

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

July 1, 2020, 3:00 PM

Summary - Regular Meeting (virtual, through Zoom)

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

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

Absent: Adina Levin

## **2. Oral Communications**

No speakers.

## **3. Action/Discussion: Review XCAP timeline and deliverables.**

Chair Naik noted she had heard from a few people concern about how much longer the XCAP timeline is going. This item was agendized so the Group can give their opinions and commitment for how much longer they will be available and possibly offer an exit strategy that takes care of the work.

XCAP Member Brail explained nothing has changed in his life that would make participating any more difficult and he is not expecting that anything will change in the future.

Chair Naik clarified there would be weekly meetings for about three hours through which every option was chosen.

XCAP Member Brain would like to see the process through to making an actual recommendation to the Council, preferably one recommendation for each location. He would like some information added about the options not chosen. He would prefer option three.

Chair Naik advised option two proposed eliminating alternatives, to the extent that is possible. Under options one and there would be no single recommendation for any of the alternatives.

XCAP Member Burton remarked he is torn between the options. Option one is not desirable. He could see arguments for either option two or three. He believed the Group is reaching a point of fatigue, but he feels this Group has an amazing body of knowledge and it would be a shape to dissipate that without using that knowledge as much as possible. He other concern about rushing to any judgement is the Caltrain process which will probably be starting soon and running for some time. That process could moot some of the Group's decisions to the point that the City Council disagrees with any or all options and reevaluate any options in light of the Caltrain decisions.

Ideally the Caltrain decisions would come in time to be incorporated into this Group's discussions. His only decision at this time would be to eliminate option one.

XCAP Member Carrasco agreed with XCAP Members Brail and Burton. Option one is not desirable. Option two is somewhat of a compromise between one and three and he thought that would move the Group along to a place where ideas can be summarized but the solutions need more community input. He prefers option two but is option to other opinions.

XCAP Member Klein indicated option three is the status quo so it is whether the Group continues on that mission or makes some changes. He feels strongly about staying the course. The community through the City Council made a big investment in this Group. His most overriding concern is that this Group has far more expertise than anyone else in the City aside from some City Council Members. To justify the amount of time and effort and money, this Group really needs to make recommendations. He suggested looking for ways to save some time, whether it's meeting times or days. He is disappointed with the Town Hall meeting delays and put forward moving ahead with the Group's conclusions and recommendations and not try to schedule around the Town Halls.

XCAP Cho favored option three except she is concerned that the deadline has been pushed back very often and was worried about waiting until after the Town Halls to finish the recommendations.

Chair Naik advised there is the possibility of waiting to start deliberations until after the Town Halls but deliberations could be started without any Town Halls. That does mean weekly meetings straight through. In options one and two, there are meetings every two weeks. It is not just getting to a final answer, but the Group's ability to write the reports in that time. Based on whatever is chosen today, she will look at the different sections of the report. The question is what is everyone's personal availability to be able the report between August and September versus later.

XCAP Member Cho indicated she would be available and would like to participate in this process to the finish and would be okay with option three.

XCAP Member Reckdahl noted nothing will be changing in his life to make XCAP more difficult or easier. His biggest concern is the question the Group is trying to answer is not known. There is financial uncertainty with COVID but also with Caltrain. The Caltrain's study could change everything. He is inclined towards option one or two. The Group has learned a lot and that should be documented as well as possible, and answer the question when that is clear. This Group is ahead of Caltrain and time and money could be spent on something that is meaningless.

XCAP Member Shen noted he had been a CAP member and now XCAP. There has been a lot of time and effort put into this process and he would like a clear conclusion. He would lean towards taking whatever time it takes to get to what was originally intended to come out of the Group. A big factor for him is August 15 when schools reopen. He will have time until then but not sure what his time constraints will be after that. The 3:00 time start may be a problem for him after that also.

XCAP Member Templeton said the limitations in the community participation model because of the shelter in place gave her pause. She is concerned about the schedule changes in August. The PTC meetings were also on Wednesdays, so if there were weekly meetings, she would have a hard stop at 6:00. She agreed with XCAP Member Reckdahl. The Group asked for extra money and if there is research being done on something that is rapidly changing with an unknown outcome, that may not be a good use of the money. She agreed with frontloading the writing as much as possible before schools start. She would like the group to come to a conclusion and think thoughtfully about the context of the recommendations. She thought there was more than a schedule behind the memo. Is it reevaluating the purpose of the Group, given that there is so much changing context?

Chair Naik replied it was trying to be responsive to each member's shifting timelines and not knowing what will happen in August in terms of homeschooling. It is unfortunate the Caltrain discussion will not be until next week because that might shed more light on this conversation. The budget and ability to do some further work to refine things will also impact the ability to move forward.

XCAP Member Templeton advised on the availability of time and commitment she is hearing a lot of strong support. She is available and committed to this effort and the 3:00 PM time start with three-hour meetings, should be a problem for her. Delivering a recommendation will be helpful to the City. She would like to hear more discussion about the changes and changing landscape.

Chair Naik noted some of the options can be tweaked, such as option three and not wait for the Town Halls. She explained she has been working on this for two years and was one of the people instigating the formation of the community advisory panel. She is aware of the amount of time the Group members have given to this, and is worried about wearing out the entire committee. The hard deliberations haven't yet been working on and she has some reservations about how that will work via Zoom. She is most comfortable with option two, partly because even though the Council has asked the Group to give a final recommendation, being able to eliminate some of the alternatives is still a win. If the Group came up with a perfect technical solution, which is not probable, there is a lot of consternation about whether this is being done in the right environment, the right public process as a result of the pandemic, the right outreach process, the fact that Caltrain's future is unknown at this point and the budget implications of not necessarily being able to do what could be done under normal constraints. The landscape has shifted significantly and she feels comfortable with being able to go back to Council with the alternatives the Group was able to eliminate. Churchill has not yet been discussed so she would like to be able eliminate at least one of the alternatives for Churchill. It is about giving the Council potentially a very detailed list of the things that would be useful when Caltrain starts their process. She thought there was some process stuff the Group hasn't had a chance to do. There hasn't been enough time to get the bike and pedestrian information on the new alternatives to get a good level of detail. In order to get that, it drives the schedule. She hoped to understand from the Group the commitment to the schedule and to be able to write the sections of the report.

