4 Regulate truck movements and large commercial buses in a manner that balances the efficient movement of trucks and buses while preserving the residential character of Palo Alto's street system.

Policy T3.5 When constructing or modifying roadways, plan for use of the roadway by all users.

Program T3.5.1 Continue to use best practices in roadway design that are consistent with complete streets principles and the Urban Forest Master Plan, focusing on bicycle and pedestrian safety and multi-modal uses. Consider opportunities to incorporate best practices from the National Association of City Transportation Officials guidelines for urban streets and bikeways, tailored to the Palo Alto context.

Policy T-3.6 Consider pedestrians, bicyclists, e-bikes, and motorcycles when designing road surfaces, curbs, crossings, signage, landscaping and sight lines.

Policy T-3.7 Encourage pedestrian-friendly design features such as sidewalks, street trees, on-street parking, gathering spaces, gardens, outdoor furniture, and interesting architectural details.

Policy T-3.8 Add planting pockets with street trees to provide shade, calm traffic and enhance the pedestrian realm.

Policy T-3.15 Pursue grade separation of rail crossings along the rail corridor as a City priority.

Goal T-4: Protect streets and adopted school commute corridors that contribute to neighborhood character and provide a range of local transportation options.

Policy T-4.1 Continue to construct traffic calming measures to slow traffic on local and collector streets, and prioritize calming measures over congestion management.

Policy T-4.4 Maintain the following roadways as residential arterials, treated with landscaping, medians, and other visual improvements to distinguish them as residential streets, in order to improve safety:

- Middlefield Road (between San Francisquito Creek and San Antonio Road)
- University Avenue (between San Francisquito Creek and Middlefield Road)
- Embarcadero Road (between Alma Street and West Bayshore Road)
- **East and West Charleston Road/Arastradero Road (between Miranda and Fabian Way)**

Policy T-4.5 Minimize the danger of increased commercial ingress/egress adjacent to major intersections, and noticeable increases in traffic from new development in residential neighborhoods, through traffic mitigations measures.

Goal T-6: Provide a safe environment for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists on Palo Alto streets.

Policy T-6.1 Continue to make safety the first priority of citywide transportation planning. Prioritize pedestrian, bicycle and automobile safety over motor vehicle level of service at intersections and motor vehicle parking.

Program T6.1.1 Follow the principles of the Safe Routes to School program to implement traffic safety measures that focus on safe routes to work, shopping, downtown, community services, parks and schools including all designated school commute corridors.

Policy T-6.2: Pursue goal of zero severe injuries and roadway fatalities on Palo Alto city streets.

Policy T-6.6 Use engineering, enforcement and educational tools to improve safety for all users on City roadways.

Program T6.4.3: In collaboration with PAUSD, provide adult crossing guards at school crossings that meet established warrants.

Policy T-6.6: Use engineering, enforcement and educational tools to improve safety for all users on city roadways.

Program T6.6.1 Periodically evaluate safety on roadways and at intersections and enhance conditions through the use of signal technology and physical changes. Consider the construction of traffic circles for improved intersection safety.

Program T.6.6.6 Improve pedestrian crossings by creating protected areas and better pedestrian and traffic visibility. Use a toolbox including bulbout, small curb radii, high visibility crosswalks and landscaping.

Policy T-6.8 Vigorously and consistently enforce speed limits and other traffic laws for both motor vehicles and bicycle traffic.

Policy Support regional bicycle and pedestrian plans including development of the Bay Trail, Bay-to-Ridge Trail and the Santa Clara County County-wide Bicycle System.

Program T8.8.1 Identify and improve bicycle connections to/from neighboring communities in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties to support local trips that cross city boundaries. Also advocate for reducing barriers to bicycling and walking at freeway interchanges, expressway intersections and railroad grade crossings.

11). How does the plan take into account the proposed bicycle/pedestrian boulevard network outlined in the CoPA Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation Plan?

### **Pitch or Pick?**

These latest plans are not ready for prime time (community meetings) because the ped/bike components are poorly developed (there is no way to evaluate something one cannot understand), but that doesn't mean they should be thrown out. The latest alternative would keep rail at grade—which, by itself, merits consideration because, without it, the alternatives we are left with probably will be the hybrid or the viaduct which likely are not politically feasible.

I understand that the box was not been incorporated in these designs. The was a cost-saving feature. Why was it not included?

These are complicated choices. I realize there won't be perfect options. However, we can't pick our evaluate these latest options if we can't understand ped/bike safety components. The partial underpass options need work, but I'm not ready to throw them out. There is potential to make them more attractive. I understand that these are very preliminary designs, but the ped/bike facilities must be made more clear.

I am still digesting these concepts and will send thoughts later this week about possible ped/bike improvements.

Thank you for your work on this important project and for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Penny Ellson



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**From:** [Nadia Naik](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Caltrain Noise EIR and Stadler KISS info  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 3, 2020 7:42:54 PM

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FYI

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

**From:** Nadia Naik <[nadianaik@gmail.com](mailto:nadianaik@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Wed, Jun 3, 2020 at 7:37 PM  
**Subject:** Caltrain Noise EIR and Stadler KISS info  
**To:** Bhatia, Ripon <[Ripon.Bhatia@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Ripon.Bhatia@cityofpaloalto.org)>, DeStefano, Peter <[peter.destefano@aecom.com](mailto:peter.destefano@aecom.com)>, Kamhi, Philip <[Philip.Kamhi@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Philip.Kamhi@cityofpaloalto.org)>, Larry Klein <[lklein40@gmail.com](mailto:lklein40@gmail.com)>, Litzinger, Millette <[millette.litzinger@aecom.com](mailto:millette.litzinger@aecom.com)>, Mercurio, Etty <[etty.mercurio@aecom.com](mailto:etty.mercurio@aecom.com)>, Shikada, Ed <[ed.shikada@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:ed.shikada@cityofpaloalto.org)>, [paul.burge@aecom.com](mailto:paul.burge@aecom.com) <[paul.burge@aecom.com](mailto:paul.burge@aecom.com)>  
**CC:** Adrian Brandt <[adrian.brandt@gmail.com](mailto:adrian.brandt@gmail.com)>

Hi All,

The following link is for the Stadler brochure describing the Caltrain trains.

[http://www.tillier.net/stuff/caltrain/stadler\\_caltrain\\_emu\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.tillier.net/stuff/caltrain/stadler_caltrain_emu_brochure.pdf)

Here's the link for the Caltrain electrification EIR from 2014

<https://www.caltrain.com/Assets/Caltrain+Modernization+Program/DEIR/Appendix+C+Noise+Study.pdf>

And here's the descriptions of specs go the Stadlers

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stadler\\_KISS](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stadler_KISS)

I hope that helps!

Nadia

**From:** [Art Liberman](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [Swent, Richard](#)  
**Cc:** [Kamhi, Philip](#); [PABAC](#); [Bhatia, Ripon](#)  
**Subject:** Re: XCAP presentation to PABAC  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 3, 2020 3:30:23 PM

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After looking at the plans and listening to the conversations last night, the issues with the two-way bike/ped path for Meadow and Charleston look very difficult to resolve.

For Meadow, I suggest that you consider instead a bike/ped tunnel under Alma and the rails that would be offset from the Meadow intersection - for example as suggested for the Churchill Option 1. This would use the current frontage on Alma (now a short one way separated right turn lane) and some of the right-of-way on the opposite side of the track for the ramps up and down to the tunnel. This would mean the tunnel would have two very undesirable 90 degree entrances and exits for bicycles - but the other alternatives that have been proposed seem worse to me.

Art Liberman

On Wednesday, June 3, 2020, 12:10:08 PM PDT, Richard Swent <[rswent@pacbell.net](mailto:rswent@pacbell.net)> wrote:

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Dear XCAP,

Looking at the plans we were given and listening to Nadia, I get the impression that the automobile design was performed first and the bike/ped design is now being shoe-horned into that. This is a flawed process and will almost always produce unacceptable results. It may be too late to fix the process this time but I hope that this does not happen again in the future. A Complete Streets approach would consider all modes from the outset and produce an integrated and harmonious plan that does not force all the inconvenience or danger onto one subset of users.

We were told that one-way bike/ped paths on both sides of Meadow and Charleston could not be built because of conflicts with the roadway turn layout (a result of the process failure). I suggest that if the bike/ped path goes UNDER the tracks and the autos go OVER the tracks (the opposite of what I said last night), then these conflicts go away. The only remaining challenge for the bike/ped paths would be to integrate them into traffic flow at the ends, but that should be much easier than with the current plans.

Richard Swent



**From:** [David Shen](#)  
**To:** [Bhatia, Ripon](#); [DeStefano, Peter](#); [Kamhi, Philip](#); [Larry Klein](#); [Millette](#); [Ety](#); [Shikada, Ed](#); [paul.burge@aecom.com](mailto:paul.burge@aecom.com)  
**Cc:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [David Shen](#)  
**Subject:** Ideas regarding the rating table in the Noise/Vibration report  
**Date:** Thursday, June 4, 2020 9:14:08 PM

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Hi all,

First many thanks to AECOM for producing that great noise and vibration report.

In reference to the many comments regarding the rating table towards the end, I had some thoughts below.

If 3 db is on the edge of perceivable change in sound, then it would seem like a scale should be:

0=no change  
1=edge of human perception  
2=certain perception for X% of the people

Potentially you could make those "positive change" or less noise/vibration, and include negative change:

-2=certain negative change for X% of people  
-1=edge of human perception in negative direction (louder)  
0=no change  
1=edge of human perception in positive direction (softer)  
2=certain positive change for X% of the people

I would comment on the fact that "edge" in either direction would only be discussed in terms of the data presented. Would there really be a perceivable positive or negative impact if the data showed options to be between -1 and 1? I would argue that would depend on other factors.

It may make sense to distill this rating to:

-1=perceivable negative change for X% of people  
0=no change  
1= perceivable positive change for X% of people

A note about "for X% of people" - there must be data and statistics on human hearing and what % of people would definitively note a change either way in sound given a change in dB. So we set some threshold percentage and that would be our threshold for rating.

This could also mean that we could also have a benchmark option in the table, like using no change, or today's version. Then options could be either positive or negative movement relevant to the benchmark. So this might be a way to include the current options with horns blowing at the intersections and show the most significant positive change from there.

You could also do that to any one of the options in each group for an intersection. There could be separate tables, comparing one option to all of the others. Yes redundant in some aspects, but the numbers could be illustrative if you used each option as the benchmark and showed how the others fared against that option. Otherwise, the numbers could have bias when only graded against the option that was used a benchmark.

I would guess that measurements could have some variance if done over time and across days. The guys who measured from my front yard did so only once and not again so averaging might yield variance, as well as a standard deviation that may or may not be relevant.

Thoughts on the above? Thanks in advance!

David Shen  
XCAP Member

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David Shen  
North Old Palo Alto Group

**From:** [Bill Zaumen](#)  
**To:** [Robinson, William](#); [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Cc:** [Star-Lack, Sylvia](#); [Mesterhazy, Rosie](#); [Chan, Joanna](#); [Kamhi, Philip](#); [Bhatia, Ripon](#); [PABAC](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Neighbor in Meadow-Charleston-Alma supports Viaduct grade separation  
**Date:** Thursday, June 4, 2020 11:18:30 PM

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On Thu, 2020-06-04 at 15:58 -0700, William Robinson wrote:

>

> Neighbors object to raising the rail, assuming more noise and less  
> privacy. Please consider these thoughts about those concerns.

Just to add some observations about noise given a raised track ...

Some years ago I was at a conference in southern France at a location on the coast between Cannes and Nice. There was a cocktail hour before a dinner, where we could stand around outside and chat. It was very close to a rail line with raised tracks. We saw several TGV plus local trains to by and the noise was not excessive at all. Because they were all sharing the same tracks, the TGV trains at this point were going at the same speed as the rest. All were a lot quieter than Caltrain. Because it was elevated, they didn't need to blast a horn, and with electric engines, they didn't need to run a noisy engine.

The train design may have had other noise-reduction features as well. I was once in Nürnberg and went to the transportation museum. They had an exhibit showing the various techniques they used to make the trains as quiet as possible. Some involved sound absorbing materials, but others tried to limit turbulent airflow around the train. Each feature they showed caused a noticeable reduction in volume - they played a recording of the sounds for each so you could hear the difference.

These trains make some of the train sets Caltrain uses look like something out of Stalinist Russia in comparison. It would be a mistake to assume the noise levels associated with Caltrain are typical of what well designed trains would produce today.

Bill

**From:** [Nadia Naik](#)  
**To:** [Wilson, Sarah](#)  
**Cc:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [Bhatia, Ripon](#); [Shikada, Ed](#); [Kamhi, Philip](#)  
**Subject:** Updated and Amended XCAP Report #5 for City Council  
**Date:** Thursday, June 4, 2020 10:01:29 AM  
**Attachments:** [Final- XCAP Update to City Council #5 amended 6420.docx](#)

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Hi Sarah (and XCAPers),

Attached please find XCAP's amended report for inclusion in the City Council packet.

Thanks  
Nadia

**From:** [Nadia Naik](#)  
**To:** [Burge, Paul](#)  
**Cc:** [David Shen](#); [Bhatia, Ripon](#); [DeStefano, Peter](#); [Kamhi, Philip](#); [Larry Klein](#); [Litzinger, Millette](#); [Mercurio, ETTY](#); [Shikada, Ed](#); [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** CAUTION: DO NOT RESPOND ALL - FWD [EXTERNAL] Ideas regarding the rating table in the Noise/Vibration report  
**Date:** Friday, June 5, 2020 1:43:59 PM

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(XCAPers - please do not respond to this email so we can avoid any Brown Act violations.)

Hi Paul,

Your email went to all of XCAP which means XCAP members can't respond because we are subject to the Brown Act and would have a violation.

All members have, however, seen your email - so they are aware of the situation.

The Committee gave you leeway to return with your best judgement. I know Staff had not had an opportunity to review the Noise/Vibration study before it came to XCAP so they may have their own feedback.