XCAP Member Carrasco agreed with XCAP Member Klein, the Group needed to finish what they started. His time is available as long as it is scheduled some time in advance. He felt at this point there has been a lot of data identified but it has not been sifted through to be able to rank options in terms of how they score against the other criteria. Face-to-face discussion would be much more helpful with this.

Chair Naik remarked to get to full deliberations it was thought weekly meetings would be held focusing on Churchill, for example, until the recommendation was finished. After a week break, deliberations would be held for Meadow and Charleston trying not to break the rhythm and get through the alternatives. On the calendar it works out to about five to six weeks of steady weekly, three-hour meetings. If that is started before the Town Halls, it could start in August but that would mean a commitment from members through September.

XCAP Member Carrasco asked why the deadline is for December? If Caltrain is doing their plan, wouldn't it be better to spread the meetings out to go past when they come up with their plan.

Chair Naik indicated she is sensitive to members wanting a resolution, they don't want this to drag on for too many more months. In an early discussion she heard it would take Caltrain at least two years from the time they scope their work, figure out what they need and so on.

XCAP Member Klein shared that he was very encourage by the fact that he felt there was a commitment from everybody to finish the project. In responding to several things, whether there has been a change in the environment. For the Group's purposes, he feels there hasn't been. The environment is the City and the geometry and geography the Group is working with and those will not change. He stated he always assumed Caltrain would be an issue. He felt the elected officials will have to negotiate a lot with Caltrain, and the community is better off if a decision is made as to what the preferred alternatives are. There has been talk of a big infrastructure bill, but it keeps getting delayed. If it does happen, the City needs to be ready to go forward with the recommendations.

Mr. Kamhi concurred with XCAP Member Klein. Caltrain will be here next week. In his early conversations with Caltrain, they think the process this Group is going through will help inform the process they are getting ready to go through. Many of the issues this Group has brought up will be used to inform their corridor process. He felt the XCAP has achieved a lot and there is much value in what they have done. The work XCAP has been doing really will provide a valuable path forward for the Caltrain process and potentially for any funding opportunities in the future.

XCAP Member Burton responded to Mr. Kamhi. The comment that Caltrain is looking at the XCAP's work as guidance for their work is new and changed his perspective a lot. That says the Group has an opportunity to set down to some markers. This is opposed to his earlier assumption that Caltrain was going to ignore what XCAP said and do whatever they wanted to do.

Mr. Kamhi advised that didn't mean they would agree with the ultimate recommendations from the XCAP, but Caltrain definitely feels they will be learning

something from the Group. His thought is that the Caltrain process will be somewhat drawn out. They will have to hire someone for that project and they haven't started that process yet. There will be a corridor-wide study with about forty-two crossings to consider.

XCAP Member Brail imagined that Caltrain will have to have a lot of the conversations this Group is having. So, having the City of Palo Alto say they have had a committee of citizens who spent two years learning and talking about the options for this project, and these are the recommendations from that Group. That could help Palo Alto especially if the City Council adopts the XCAP's report and votes on something. Money is a real chicken and the egg thing. It would be helpful if something could help the Group understand it. One of the things the City said in the criteria was, fundable by existing funding sources. Even before COVID, none of the alternatives were fundable by existing funding sources. It has been said a preferred alternative is necessary so the Council can go to whomever and ask for money. Some decisions have been made based on money, but it is hard to understand what the possible options are. Lastly, Chair Naik mentioned several times that more details are needed. He would like to be clear about the level of abstraction the Group has to work at. There could be a report for the Council much sooner if the Group could say they operated at a certain level of abstraction. It is not known where every bike lane will be, if the tunnel for one of the options would be at Kellogg or Seal, what the width of the bike lane will be. It is known, in general, the Group has seen a design for a specific alternative that, at the current level it either looks feasible or not. He thought the public was expecting that XCAP would be designing a grade crossing, deciding exactly where each cut and bike lane and each ramp will be. If they want that, it will take at least until November. A recommendation could possibly go to the City in less time, if the Group is willing to say, given what we know now, we're not going to have perfect information. He asked if there was any way the level of abstraction could be raised to say a specific alternative looks feasible and one looks infeasible, and therefore present a recommendation without so many details ironed out?

XCAP Member Shen addressed XCAP Member Brail's third point, and thought that no matter what the Group does, there will be open questions which may cause more than one alternative to be recommended, and potentially conditionally. He recommended considering that potentially there may be more than one alternative. Regarding funding sources, it is probable that will never be known.

Chair Naik noted one of the things she proposed in option two was eliminating as much as possible. If more than one looks good, show how alternatives were ranked or that the Group's preference was based on the questions about certain facts.

XCAP Member Brail reiterated that then option two would be that a recommendation was made if it can be done before November.

Chair Naik explained the full deliberations would be going through and argue each one, but if the Group can eliminate certain ones, then maybe the remaining ones could be ranked.

XCAP Member Klein remarked it has always been said there are a variety of ways to reach a decision. The path the Group is on is to have a series of recommendations

and reasons for the recommendations so anyone can read them and understand why those recommendations were made. He thought option two meant avoiding some of the decision making. He feels the community needs to know what the Group thinks about all the alternatives.

Chair Naik commented there will still be bits of significant information that will still be missing.

XCAP Member Klein stated that was always going to be a problem.

Chair Naik noted the entire time this process was architected it was based on the idea that there are very generic grade separations, a trench, a tunnel, a viaduct and a preference is needed. What has come out of that are the South Palo Alto and the North Palo Alto alternatives, and what is needed is a level of bike and pedestrian information necessary to be able to understand whether an alternative succeeds or does not. Staff has said they need to go deeper on this alternative than the other two because the Comprehensive Plan says bikes and pedestrians and cars are to be treated equally. In order to give the two new alternatives, the same level of analysis and prove that it works more information is needed.

XCAP Member Klein believed a decision could still be made as to what the Group's recommendations are.

Chair Naik didn't think the input was gotten from the proper committees.

XCAP Member Klein indicated there is a decision point where it is said there is enough information to make a decision but will always be less than 100 percent.

Chair Naik replied from her perspective, the bike and pedestrian items have been flushed out sufficiently for her to be able to go to City Council or the community and say for the new alternatives she had considered a person walking and biking the same way she considered a car. That was the same problem there was with the closure. The biggest complaint was how the mitigations worked for bikes and peds.

XCAP Member Shen felt another big open question was the Caltrain right-of-way which could kill anything. That, along with funding sources could mean uncertainty in whatever the Group recommends. He thought it would take until November or December to get to preferred plus caveats.

XCAP Member Reckdahl was not clear on the next step. He understood the Group would give a recommendation and that recommendation would be for Council to spend more money doing a deeper dive on that recommended alternative. If that was the case, he would not support more money. If the purpose is to have a decision with concerns and there would be a different option if those concerns came up, he would support that.

XCAP Member Burton felt what XCAP Member Reckdahl said is very wise. If there is a vote, he would choose option three as long as the Group give itself permission to document the pros and cons of its decisions carefully and possibly suggest an

alternative or backup decision. There needs to be a drive to completion but whatever that means may not be exactly what the community expects. That is not feasible now.

XCAP Member Brail felt it would not be appropriate for XCAP to get to that level of design. A preferred alternative could be put forward, but the exact design should not come from XCAP, but what XCAP thinks is feasible for all of Palo Alto. After the Council votes on an alternative, then the people living near what would be built could engage with the engineers and have a say in what happens.

Chair Naik thought the majority of the members was leaning towards option three. Next to be considered would be not waiting for the Town Halls. Then maybe the option three schedule could then put back to the end of July, which would mean working through July, August and September and push for something in October. She asked how that would work with the Group?

XCAP Member Carrasco advised he is good with that.

XCAP Member Burton remarked he and XCAP Member Levin were supposed to work on Caltrain. Also, given the attrition of members, some may find they are writing solo. He is nervous about working ahead of the Town Halls because there might be strong opposition. He has been unclear about the extent the City Council wants XCAP to take community input or feedback as a consideration in the decisions.

Chair Naik thought it was up to the Group.

XCAP Member Klein clarified he would still like to have the Town Hall, but that schedule keeps moving and he feels it has moved too far. He asked if staff's timetable could be improved.

Mr. Kamhi agreed with Chair Naik about community input. The Council gave XCAP specific criteria to consider for the grade separations, and community feedback was not one of the. It is very unlikely the Town Halls will be on line sooner than August.

Chair Naik explained she had many reservations about not being able to go further on the bike/pedestrian issues for budget reasons but also putting that out to the public and the kind of reaction from the community.

XCAP Member Carrasco agreed there is a great deficiency in bike and especially pedestrian considerations and feels it will take until October or November.

XCAP Member Brail asked, if the Town Hall meetings are not moved, schedule three looked like the plan was to not have any XCAP meetings the weeks of the Town Hall meetings. Could there be some deliberating the same weeks as the Town Hall meetings and reserve the right, if something never heard before is brought up, take that into consideration?

XCAP Member Klein noted most of the people he has talked to, no matter the age group, are not planning on taking any trips out of town.

Male speaker advised there will not be much detail on these plans to further levels because those will be part of the design phases. At conceptual levels, you can't get the level of details members of the public may want. At this level, it will be the type of alternative that best suits the community and addresses the majority of concerns. Those are then refined as part of the future phases of design.

Chair Naik agreed the Group is doing very high-level conceptual design and she is concerned that the new alternatives came about out of the concerns of the existing alternatives. In order for people to understand the why, they need to understand levels of at least basic circulation for the bikes and peds that is not available. This may negatively impact the new alternatives in a way it doesn't impact the existing alternatives.

XCAP Member Klein asked if there is a commitment that the Town Halls will take place in the second half of August?

Mr. Kamhi advised that was the plan and the target was August 15.

XCAP Member Reckdahl is concerned that if the Group presents what it has currently to the Town Hall, it will be counterproductive. The Group understands this is looking at the high level and there are some flaws that can be fixed. When something is presented to the City with obvious flaws, there will be a backlash of people who don't understand the flaws can be fixed and that will hurt the final decision.

#### Public Comment

Elizabeth Alexis related that she and Chair Naik have spent eleven years looking at the issues of how transportation projects are planned in the United States. There is a crisis in this country that projects are designed poorly, bad for bike and peds and cost too much. There is a rush to a specific direction before important fundamental requirements are understood or discussed, especially with Caltrain on the construction management. Regarding utilities, on projects throughout the country, specific alternatives are committed too with a generic utility relocation budget and it is a nightmare. The numbers from the traffic engineer are relied on instead of thinking about what is driving traffic and what could be done differently.