You will be invited to return to present the final report, so at that meeting you will then have the opportunity to ultimately explain your final decision.

Thanks,  
Nadia

On Fri, Jun 5, 2020 at 8:17 AM Burge, Paul <[paul.burge@aecom.com](mailto:paul.burge@aecom.com)> wrote:

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XCAP members,

Reflecting on the discussion following Wednesday afternoon's noise and vibration presentation, I am leaning towards scrapping the summary table entirely. This is because, while the summary table was originally intended to provide a composite of the influences of (quantitative) operational noise, (qualitative) operational vibration, and (qualitative) construction noise and vibration; any effort to combine these influences would be biased on the basis of which is more or less important. So while I evaluated the relative importance of operational noise on a scale of 0 to 5, operational vibration on 0 to 3, and construction N&V as 0 to 3, others might have weighted these differently as a matter of personal opinion. For example, as someone pointed out, to someone who moves into the neighborhood after the construction is completed, what do they care about the construction noise and vibration? Rather, if we had assigned weighting factors as 0 to 20 for noise, 0 to 5 for vibration, and 0 to 3 for construction N&V, (which is completely subjective) the results would have been

much different.

As an objective evaluator (who does not even live in the community), *my opinion* on which of these fundamentally different components is more or less important should not influence the outcome. In fact, since everyone's opinion on the relative importance of these components could be different (depending on a number of factors), it seems that trying to combine the relative benefits of each into a single number may be an unwarranted oversimplification. This might be similar to trying to create a single combined score for each alternative that includes not only the evaluation of noise and vibration, but also traffic, pedestrian access, aesthetics, air quality, safety, project cost, and a dozen other factors, and I don't think that is what you are trying to do.

Thoughts?

Paul

**From:** David Shen <[dshen.nopa@gmail.com](mailto:dshen.nopa@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, June 04, 2020 9:14 PM

**To:** Ripon <[Ripon.Bhatia@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Ripon.Bhatia@cityofpaloalto.org)>; DeStefano, Peter <[peter.destefano@aecom.com](mailto:peter.destefano@aecom.com)>; Philip <[Philip.Kamhi@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Philip.Kamhi@cityofpaloalto.org)>; Larry Klein <[lklein40@gmail.com](mailto:lklein40@gmail.com)>; Litzinger, Millette <[millette.litzinger@aecom.com](mailto:millette.litzinger@aecom.com)>; Mercurio, Eddy <[etty.mercurio@aecom.com](mailto:etty.mercurio@aecom.com)>; Ed <[ed.shikada@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:ed.shikada@cityofpaloalto.org)>; Burge, Paul <[paul.burge@aecom.com](mailto:paul.burge@aecom.com)>

**Cc:** [xcap@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:xcap@cityofpaloalto.org); David Shen <[dshen.nopa@gmail.com](mailto:dshen.nopa@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Ideas regarding the rating table in the Noise/Vibration report

Hi all,

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David Shen

XCAP Member

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David Shen

North Old Palo Alto Group



**From:** [Glenn Fisher](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** Fact sheets for alternative Charleston and E Meadow  
**Date:** Friday, June 5, 2020 9:34:55 PM

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When do you expect the Fact Sheets for the new proposals for Charleston and E. Meadow, and their cost estimates? Until these are available, there's no way to provide meaningful input to the committee about the options for S. Palo Alto.

Glenn

**From:** [Teri Llach](#)  
**To:** [citycouncil@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:citycouncil@cityofpaloalto.org); [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** Please Close Churchill  
**Date:** Friday, June 5, 2020 10:45:22 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Hi

Thank you for reading my email. I go to the meetings but I wanted to write too – we need to close Churchill. It is the only logical option based on all the analysis.

The data speaks for itself - based on the analysis by AECOM, and all the additional traffic research, it is clear that the Oregon + Embarcadero mitigation measures with the closure of Churchill is the best and most cost effective solution for the whole city. Traffic on Churchill is 70% thru traffic that is easily managed on Oregon and Embarcadero w/ the cost effective mitigation measures.

There is no issue with police and fire to close Churchill.

The data, the expense, the time, the safety – closing Churchill is the only option. We will all get used to Churchill being closed and soon will not even remember when it was open.

Thank you for your time

Teri

**Teri Llach**  
**p:** 650-575-6913  
**w:** [www.terillach.com](http://www.terillach.com)  
**e:** [llachteric@gmail.com](mailto:llachteric@gmail.com)



**From:** [Phil Burton](#)  
**To:** [Shikada, Ed](#); [Nadia Naik](#)  
**Cc:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [Bhatia, Ripon](#); [Kamhi, Philip](#)  
**Subject:** RE:OK to respond by email and not violating Brown Act -- [EXTERNAL] Ideas regarding the rating table in the Noise/Vibration report  
**Date:** Friday, June 5, 2020 1:13:27 PM

---

Ed,

Does the Brown Act preclude me or any other XCAP member from responding to the substance of Paul's email?

[Phil Burton](#)

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**From:** Burge, Paul [mailto:paul.burge@aecom.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, June 5, 2020 8:17 AM  
**To:** David Shen <dshen.nopa@gmail.com>; Ripon <Ripon.Bhatia@cityofpaloalto.org>; DeStefano, Peter <peter.destefano@aecom.com>; Philip <Philip.Kamhi@cityofpaloalto.org>; Larry Klein <lklein40@gmail.com>; Litzinger, Millette <millette.litzinger@aecom.com>; Mercurio, ETTY <etty.mercurio@aecom.com>; Ed <ed.shikada@cityofpaloalto.org>  
**Cc:** xcap@cityofpaloalto.org  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] Ideas regarding the rating table in the Noise/Vibration report

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

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XCAP members,

Reflecting on the discussion following Wednesday afternoon's noise and vibration presentation, I am leaning towards scrapping the summary table entirely. This is because, while the summary table was originally intended to provide a composite of the influences of (quantitative) operational noise, (qualitative) operational vibration, and (qualitative) construction noise and vibration; any effort to combine these influences would be biased on the basis of which is more or less important. So while I evaluated the relative importance of operational noise on a scale of 0 to 5, operational vibration on 0 to 3, and construction N&V as 0 to 3, others might have weighted these differently as a matter of personal opinion. For example, as someone pointed out, to someone who moves into the neighborhood after the construction is completed, what do they care about the construction noise and vibration? Rather, if we had assigned weighting factors as 0 to 20 for noise, 0 to 5 for vibration, and 0 to 3 for construction N&V, (which is completely subjective) the results would have been much different.

As an objective evaluator (who does not even live in the community), *my opinion* on which of these fundamentally different components is more or less important should not influence the outcome. In fact, since everyone's opinion on the relative importance of these components could be different (depending on a number of factors), it seems that trying to combine the relative benefits of each into a single number may be an unwarranted over-simplification. This might be similar to trying to create a single combined score for each alternative that includes not only the evaluation of noise

and vibration, but also traffic, pedestrian access, aesthetics, air quality, safety, project cost, and a dozen other factors, and I don't think that is what you are trying to do.

Thoughts?