Eduardo Llach urged the Group to do come to a recommendation because a significant amount of time and expertise has gone into this. Also, consider the impact the decisions being made have on people on those streets so the faster the decisions can be made, the faster residents can make their decisions about their lives and homes.

Penny thought uncertainty around the Caltrain process should be of paramount concern. There won't be a shovel-ready project until the Caltrain process is complete. She is concerned about the difficulty evaluating if the bike/pedestrian facilities in these concepts would work. There was not a high level of detail available in these concepts.

Susan Newman stated she liked the list of things in option two and should be included in the report. Contradictions in the City's criteria for this project could be pointed out. For the community, details are needed and figuring out how the bike/ped flows will

work for the new options is important because one big motivation is improved safety for bikes/peds. For the viaduct and hybrid, it would be good to lay out what could be done to improve bike and pedestrian safety.

Rachel Kellerman pointed out the importance of community engagement. She has been trying to engage the north part of the area for several years. The closure of Churchill will bring great volumes of traffic to her area and not pleased with the mitigation plan, especially for the bikes and pedestrians. She thought the Council would like a recommendation the community will get behind especially if it requires the output of money. The context of the pandemic is very important.

Drew remarked he has watched the grade separation projects of Caltrain in multiple cities. XCAP is one step along the way of many steps. Getting down to specific alternatives even without resolving all the issues helps with the next step. The unresolved issues bring out the points that need further study. XCAP can narrow things down, but great results can be achieved by leaving some things that still need to be worked through and that will help the next steps.

Chair Naik noted the last week of July and the first week of August will be difficult for her to have Zoom meetings. She suggested she would come back at the next meeting with an updated timeline. It would be informational and flexible. There would also have to be some Doodle poles regarding time getting closer to August 15.

#### **4. Action/Discussion: Updated Matrix and discussion of responses to comments on layouts, renderings and fact sheets.**

Millette Litzinger, AECOM advised they had not planned on a formal presentation. They had provided two documents, the response to comments based on the last XCAP meeting they attended and comments received on the fact sheets, the layouts and the renderings. This would help the Group understand the items they would be incorporating and the ones deferred to the next phase of study. The second item was going through the matrix summaries previously seen with some updates and the new added ideas.

Mr. Bhatia requested XCAP to make any proposed changes, make sure the colors are in the right areas and any concerns or comments that need to be incorporated in the updates to be brought back in the next meeting.

Chair Naik remarked her biggest concern is about areas that say refinements will be made at the next phase of the project, especially about the bike connections. If the Town Halls go forward, she would like to see how that verbiage is called out. This Group understands that, but she is concerned about how that will be received by the community, especially since there will be property impacts. Also, she pointed out, on page 2, the item about not showing anything going down to Carlson Court. She appreciated that the bike/ped connection from AECOM's perspective is part of a bike safety connectivity study, not part of the grade separation, but this is supposed to plug into this network. She asked if there were any updates from staff or the AECOM team about how those will be incorporated in the Town Hall documents.

Mr. Kamhi indicated he would see if he could get Safe Routes to address that. In answer to her other question, realistically there could be more than Carlson Court. There is a coordination between more of the nearby streets and corridors that should play into these networks that would be looked at outside of the actual grade separation project, but shouldn't necessarily be a completely separated process.

Chair Naik would like something that signals that officially so when it goes out to a Town Hall, people understand that hasn't been lost. Regarding the fact sheets, without going into the colors, she thought there were some subjective elements, so maybe they should be called overview sheets. Some of the information is not factual, just the best overview, but when people see facts, they think the information is exactly what is going on.

XCAP Member Burton commented on the response item entitled "The U-Turn Movement, Alma Plaza". He spent some time looking at that and it seemed correct, it would be confined to automobiles only. He is inclined to accept that as a reasonable response.

XCAP Member Klein referred to the question why at Churchill the bike-ped crossing would be at Kellogg and not at Seal?

Peter DeStefano responded that was initially proposed by the two Mikes and had a lot of benefits versus being at Churchill. There has been some discussion about Seal, but it is shown at Kellogg. The City may be open to the idea of moving that crossing to Seal but he thought there were some issues at Seal.

Mr. Kamhi remarked the City is open to Seal or Kellogg, but that is potentially something that the Bike and Ped Plan could look at in collaboration with this. It could potentially be both.

Chair Naik noted the Seal conversation dates back more than two years. It was reviewed and removed. It is something that is in the rail corridor study and it is important that does not get lost because it is not in any of the documents. The obvious benefit of Seal is that it would come up on the Pearce Park side so there wouldn't be the issues of having the sharp 90 degree turns.

XCAP Member Reckdahl confirmed bike/ped access is considered a park use.

Chair Naik asked how that could be included as one of the options for the portal underpass, recognizing that is work that is unfunded and not scoped.

XCAP Member Klein advised one of the respondents commented this was part of the design by the two Mikes and he asked their thinking in choosing Kellogg over Seal?

Chair Naik responded the two Mikes original proposal was to have the bike/ped crossing at Churchill.

Mr. DeStefano clarified the advantage of having it at Kellogg is they're going underneath Alma. The other one the peds/bikes had to cross the northbound lanes on Alma, then there would be a bridge over the southbound ranges, so Kellogg made a

lot of sense in that regard. It also makes sense in that while construction is going on at Churchill, you could have the ped/bike facility at Kellogg built in an early phase which is true of Seal as well. He didn't think Seal was ever dismissed as not being a possibility. He suggested in the Group's recommendation it could be noted the Group recommends that Seal be investigated as an option.

Chair Naik referred to XCAP Member Klein's question of how did the Group get from what the Mikes proposed to the option at Kellogg. She believed it was something AECOM proposed because it was the next closest one physically to Churchill and seemed to make sense, but Seal is still possible.

Mr. DeStefano indicated it was proposed for the reasons he mentioned. There would not be the at-grade crossing with Alma and it provided the ability to construct that in an initial phase. The separation with Alma made a lot of sense.

Mr. Kamhi remarked there were some apprehensions that came up with Seal but he did not remember what they were. A simple response to this is that a bike-ped crossing could be provided at Seal as an optional alternate. He felt this was the type of thing that could be provided in the Town Halls. It is also something that should be looked at as part of the Bike and Ped Plan.

XCAP Member Brail clarified this was talking about Seal at Pearce Park which is four blocks from Churchill. It would seem unlikely kids riding their bikes to Paly would go all the way around to Seal if that's the only way for them to cross Alma between Embarcadero and Oregon.

Chair Naik replied on the east side of the track Seal is the preferred safe route for all the kids going down to Walter Hays. On the west side following through Southgate, it goes right into the back of Paly.

XCAP Member voiced concern that it is a long detour for certain children on their way to Paly, which will mean more children will try to cross at Embarcadero. Kellogg or Seal seemed like the wrong decision and it seemed there should be a crossing at either Kellogg or Churchill and at Seal.

XCAP Member Carrasco thought both Seal and Kellogg have problems. Kellogg because it is so close to Embarcadero and there is a bike path there so Seal might be a little better. The problem with both alternatives is that the existing streets have a bike lane and a pedestrian sidewalk, and the plan is only for bike lanes. He did not understand why 8 percent was being used when 4 percent is at the borderline of comfortable and the ADA says that is the max. He did not see this pedestrian crossing viable at 8 percent.

Mr. DeStefano indicated the ped/bike ramps were 8 percent with five-foot landings which averages out to about a 7 percent grade. Those could be laid out at 5 percent with a slightly longer length of ramp. That should not make a difference on the decision of the alternatives. This cannot really be compared to the 2 percent grade for the rail is a required design exception. What is laid out for the ped/bike ramps would not require design exceptions.

Chair Naik reminded everyone it's nice to have all these thoughts on the bike details, but none of that will be included in any of the drawings.

XCAP Member Burton noted these points are very good examples of the things that could be left to future decisionmakers. This should be captured very carefully, but the XCAP timelines cannot be pushed out to address all these issues. At the Town Halls, XCAP has to very carefully tell people that at this stage of design there normally isn't a final design, and there will be many opportunities for community engagement as the design moves closer to final.

The Group moved to discussion of the Matrix Summaries.

XCAP Member Shen had two comments. He wondered if there was a way to take out the things the Group didn't know much about, such as Caltrain right-of-way versus the other right-of-ways, and funding sources. He also commented on the coloring. The scale has no middle and it seemed some may be grey or no change. He referred to Engineering Challenges, in the viaduct it said no significant creek or drainage impacts which is no change and could be grey. In Engineering Challenges, nothing improved and is that correct? He suggested combining light blue and light orange and change that to grey or put grey between those two to acknowledge it will be about the same.

Ms. Litzinger commented that the Engineering Challenges are impacts and that is why they are highlighted in the orange to red colors. It is a new problem that is an impact that isn't in the existing conditions. Regarding the funding, those comments are just in the response or the level of the order of magnitude of the cost. The higher cost alternatives are harder to fund. The wording used was to address the variation in costs of the alternatives. Referring to right-of-way, the difference between private property and Caltrain right-of-way can be differentiated.

XCAP Member Shen remarked his interest is in separating that out because it could be a critical factor that not much is known about.

Chair Naik thought the City Council criteria was more about property impacts to homes, not encroachment on the Caltrain right-of-way and she suggested separating acquisition of homes and the City's property from Caltrain right-of-way.

Mr. Kamhi commented that a right-of-way acquisition would potentially have a financial impact whether it is private or Caltrain. A potential solution could be moving Caltrain right-of-way into an engineering challenge.

XCAP Member Shen continued regarding the underpass for Meadow/Charleston, row D, he wondered why that was not light orange because the text in that box is very similar to row D of viaduct and partial underpass at Churchill which are light orange. In underpass C, he wondered how something like confusion of riding or walking could be ranked because of circuitous routes and shouldn't that be at least a medium blue.

Chair Naik noted the actual criteria says separate from vehicles, would make that alternative score better than a hybrid where the bikes and peds stay with the vehicles.

XCAP Member Shen remarked a lot of the criteria from the older options are getting dated and especially if parameters are set based on the language of the new ones. Referring to row I of underpass Meadow/Charleston, he wondered why the coloring was not the same as the underpass of Churchill in the same row. The language seems very similar.

Ms. Litzinger believed part of that was because of the landscaping removal on Meadow/Charleston. Decisions will be made on preferences for Churchill and Meadow/Charleston. They looked at, for Churchill, what were the differentiators between the closure, the viaduct and the partial underpass. The color coding compares those three against each other.

Chair Naik remarked a caveat that could be put on the documents is that the banding of color relates to the overview sheet and are not necessarily the same for the north and the south.

XCAP Member Shen asked if there would be value in separating these by crossing with separate fact sheets?

Ms. Litzinger replied in the previous versions, all the alternatives were together, but they are separated now by location.

Chair Naik clarified XCAP Member Shen was asking for Meadow and Charleston should be separated because the configuration at Meadow is different than Charleston.

XCAP Member Shen replied yes and when going to the Town Halls, this should not be provided as one document. Separating the documents might allow people to consider them separately.

Ms. Litzinger advised that would be the intent for Meadow, Charleston and Churchill to be separate documents. She did not think all the Meadow versions and all the Charleston versions should be compared separately because they go together. The Meadow and Charleston alternatives will be done together.

Chair Naik asked if Meadow and Charleston underpass could be separated but on the same page?