Paul

**From:** David Shen <[dshen.nopa@gmail.com](mailto:dshen.nopa@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, June 04, 2020 9:14 PM

**To:** Ripon <[Ripon.Bhatia@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Ripon.Bhatia@cityofpaloalto.org)>; DeStefano, Peter <[peter.destefano@aecom.com](mailto:peter.destefano@aecom.com)>; Philip <[Philip.Kamhi@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Philip.Kamhi@cityofpaloalto.org)>; Larry Klein <[klein40@gmail.com](mailto:klein40@gmail.com)>; Litzinger, Millette <[millette.litzinger@aecom.com](mailto:millette.litzinger@aecom.com)>; Mercurio, Ety <[etty.mercurio@aecom.com](mailto:etty.mercurio@aecom.com)>; Ed <[ed.shikada@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:ed.shikada@cityofpaloalto.org)>; Burge, Paul <[paul.burge@aecom.com](mailto:paul.burge@aecom.com)>

**Cc:** [xcap@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:xcap@cityofpaloalto.org); David Shen <[dshen.nopa@gmail.com](mailto:dshen.nopa@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Ideas regarding the rating table in the Noise/Vibration report

Hi all,

First many thanks to AECOM for producing that great noise and vibration report.

In reference to the many comments regarding the rating table towards the end, I had some thoughts below.

If 3 db is on the edge of perceivable change in sound, then it would seem like a scale should be:

0=no change

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2=certain perception for X% of the people

Potentially you could make those "positive change" or less noise/vibration, and include negative change:

-2=certain negative change for X% of people

-1=edge of human perception in negative direction (louder)

0=no change

1=edge of human perception in positive direction (softer)

2=certain positive change for X% of the people

I would comment on the fact that "edge" in either direction would only be discussed in terms of the data presented. Would there really be a perceivable positive or negative impact if the data showed options to be between -1 and 1? I would argue that would depend on other factors.

It may make sense to distill this rating to:

-1=perceivable negative change for X% of people  
0=no change  
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A note about "for X% of people" - there must be data and statistics on human hearing and what % of people would definitively note a change either way in sound given a change in dB. So we set some threshold percentage and that would be our threshold for rating.

This could also mean that we could also have a benchmark option in the table, like using no change, or today's version. Then options could be either positive or negative movement relevant to the benchmark. So this might be a way to include the current options with horns blowing at the intersections and show the most significant positive change from there.

You could also do that to any one of the options in each group for an intersection. There could be separate tables, comparing one option to all of the others. Yes redundant in some aspects, but the numbers could be illustrative if you used each option as the benchmark and showed how the others fared against that option. Otherwise, the numbers could have bias when only graded against the option that was used a benchmark.

I would guess that measurements could have some variance if done over time and across days. The guys who measured from my front yard did so only once and not again so averaging might yield variance, as well as a standard deviation that may or may not be relevant.

Thoughts on the above? Thanks in advance!

David Shen  
XCAP Member

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David Shen  
North Old Palo Alto Group

**From:** [David Shen](#)  
**To:** [Burge, Paul](#)  
**Cc:** [Bhatia, Ripon](#); [DeStefano, Peter](#); [Kamhi, Philip](#); [Larry Klein](#); [Litzinger, Millette](#); [Mercurio, Ety](#); [Shikada, Ed](#); [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [David Shen](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Ideas regarding the rating table in the Noise/Vibration report  
**Date:** Saturday, June 6, 2020 5:51:14 PM

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Paul,

Thanks for responding. I'll throw in my two cents - I would not be opposed to removing that table as Larry Klein already had proposed it. It would then fall to some smart XCAP folks to put together some way of summarizing, perhaps in the way that I proposed.

We do value your opinion and viewpoint as an expert in the field, and as you may recall some XCAP members did not want to remove the table just yet. As an independent entity, there is value in that whatever table is presented it came from you instead of ourselves. Perhaps you might consider taking one more stab at making some alterations which integrate the great reflections you propose below, and if it helps, incorporating the ideas I threw out there (and anyone else who might want to contribute) as well?

Dave Shen  
XCAP Member

On Fri, Jun 5, 2020 at 8:16 AM Burge, Paul <[paul.burge@aecom.com](mailto:paul.burge@aecom.com)> wrote:

XCAP members,

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**Sent:** Thursday, June 04, 2020 9:14 PM  
**To:** Ripon <[Ripon.Bhatia@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Ripon.Bhatia@cityofpaloalto.org)>; DeStefano, Peter <[peter.destefano@aecom.com](mailto:peter.destefano@aecom.com)>; Philip <[Philip.Kamhi@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Philip.Kamhi@cityofpaloalto.org)>; Larry Klein <[lklein40@gmail.com](mailto:lklein40@gmail.com)>; Litzinger, Millette <[millette.litzinger@aecom.com](mailto:millette.litzinger@aecom.com)>; Mercurio, Ety <[etty.mercurio@aecom.com](mailto:etty.mercurio@aecom.com)>; Ed <[ed.shikada@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:ed.shikada@cityofpaloalto.org)>; Burge, Paul <[paul.burge@aecom.com](mailto:paul.burge@aecom.com)>  
**Cc:** [xcap@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:xcap@cityofpaloalto.org); David Shen <[dshen.nopa@gmail.com](mailto:dshen.nopa@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Ideas regarding the rating table in the Noise/Vibration report

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Thoughts on the above? Thanks in advance!

David Shen

XCAP Member

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David Shen

North Old Palo Alto Group

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David Shen

North Old Palo Alto Group

**From:** [Minor, Beth](#)  
**To:** [Nadia Naik](#); [Wilson, Sarah](#); [Shikada, Ed](#); [Council, City](#); [Kamhi, Philip](#)  
**Cc:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** RE: NOTE: Updated XCAP Report for City Council Meeting this Monday  
**Date:** Saturday, June 6, 2020 8:30:49 PM  
**Attachments:** [9BD9A2C33B424CCE86862B97F970450E.png](#)

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Hi Nadia, I changed the attachment to your correct one. Let me know if there are other issues.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

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**From:** [Nadia Naik](#)  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 6, 2020 9:54 AM  
**To:** [Wilson, Sarah](#); [Shikada, Ed](#); [Minor, Beth](#); [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** NOTE: Updated XCAP Report for City Council Meeting this Monday

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

The Council packet is incorrect. The updated report is mentioned but the original May 28th report was attached. Please find attached the correct XCAP update.

Thanks  
Nadia Naik  
Chair, XCAP

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

From: **City of Palo Alto** <[cityofpaloalto@service.govdelivery.com](mailto:cityofpaloalto@service.govdelivery.com)>  
Date: Fri, Jun 5, 2020 at 9:34 PM  
Subject: City of Palo Alto City Council Meeting Agendas/Minutes/Reports Update  
To: <[nadianaik@gmail.com](mailto:nadianaik@gmail.com)>

You are subscribed to City Council Meeting Agendas/Minutes/Reports for City of Palo Alto. This information has recently been updated, and is now available.