Ms. Litzinger noted that would be inconsistent with the other alternatives but it is possible.

Chair Naik pointed out these are two different streets with two different configurations.

XCAP Member Shen thought the nuances are not clear on why the coloration is different when the words are the same. In the viaduct column for Churchill, row F, no acquisition of private property, he thought that should be dark blue. Not taking private homes should be a significant result for any of the options. Row G, viaduct, why is that not slightly negative as noise could be radiated out. This is true at the partial underpass also. A lot of information has been updated, and some of the colors

on the chart will change if the improvements are considered to show alternatives are beneficial.

Chair Naik agreed that the closure should say closure plus mitigations. There is much discussion about these matrices.

XCAP Member Carrasco felt all members should talk about each cell together. At this point more is known about the criteria than when first received from Council. Some criteria are more important than others so each cell should be discussed, then weighted by importance using numbers instead of colors.

Chair Naik advised the concept of what is the outcome being looked for versus ranking what is there is a worthwhile discussion.

XCAP Member Brail thought the matrix is almost the core of what the Group is to do. There may be an off line process that didn't require a three-hour meeting. There are seven boxes that he didn't agree with the conclusions.

XCAP Member Klein asked if these documents were being adopted as the Group's own or stay as the consultant's opinion?

Chair Naik to the extent the Group comes up with something that doesn't agree with AECOM, is it possible there will be a level of pushback from the community about this. The Group may disagree with the consultant, and if that happens it should be noted in the report.

XCAP Member Brail thought too much agreement was being given to the two underpass options in column A given the turning motions. The same goes for the underpass options for row C. When looking at what is planned for Churchill, there may never be a situation that is as nice as some of the others. Also, the noise consultant didn't seem to agree that with the elevated track, train wheel noise could radiate out, which could be mitigated. He also pointed out, this chart was not accessible, because about 4 percent of the world population is color blind. This information is not completely presented only by color. A colorblind person could read the words and come to a conclusion. He suggested taking the colors out or put numbers in.

Mr. Kamhi noted the colors were determined by AECOM and the City and input from XCAP. These colors can be modified and there are some that will not be agreed on by everyone. Staff would like the Group's input about how to present these. Colors could be numbered and presented with both colors and numbers.

XCAP Member remarked numbering such as 2 to 0 to -2 could be considered then a score could be generated, but colors don't allow for an overall evaluation.

Chair Naik didn't think XCAP would use color coding or number system to make these decisions. However, the Group is being asked to develop what potentially will be what drives both the greater public at large and the Council towards some kind of solution. The criteria are old and should be reevaluated, but that would add to the timeline.

XCAP Member Burton wondered why the chart still showed the alternatives that have already been ruled out. For Meadow/Charleston, why are the tunnel alternatives shown? That may be misleading to the public and it makes some of the pages hard to read.

Mr. Kamhi explained even if XCAP is no longer considering the tunnel option, until this is taken to Council and they remove an option for consideration, there is an expectation that Council could still consider that.

XCAP Member Burton if this could be broken out to a separate page entitled "Options XCAP has ruled out" which could help with the clarity of the pages. He commented regarding line G on the first page, there is inconsistent wording, electric engines, electric motors. Neither is correct, it should be electric trains as opposed to a diesel engine. In his opinion, if numerics are used, it should be -2 to +2. He did not think the public will see the distinction of the charts being AECOM's or XCAP's. The public will see fact sheets and evaluations.

XCAP Reckdahl remarked if the charts were just to guide the Group to organize thoughts for deliberation, it does the job. If they are distributed to the public, this would mean trouble.

Chair Naik thought the Group was setting itself up for going to a Town Hall potentially with charts that don't really show the full level of work. She referred to row G, there is a difference between how noise is colored versus vibration and maybe that should be split into two rows. Also, Row G, noted noise mitigation along the right-of-way at grade is not mentioned. She agreed under Meadow/Charleston, D, that should be orange, not light blue, and N, she asked why there is a difference in colors for the major utility relocations of the two roads?

Ms. Litzinger responded it is the degree. With a hybrid there is partial lowering, but this the tunnel there is extensive lowering.

Chair Naik referred again for Charleston, engineering challenges, letter P for the underpass, there needs to be a caveat that it depends on the construction methods. She would also like to see a neutral color. Some cells cannot be color coded appropriately until there is more information about them. There is a difference between improvements for bike/peds versus cars, so on Churchill, letter H, it is orange but for bikes and peds there would be a crossing and that would make it a blue.

XCAP Member Templeton commented about ownership of this information. It is clearly branded with the City of Palo Alto logo. Then, ideas about the way this is presented, are all evaluation criteria equal? If not, there could be a grouping such as all orange and reds are in a lower priority aspect of the criteria evaluated. Regarding potential for improvement, keeping it abstract, what the current understanding is, but might be improved with further study, that should be indicated with a symbol. Also needed is an understanding the color ratings might be different for bikes, pedestrians and vehicles. That would look similar to this matrix, but if there was a difference, there could be an icon to indicate this is different for pedestrians. These are presentation and analysis suggestions.

XCAP Member Klein feels strongly this should be relabeled as a report of the consultant and a report of staff and a disclaimer that this is not necessarily the opinion of the XCAP. Trying to get a consensus or going through the charts cell by cell is not a good use of time. When writing the report, if there is disagreement with the consultant that should be noted.

XCAP Member Carrasco agreed with putting a disclaimer on the document. He feels there needs to be work done on separating out the advantages for bikes and pedestrians for each alternative. The issue of rail noise could be separated based on the consultant's numbers. Supporting continued rail operations is not as important as providing safe routes to schools. The matrix is not weighted in the correct manner. He agreed with adding numbers.