**The link to the Black Lives Matter Resolution to be considered by the City Council on Monday, June 8, 2020 is below as Agenda Item 4A.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**City Council & Standing Committee Notices**

**\*\*\*\* BY VIRTUAL TELECONFERENCE ONLY \*\*\*\***

Pursuant to the provisions of California Governor's Executive Order N-29-20, issued on March 17, 2020, to prevent the spread of Covid-19, this meeting will be held by virtual teleconference only, with no physical location. The meeting will be broadcast on Cable TV Channel 26, live on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/c/cityofpaloalto>, and Midpen Media Center at <https://midpenmedia.org>. Members of the public who wish to participate by computer or phone can find the instructions at the **beginning and end of each agenda**. To ensure participation in a particular item, we suggest calling in or connecting online 15 minutes before the item you wish to speak on.

\*\*\*\*\*

June 8, 2020 - [Sp. City Council Meeting REVISED Agenda and Packet](#)

June 8, 2020 - [Sp. City Council Meeting REVISED Agenda and Packet with Packet Page Numbers](#)

Added: Agenda Item 1, Grade Separation - [Staff Report](#)

Added: Agenda Item 4A, Black Lives Matter - [Staff Report](#)

Removed: Agenda Item 6, Climate Action Plan - Moved to 6/22/20

Removed: Agenda Item 7, Pension Discussion - Moved to 6/22/20

Added: Agenda Item 8, Direction on Outdoor Dining - [Staff Report](#)

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GovDelivery logo



**From:** [Nicole Zoeller](#)  
**To:** [Nadia Naik](#); [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [Kamhi, Philip](#); [Bhatia, Ripon](#)  
**Cc:** [Arnout Boelens](#)  
**Subject:** Feedback on PABAC Presentation  
**Date:** Sunday, June 7, 2020 9:00:27 PM

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Dear Nadia,

Thank you for your presentation at the last PABAC meeting, and for fielding the questions and commentary graciously.

Upon further review of the plans, here is my detailed feedback which I hope the XCAP committee finds helpful:

\* I am a strong proponent of closing Churchill to car traffic with option #2. Although this option would benefit from making the tunnel wider and separating cyclists and pedestrians, this design offers the most direct route and has a clear line of view through the tunnel. Option #1 looks very similar to the Homer tunnel, which is very difficult to navigate on a bike and has many blind corners. With hundreds of kids riding without being able to see what's around the corner it is surely an accident waiting to happen.

\* Currently one can walk to the Embarcadero bike path from both sides of the road to cross Embarcadero Road instead of using the pedestrian traffic lights, but no one does this. Therefore, I do not expect a pedestrian/bike bridge to be appealing to a lot of people.

\* When considering option A vs option B, I do not see any sign of bicycle infrastructure. The north-side tunnel should be widened and a bi-directional bicycle path with a sidewalk should run directly from Town and Country to Kingsley Ave.

Currently, this route is very dangerous, because cars are speeding on Embarcadero, and then, without slowing down or turning on their indicator, keep right on Embarcadero Rd to turn onto Alma. Option B seems to encourage this behavior even more. Without traffic calming measures this will turn Embarcadero Rd into a race track and make it very dangerous to cross. Assuming there will be a "no turn on red", and a fast timing cycle for the pedestrian light, option A seems to be the safer option.

\* I prefer closing Churchill over the partial underpass. It is a policy goal of the City of Palo Alto to increase bicycle ridership, and this is not achieved by sending bicycles to a side street with a poorly designed tunnel and blind sharp corners. With properly designed protected bike lanes, putting the train in a trench could be a safe design as well.

\* The Charleston underpass seems to result in a lot of diversions for pedestrians and cyclists. Would it be possible to raise the train tracks just a couple of feet instead of building a full viaduct? This would give a lot more flexibility for the underpass design. Since Park Blvd is an important cycling route, it would be great if both the Charleston and the Meadow underpass would reach ground level again by the time they cross Park Blvd.

\* For the pedestrian and bicycle underpasses, it would be nice if pedestrians got their own

sidewalk. A 15ft bi-directional bicycle path and a 5ft sidewalk would be great. Properly connecting the ped/bike infrastructure with existing bike lanes is essential. I would recommend giving cyclists their own protected lane on roundabouts and any crossing should be prioritized for bikes/peds and raised to slow down car traffic. Not doing so would create new high-stress bottlenecks in the cycling and pedestrian network and stand in the way of getting more people to walk and bike.

Kind regards,

Nicole Zoeller Boelens

**From:** [Mohamed T. Hadidi](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [youngjoh](#); [Omar Hadidi](#); [Mohamed Hadidi](#)  
**Subject:** Churchill Grade Separation  
**Date:** Monday, June 8, 2020 2:23:34 PM

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**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

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Honorable Members of Palo Alto City Council,

I'd like to begin by taking a step back and ask that you consider engaging in discussions with the concerned entities on whether proceeding with grade separation still makes sense in this post-pandemic world.

However, if it is to proceed, our family strongly support the Churchill Closure proposal with a bike/pedestrian underpass, mitigations at Embarcadero & Oregon Expressway, and sound screens/parapets at the intersection. We also strongly oppose the 2 other proposed alternatives, namely the Partial Underpass and the Viaduct.

We support Churchill Closure for the following reasons:

1. It serves as the first part of a phased approach to grade separation at Churchill. If necessary, either of the other 2 options can be implemented in a later phase.
2. It is much less costly, totaling \$50-65M.
3. It is traffic-friendly, and traffic flow will be better than the current state of things, as confirmed by the Hexagon analysis of May 5th.
4. It is much safer, incorporating a bike/pedestrian underpass and reducing traffic backups on Churchill.
5. It will significantly reduce noise by eliminating horn noise and installing sound screens/parapets.

We oppose the Partial Underpass for the following reasons:

1. It depends on acquiring CalTrain's Right-of-Way, which is unlikely. Would also require eminent domain seizures.
2. It bears a huge cost of \$200-250M.
3. It would significantly change the character of the neighborhood.

We oppose the Viaduct for the following reasons:

1. It will cost \$300-400M
2. Less traffic-friendly: Worse level of service than the Churchill Closure solution (see Hexagon analysis).
3. A permanent eyesore to the neighborhood.

Regrettably some Southgate opponents of Churchill Closure have resorted to underhanded devices of illegally placing placards advocating for their position on public and private properties, including our own front yard. Some have even encouraged property seizures without empathy for their affected neighbors - and all that just to maintain access to Alma and shave off a few minutes from their commutes. To address their concerns about feeling cut off if Churchill Ave were to close, we suggest opening up some of the Southgate streets that are

currently blocked off.

We urge you to vote for Churchill Closure as the best alternative for grade separation at the Churchill/Alma intersection, in the event that grade separation projects in the Bay Area are to proceed.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

With our best regards,  
Mohamed Hadidi, Young-Jeh Oh and Omar Hadidi

**From:** [Hyunkyu Lee](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** Concern related to the New Churchill Partial Underpass option  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 10, 2020 11:54:47 AM

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**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

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Hello,

I am Kyu, a Palo Alto resident.

First of all, I would like to thank you for your effort to make Palo Alto a better place.

Related to the "new Churchill underpass option", I would like to raise some concerns as a resident of Kellogg Avenue. It would be great if you consider those in your decision making.

I concern that the pedestrian/bike ramp on Kellogg will cause a lot of issues for the residents on the block. With the ramp extended to 2-3 houses on Kellogg, cars around the ramp might have a hard time to get out or into the driveway. There might not be enough space for garbage bins for their pick-up. Given there are many flag lots on Kellogg relying on street-parking, this change might cause a serious parking issue. According to the rendered image, Kellogg is one way street for those houses around the ramp, which limits the residents' access to Alma or to the east of Palo Alto.

I was wondering if you have considered those issues and have any plans to resolve them.

I really appreciated your hard work, and it would be great if you could answer the above concerns.

Best regards,  
Kyu



**From:** [Subodh Iyengar](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** churchill closure  
**Date:** Thursday, June 11, 2020 10:41:09 PM

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Hearing the arguments at the last council meeting, I'm supportive of the Churchill closure with a pedestrian underpass as a longer term approach. It seems like the most cost effective route and also very effective to encourage biking and walking in Palo alto.

In addition to traffic improvements at Embarcadero, I would like to see mitigations to the pedestrian paths under embarcadero as well. Walking to town and country or Stanford under embarcadero is really unsafe as cyclists zoom across at high speeds without regard for pedestrian safety. Is there a plan to improve the walkability of the embarcadero underpass as well?

Thanks,  
Subodh Iyengar  
Resident

**From:** [Stuart Hansen](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** Aoid "Taking" E. Meadow Apt Bldg  
**Date:** Monday, June 15, 2020 11:32:02 AM

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It appears that vehicle access to the apt. bldg. near Grocery Outlet that would be "taken" when E. Meadow underpass is built could be avoided.

Inspection of the premises shows that access could be restored to the building if an easement could be negotiated with the adjacent professional bldg.

owner to allow vehicles to pass behind it to/from the apt bldg. This could save substantial \$ and preserve needed housing. Stuart Hansen, Palo Alto

**From:** [Gary Lindgren](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** Charleston, Meadow and Churchill  
**Date:** Monday, June 15, 2020 2:40:59 PM

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**CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.**

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Dear XCAP Committee,

Regarding the latest sets of grade separation plans for Charleston, Meadow, and Churchill.

**Charleston:**

1. These look very good, but have one suggestion.
2. Remove the up-ramp for vehicles going east on Charleston and then making a right turn to enter Alma on an up-ramp. To me this is a dangerous situation, drivers on Alma can't see cars coming up the up-ramp and drivers on the up ramp have a difficult time to see cars on Alma.
3. In addition, this up ramp would make it impossible to use the Petrucco system of Box Jacking the underpass, see <http://www.paloaltoenergy.org/box-jacking/>
4. Digging up Alma for the up-ramp would cause traffic delays.

**Meadow:**

1. These plans need to be completely reworked. There are many places where people could not make turns to either turn on/off Alma or get on/off Meadow.
2. This has to be a requirement that all 8 turn directions are possible. Without this ability, vehicles would have drive around the neighborhood in order get to the desired destination.
3. Remove the up and down ramps entering and exiting Alma. See numbers 2, 3 and 4 above.

**Churchill:**

1. The Partial Underpass solution was designed by and for some residents west of the tracks.
2. The Partial Underpass solution would be the worst of the 3 ongoing designs for the Churchill grade separation.
3. Residents east of Alma would not be able to turn left onto Alma. Right turns would be allowed, but they can do that at any cross street.
4. Digging up Alma would cause major delays during construction.
5. We need a solution that works for residents on both sides of the tracks.
6. Closing Churchill at the tracks would be better for residents east of Alma, but that solution creates issues for residents too.
7. A better solution would be to widen Churchill east of Alma and build a complete underpass with ability to go in all 8 directions, see <http://www.paloaltoenergy.org/churchill/>

We need to do this correct the first time rather than get into a compromise situation that designed the Embarcadero underpass 85 years ago.

Thank you and Take Care,  
Gary Lindgren

**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:** [OOT Public Meetings](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** FW: XCAP comments  
**Date:** Monday, June 15, 2020 4:18:50 PM

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Forwarding to [XCAP@CityofPaloAlto.org](mailto:XCAP@CityofPaloAlto.org) from [OOTPublicMeetings@CityofPaloAlto.org](mailto:OOTPublicMeetings@CityofPaloAlto.org).

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**From:** Brian Kilgore <[bkilgore05@gmail.com](mailto:bkilgore05@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2020 4:37 PM  
**To:** OOT Public Meetings <[OOTPublicMeetings@CityofPaloAlto.org](mailto:OOTPublicMeetings@CityofPaloAlto.org)>  
**Subject:** XCAP comments

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Hi,

I spoke for a minute during the meeting, so these comments are just a follow-up to those comments.

I support putting the train in a trench, if that proves to be a viable option.

Barring the trench option, I support the proposed Meadow Drive and Charleston underpass options. These options keep the train at grade, separate auto-pedestrian-bike traffic, and prevents the visual blight of an elevated viaduct that would have otherwise persisted into the next century. Keeping the trains at grade also helps mitigate the train noise that would have projected from the elevated viaduct tracks. Yes, the train horns and gate crossing bells will disappear with the grade separation, but fast electric trains can make a lot of wind noise. The heavy diesel freight trains that pound the tracks at night would be projecting noise over a greater distance if they were elevated. Traffic flow to/from Alma and Meadow and Charleston is partially impeded in this scenario which is unfortunate. However, the traffic impacts at Meadow and Charleston appear to compliment each other, and would presumably help mitigate that problem.

To possibly prevent the loss of the apartments on the corner of Meadow Drive and Alma and/or reduce the property taking on the south side of Meadow Drive, consider reducing the 20' width of the proposed ped/bike path to 12', the same width of the new bed/bike bridge going up in south Palo Alto. That reclaimed 8 feet of road/path width would allow the Meadow Drive/ped/bike corridor to shift enough north or south to preserve an acceptable driveway grade for the apartments and/or eliminate the property taking on the south side of East meadow on both sides of the tracks.

The diameter of the roundabout on Charleston seems to be very large, too large. I would suggest considering reducing it to one lane and evaluate performance after it's built. If necessary, then enlarge it. Alternatively, eliminate it from the current plan, but keep it as an option for a future traffic improvement project.

Thank you for your consideration,

Brian

**From:** [Nadia Naik](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Post to XCAP ??? -- FW: Paying for Transportation in California: Does COVID-19 Change Everything?  
**Date:** Monday, June 15, 2020 10:00:13 PM

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Incase anyone is interested

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

**From:** **Phil Burton** <[philburton.pagradecrossings@gmail.com](mailto:philburton.pagradecrossings@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Mon, Jun 15, 2020 at 9:14 PM  
**Subject:** Post to XCAP ??? -- FW: Paying for Transportation in California: Does COVID-19 Change Everything?  
**To:** Nadia Naik <[nadianaik@gmail.com](mailto:nadianaik@gmail.com)>

## [Paying for Transportation in California: Does COVID-19 Change Everything?](#)

(Commonwealth Club Livestream)

FRIDAY, JUNE 26 2020 AT 10:00 A.M. PDT

[Register](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic threatens every aspect of transportation funding in California. State revenues from federal, state, regional and local taxes and fees are all at risk. Since California's shelter-in-place order went into effect in March, the state has already faced plummeting revenues from gasoline taxes, tolls, transit fares and sales taxes. These revenue sources will most likely continue to be severely threatened in the coming months and possibly even years.