XCAP Member Shen indicated after XCAP Member Reckdahl's comments, he has a growing sense of unease mostly about the matrix. It only ranks the final state of the designs through this time period. He is concerned that people assume the information presented is final. That is a disconnect and creates unnecessary angst in everyone. He urged everyone to consider that this is only capturing the state of the design as it currently stands.

XCAP Member Brail commented that priority and severity were mentioned. Everything that is not priority zero or priority one is ignored. He will try to make a simplified version of this chart for the XCAP. Does it take property or not? Does Caltrain need an exception or not? Other things such as appearance, in the eye of the beholder. Is it feasible related to cost? He felt half of the chart could be reduced to, is it neutral or bad. That would leave about three or four columns that the Group could debate. This document contains a lot of good information, but XCAP should try to produce a simplified version of the evaluation criteria.

Chair Naik agreed this was a good idea but could have other pitfalls.

XCAP Member Cho thought this table took too long to digest. She believed another important chart could be developed that could be a navigating point to look at this table. Focus on what is relevant and prioritize that.

#### Public Comment

Ken Joye focused on responses to comments about the fact sheets. The consultant talked about Carlson Court and he thought the response from AECOM ignored the fact that other alternatives don't have a two-way bike-ped ramp. Addressing that issue in the design phase would not be a subtle improvement.

Eduardo Llach commented on the matrix and asked if the wording "traffic mitigation and closure" for Churchill rather than closure? He wanted to ensure the right-of-way needed for Caltrain was included at the bottom of page 4, partial underpass. More than 95 percent of people are not colorblind, so it is reasonable to use color. He would like focus to be on a weighted average that takes cost into consideration.

O. Hadidi (phonetic) address the comment at the last meeting that grade separation projects could possibly be funded by a nationwide infrastructure program. If that is a

serious possibility, he urged XCAP to recommend to the City Council to propose the tunnel as the most suitable candidate for such funding. If cost remains an issue, he strongly favors the closure of Churchill with mitigations at Embarcadero and Oregon Expressway, because of costs, safety, traffic friendliness and preservation of the character of the neighborhood. Regarding the matrix summary relating to Churchill, he suggested: 1) change the option label from "closure" to "closure plus mitigations" to accurately describe this particular option; 2) change the color of row A to light blue to reflect the Hexagon traffic analysis.

Elizabeth Alexis (audio issues)

Susan Newman agreed about the importance of a modified matrix to communicate with the public and discipline deliberations for the Group. Being systematic in deliberations might be supported by using some kind of formal criteria. She also felt item H would be a good candidate to be separated out. If the criteria are ranked, be sure to record where people don't agree on the ranking and could criteria that engendered a lot of disagreement be indicated somehow.

Hugh Lee (phonetic) commented on the Churchill underpass plan related to the safety of pedestrian and bikes. This plan requires removing landscaping on Alma but the Alma sidewalk is already narrow. Without the landscaping there are no safety features for pedestrians which will make it very hard to walk on Alma. Referring to the bike ramp on Kellogg, that ramp is not convenient to those who are not Paly students.

Phil Why (phonetic) (audio issues)

Rachel Kellerman echoed the point that these things are not final. Residents on Embarcadero and north of there have issues with the mitigation plan. It is important that in the detailed part of the process, neighborhoods who are highly impacted are engaged and hoped that language was included in the report. Mitigation plan also did not include a study of the number of cars that would be coming up Embarcadero and many other things need to be addressed.

Richard Proke (phonetic) noted a concern with the matrix. In the options for Churchill, a lot of work has been done to expand on the two new proposals, the matrix no longer accurately reflects all the work done on the closure option. Row A, Churchill Avenue says it closes it to vehicle traffic. Both the viaduct and the partial underpass have language that describes the measure for pedestrian and bike traffic which the mitigation measures for the closure option also include. That language should be made the same. The color coding for the closure option should be changed, given the mitigation measures and should be a shade of blue.

Terry Lack agreed that there seemed to be an error in the matrix. It is clear row H talks about the extra driving so row A should definitely be blue because Hexagon clearly demonstrated that the resulting traffic would be better.

Robert Neff responded to the crossings at Kellogg and Seal Park, it could be a similar design in either location, and when it is built will be put in the best location. Outside the XCAP process may be the best way to do this. Regarding the underpass plans for Meadow and Charleston, these are incomplete in their design for cyclists and

pedestrians. Many are left to the viewers imagination, especially the route that bike and ped traffic will take from both sides of the street. It is obvious the plans have broken the connectivity and it is not clear how it has been fixed in these plans. The simple crosswalks at Meadow for the westbound bicycle traffic is inadequate and unsafe. There should be active traffic signals there. Bike lanes eight feet wide for buffered lanes at Charleston would be best.

Karen Kalinsky asked if it was still possible that different options could still be considered for Meadow versus Charleston, especially if more than three points of connectivity cannot be obtained at Meadow and Alma.

Drew remarked the colors and criteria should be somewhat similar across the different options. There seems to be a conflict between absolute criteria and relative criteria. All the engineering challenges are in the absolute, but the first page is all relative. It is most obvious on Churchill, row E funding. It will cost \$50 to 65 million and that is blue. Going back to Meadow/Charleston, there is no blue for the cost. They are all in some shade of red, orange, yellow. There is some internal conflict that needs to be cleaned up.

Penny agreed with everything Robert Neff said. She did point out that eliminating train preemption will automatically increase the capacity of all the intersection. If there is a criterion that celebrates reduction of delay for motor vehicles, the risk this creates for bikes and pedestrians needs to be measured and mitigated.