Panelists will discuss the opportunities for every level of government to help recover transportation revenues in our uncertain future. Can we rely on our traditional mix of revenue sources? Will the COVID-19 crisis stimulate innovation in transportation finance?

These and other revenue options will be discussed at the 11th Annual Norman Y. Mineta National Transportation Policy Summit.

This program will be online-only; please pre-register to receive a link to the live-stream program

Free to registrants

Program supported by Mineta Transportation Institute, San José State University

**From:** [Phil Burton](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Cc:** [Kamhi, Philip](#); [Shikada, Ed](#)  
**Subject:** news item about Caltrain - INFO ONLY - PLEASE DO NOT REPLY  
**Date:** Monday, June 15, 2020 11:26:45 AM

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<https://www.paloaltoonline.com/news/2020/06/13/caltrain-will-increase-weekly-service-starting-monday>

Phil Burton



**From:** [李 晓云](#)  
**To:** [Council, City: Transportation; Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** Say No to Kellogg bike tunnel  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 1:46:47 PM

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Dear City Council members, Department of transportation and XCAP community members,

I am Xiaoyun Li, the owner of 159 Kellogg Ave, Palo Alto. On behalf of our whole family, I write this letter to express our deep concerns about bike tunnel.

As Castilleja is just on the corner of our block, we have been to deal with the busy traffic for years. We can not bear more bikers or strangers passing our street. We all know how much graffiti, crime and unpleasant smell of urine in the California Ave. As a mother of two kids, we also concern about the safety of our children. Please do not put in any more tunnels in Palo Alto, and help keeping Kellogg be safe and quiet.

Thanks for your attention.

Sincerely,

Xiaoyun Li & Yingxiong Zhao  
159 Kellogg Ave  
650-9333996

发自我的iPhone

June 16, 2020

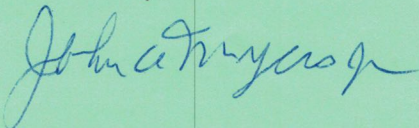
Dear City Council Members, Department of Transportation and the XCAP community members,

I have been a resident of the one hundred block of Kellogg Avenue since 1980. I am a senior and have limited access to information on the internet with the closure of the public libraries. My neighbor, Amber La, has informed me about a bike tunnel planned at the end of my block. I want to make it clear that I do not support it and want to keep the bike lanes and tunnel on Churchill Avenue. As I have explained to Amber, historically the bike route to Palo Alto High has been on Churchill. I am not sure why it should be rerouted to my block. Can someone please explain this?

My family and I have struggled for years with the traffic that Castilleja has brought to my block and the other blocks leading to Castilleja. I am tired of this constant stream of traffic and do not want more bike traffic from Palo Alto High on my block. I am an avid biker and support bikers in Palo Alto. Due to this I know how much graffiti, crime and unpleasant smells of urine in the California Avenue. Please do not put in any more bike tunnels in Palo Alto. Furthermore, please maintain and enforced safety concerns for the California Avenue tunnel. Why can't we build a bike overpass? They do not have the same issues that exist in small, dark spaces. My neighbor, Amber, has a young son as well as many of the new families on my block. I do my part to maintain a safe environment for these young children who have brought a new energy and vitality to my block.

Thank you for reading my concerns. I would like my concerns addressed by the city council, department of transportation and XCAP. I am writing for myself and my wife, Yvonna Meyer, who is currently living in a rehabilitation facility. She loves this block and the children on it; she wants the best for the families on Kellogg.

Sincerely,



John and Yvonne Myers  
168 Kellogg Avenue  
650-799-8921

**From:** [Amber G. La](#)  
**To:** [Council, City; Transportation; Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Cc:** [Ann Nguyen; Diane Rolf; Diane Rolfe; Zaid A. Kahn; Kathy Johnson](#)  
**Subject:** Scanned Letter from John Myers Regarding the Kellogg Avenue Bike Tunnel  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 12:01:40 PM  
**Attachments:** [John Meyer Signed Letter.pdf](#)

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Hi,

Please read the scanned letter from my elderly neighbor, John Myers. He does not have internet access at the moment due to the public library closures. Please respond to him with a written letter to his residence, 168 Kellogg Avenue. He has lost some of his hearing but his number is 650-799-8921. Thank you for including his thoughts and perspective into your plans and proposals. John is very concerned and does not understand why the tunnel and bike path has been rerouted to Kellogg Avenue.

Thank you,

Amber La  
160 Kellogg Ave  
415-608-0528

**From:** [Eduardo F. Llach](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** XCAP - Thank you - Please highlight the Challenges on the Churchill Underpass Fact Sheet  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 3:37:44 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Hi XCAP Team, Thank you for all your help on XCAP. You continue to provide us, and the City Council, great information. We all appreciate it.

Great job getting all the details in the distributed materials on the Agenda for tomorrow's XCAP meeting. I'm asking that we make the challenges for the Churchill Underpass front and center under the Engineering Challenges in Page 4 of the 2020-06-17\_Item3a\_Palo-Alto-Rail-Factsheets

You have all the information in the Churchill Underpass Fact Sheet, but can we highlight it on the Engineering Challenges vs have it buried in the Criteria explanation? So that both the public and the City Council can see it front and center?

For the Kellogg bike underpass we are going to need a full bike lane width encroachment into the Caltrain right-of-way. Alma also goes from 4 lanes to 5+ lanes, which I assume are coming from the Caltrain right-of-way, right?

Could we add the following to the Engineering Challenges in Page 4 of the 2020-06-17\_Item3a\_Palo-Alto-Rail-Factsheets?

- Caltrain right-of-way required, Caltrain has not agreed yet.
- Acquisition of house and school property required.

Add them below these

### **Engineering Challenges**

- For access to the construction site, construction traffic will be diverted to other areas.
- Lowering of the roadway will require a pump station.
- Increased cost of long-term maintenance and risk of flooding due to pump stations.
- Major utility relocations will be required for the lowered roadways.
- Dewatering of the excavation during construction will be required.

You have them under the **Evaluation with City Council-Adopted Criteria**, which is fine, but likely missed by a lot of people. Leave them there for a fuller explanation.

- "Some of the proposed improvements require encroachment inside Caltrain's right-of-way, especially during construction."

- “Some (sliver) acquisition of the high school and/or residential property fronting Churchill Avenue on the west side of the tracks will be required “

I agree with your analysis showing that the Oregon + Embarcadero mitigation with Churchill closing is the best alternative considering costs, disruptions, safety and traffic improvements across the whole city. But I know you need to present all viable solutions to the City Council. So I’m asking that we make it clear what are the issues w/ the Churchill Underpass proposal 😊.

Thank you, Eduardo

Eduardo F. Llach  
Cel – 650 678 1406

**From:** [Amber G. La](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#); [Transportation](#); [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Cc:** [Ann Nguyen](#); [Kathy Johnson](#); [Diane Rolf](#); [Zaid A. Kahn](#); [Diane Rolfe](#)  
**Subject:** XCAP Churchill Closure Option #2  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 10:33:25 AM

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Dear City Council Members, Department of Transportation and the XCAP community members,

I am a concerned and dedicated resident of Palo Alto. Thank you for detailing the Alma projects with photos and map overviews. I am grateful for the information in a clear manner.

I live on the 100 block of Kellogg. I strongly oppose placing a bike tunnel at the end of my block. I support bicycles and Palo Alto High students. However a tunnel on the 100 block of Kellogg is not the solution. Historically the bike route to Paly has been via Churchill. I am not sure why it should be rerouted to my block. Can someone please explain this?

I would like to point out that the three hundred, two hundred and one hundred blocks of Kellogg already deals with increased drop off and pick up traffic from Castilleja. Castilleja adds a lot of traffic to our neighborhood and they still do not abide by the student cap that they agreed to years ago. From drop off until well after 7PM many cars past through our block to drop off and pick up students at Castilleja. Many of these cars are large SUV driven by those who do not follow the 25 mile speed limit. There are many young families on the one hundred block of Kellogg including my own family. Our children have to be constantly cognizant of outsiders zooming pass our block. Adding a stream of Paly bicycles will only further exacerbate the traffic patterns and affect the lives of the families on Kellogg. We already struggle with Castilleja and their reluctance to follow the rules and who constantly disrespect this neighborhood. Kellogg can not handle the traffic of one more school! I bought my house in 2018 with the knowledge of Castilleja but there was nothing on the radar to indicate that we will be a bike lane for Paly students as well. How will the city indemnify my family and the other property owners for our property value loss due to increase school traffic and congestion?

A bike tunnel brings a lot of crime, graffiti and a host of other undesirable activities we do not welcome on our block. How will the city maintain the safety of the families, students and community members who will use the tunnel? Why is a tunnel the only solution? What about an exposed bike overpass which does not harbor crime and graffiti? My street's appeal, accessibility, parking availability and property value will be affected negatively. I am acutely aware of the issues with the California Avenue tunnel and the crime and undesirable activities in that tunnel. How will the city indemnify my family and other property owners for the loss of property value to due to crime, graffiti and other associated problems?

I would like to be fully involved in this process and speak about it publicly to advocate for the residents of Kellogg. Thank you for reading my concerns. I look forward to being involved in tomorrow's meeting. I would like my concerns addressed by the city council, department of transportation and XCAP.

Respectfully,

Amber La  
160 Kellogg Ave  
415-608-0528

**From:** [David Schnedler](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Cc:** [Susan Newman](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Caltrain Churchill Crossing  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 17, 2020 9:09:19 AM

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Dear Committee,

I am a longtime resident of Southgate and live on Castilleja Avenue, and it is the Southgate neighborhood which will be most severely impacted by whatever decision is made regarding this crossing.

Having lived in Southgate since 1988 I have lived through three boom and bust cycles which characterize silicon valley, and during the most recent bust you might recall that Caltrain nearly went bankrupt. Until the recent 2013 -2019 boom Caltrain ridership has been pretty stable, and so I was pretty astonished when people began accepting Caltrain's self serving 30 year ridership projections based upon the recent 5 year growth spurt. These projections actually contradict what is happening throughout the rest of the United States — mass transit ridership is falling everywhere, and even in San Francisco and places like Los Angeles, due to many factors including Lyft and Uber. In fact, if one looks at month by month ridership on Caltrain it had entered a decline for several months before Coronavirus hit in February, probably due to the end of the latest silicon valley boom as it heads into its next slump.

Covid has catapulted us into a new world, where employers discover the value of working from home, and for safety reasons mass transit would be the commuter's last choice to get to work. In coming years the # of trains Caltrain runs will be determined entirely by ridership, and their self serving projections are simply not to be trusted, particularly in view of Covid. I wouldn't be surprised to hear another discussion within the next 18 months — how to bail out Caltrain.

Therefore, regarding the Churchill Crossing, the safest thing to do is to do nothing for now.

If Palo Alto feels the need to spend money for fear of losing it, the most harmful thing they could do to Southgate would be to close it. Furthermore, closing Churchill would also have significant collateral impact on both Embarcadero and Oregon Expressway congestion which would need to be carefully modeled and understood. Keep in mind, the congestion occurs 4-8 PM and 7-9 AM five days a week, or 30 hours per week, just 18% of the hours that it is currently used. Southgate has put forward a hybrid proposal which would only close Churchill east of Alma but would continue to at least provide Southgate access to Alma.

As silicon valley enters its periodic slowdown, this time compounded by the global and national recession due to covid 19, and as silicon valley reinvents itself as it does after every boom and bust cycle, this is a good time to *wait and see* what the future is for Caltrain in the post Covid 19 world before we disrupt life in Palo Alto and Southgate by reengineering the Churchill Caltrain crossing.

Best Regards,  
Dave Schnedler  
1671 Castilleja Avenue  
650 324-9159



**From:** [William Robinson](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Subject:** I abhor "trenching" the roads and bike-pedways  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 17, 2020 11:42:53 AM

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Railroads have one rule: stay on the tracks. Move the tracks, they stay on the tracks.

Motorists, cyclists and pedestrians want to go this way, that way, every way! Put them in trenches that take four years to construct during which they can't go any way is a non-starter with me.

We have been in quarantine only 3 months. I can't imagine not being able to cross Alma at Meadow or Charleston for four years during construction of tunnels!

Put the train on a viaduct in half the time!

*'Rob' William Robinson 650-464-8933  
Resident of Wilkie Way, 50 years*

**From:** [Zaid Kahn](#)  
**To:** [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)  
**Cc:** [Amber La](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Concerns on new Churchill Partial underpass option  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 17, 2020 1:30:23 AM

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On Mon, Jun 15, 2020 at 10:40 PM Zaid Kahn <[zaid@udp7.com](mailto:zaid@udp7.com)> wrote:

Hello, my name is Zaid Kahn and I am a resident of Kellogg Avenue, Palo Alto. I am writing to raise concerns over putting a pedestrian/bike ramp on Kellogg ave. Speaking with my family and a number of residents from the street we strongly disapprove of a pedestrian/bike ramp half way on Kellogg ave. This proposal will make Kellogg a bike street for Paly and an additional burden to what we are already experiencing with Castilleja school. In the mornings and afternoons during school rush hour, our street is already a busy street due to Castilleja pick up and drop off. Turning Kellogg into a bike street will cause much more traffic and will be difficult to get in and out of our driveways. Another challenge is due to the divider in the middle of Kellogg some of the residents will have a difficult time getting their car out to the street and also placing trash bins.

Since Castilleja traffic is already a burden to Kellogg residents, enabling Kellogg as a bike street with a bike ramp will add to more traffic to the street which is also unsafe for the number of children living on Kellogg. For the reasons above we are in opposition of a pedestrian/bike ramp on Kellogg Ave.

Zaid