Yokum Taku addressed an XCAP comment about how the public will take the grids and the fact sheets. He and a neighbor have talked to approximately fourteen households on the 100 block of Kellogg and they are confused about the proposals and universally opposed to the tunnel. Anything that involves the acquisition of private property is clearly a red problem. It is unclear how far parking will be removed on that block. Regarding the traffic flow, Kellogg is 36 feet wide and it will be hard to make turns. Remember, Castilleja is the 200 block of Kellogg and routing the approximately 500 plus bicyclists from Paly through Kellogg in front of Castilleja pickup is not a good thing. The residents of Kellogg would prefer a tunnel or crossing at Seal.

Phone caller emphasized that Castilleja students commute via car and having them on the same path that Paly bikes are going is not a good idea. A lot of the Castilleja cars use Kellogg to get northbound on Alma after drop off or pickup. Taking away the median along the sidewalk on Alma would make the sidewalk extremely dangerous. Bicyclists use the sidewalk and pedestrians have to go into the median when crossing.

Mr. Kamhi noted some of the different alternatives, such as an underpass at Meadow and a hybrid at Charleston might be compatible at Meadow/Charleston, but all the different possibilities would have to be looked at.

Mr. Wong speaker commented for a hybrid, a vertical curve cannot be fit between Meadow and Charleston, so narrowing it down to hybrid or underpass, both would have to be the same solution. An underpass won't work with a trench. Hybrid and viaduct have not been looked into.

Chair Naik remarked if an underpass was selected, they would both have to be an underpass.

Mr. Wong responded that was correct, and that would roughly be the same with hybrid. Both Meadow and Charleston need to be either above ground or below ground.

Mr. DeStefano indicated he stated this differently in the past. He asked Mr. Wong if it was possible to keep the rail at grade, for example, at Charleston, raise it slightly at Meadow or raise it at both but still provide the same underpass scheme at Charleston but a hybrid at Meadow?

Mr. Wong answered we can't get to the full at grade situation, but it could possibly be gotten down to three or four feet, but that ultimately affects the underpass option.

Chair Naik thought there was a lot of consternation about using the matrix so a discussion off line is needed to understand if this is something just the City will use.

Mr. Kamhi noted he thought he heard some request to perhaps modify it or simplify it or makes it XCAP's own.

Chair Naik asked if there was budget to do that?

Mr. Kamhi understood XCAP Member Templeton offered to try to simply it, and if XCAP wants to make it their own, that would not have a cost implication for the consultant or staff.

Chair Naik noted the Group would have to decide on taking XCAP Member Templeton's version, AECOM's version or go back and decide if it should be color coded or numbered. That would lead a question of how that feeds into Town Halls. XCAP might come up with their own version, but that's for their own report.

Mr. Kamhi remarked that was fine, just wasn't clear if XCAP wanted to modify it as the official version or should staff note this is staff's analysis of the criteria.

XCAP Member Burton indicated if there was daylight or dissention between the City's version of the matrix and XCAP's version, or it was disclaimed, that is not good options for the Town Hall or the community in general. He didn't think XCAP had a choice about making it their own and fixing it to give the best shot at a Town Hall process.

XCAP Member Shen urged Mr. Kamhi to update the older options in the matrix to reflect current information.

XCAP Member Carrasco agreed XCAP could put in a disclaimer that it is not their matrix, but this is the substance of what the Group was asked to do by Council. The sooner it is made the Group's own, the better it will be for a functional choosing of alternatives eventually.

Chair Naik clarified she and XCAP Member Klein will talk off line with Mr. Kamhi and Mr. Bhatia to understand what is in the City's budgeted scope of work, understand

where the schedule is in terms of Town Halls and then come back. There is a meeting next week and Caltrain will be present then.

Mr. Kamhi indicated as much as it is said these are the consultant's or staff's matrices, these revisions have been taken back to XCAP and then continually incorporate their comments and suggestions, so they are becoming XCAP's matrices.

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

No updates.

## **6. Staff Updates**

Chair Naik asked where the City was in terms of getting feedback from PAUSD and the City Traffic Committee and those organizations?

Mr. Kamhi answered the City Manager had a meeting yesterday or today with PAUSD and he thought August 20 was the date they offered to bring items to PAUSD and likely city school would be sometime in August as well.

Chair Naik clarified there would not be any new information related at least to the school district in time for Town Halls?

Mr. Kamhi thought they would likely be concurrent. Town Halls would be approximately August 15 and August 20 PAUSD would mean the Town Halls would be live and potentially people from PAUSD could participate in the Town Hall at the same time live comments are received.

Chair Naik asked if PAUSD's comments were the same as what might be received from the City School Traffic Commission or the Safe Routes to School.

Mr. Kamhi believed they were very different types of groups and feedback. City School would likely happen in August also.

Mr. Bhatia remarked they were working to get the additional data from Caltrain regarding the noise and vibration report, so there is an update on that. There was additional information received as it related to the information that XCAP requested in an update of the noise and vibration report. Caltrain indicated they do not have the actual Caltrain EMU data available yet. Staff recommended using the EMU data that was in Caltrain's electrification noise and vibration technical report from 2014 and those will be the parameters used to do the noise and vibration report update. Regarding the train speed, the speed profile from Caltrain showed their express EMU trains were traveling up to 110 miles per hour; however, based on the 2014 EIER and other references, it was suggested that the new EMU would be limited to 79 miles per hour through the Palo Alto region. The staff's professional opinion is to use the modified version of the speed profile that included 79 miles per hour max for the new EMU units. Regarding train volumes, the previous report was based on the existing number of trains and XCAP asked for more information regarding the proposed Caltrain scheduling. The 2014 EIR recommended that the EMU be transitioned from the current diesel to complete EMU replacement by 2029. That suggests about 114

trains per day, and that included 16 trains during the peak hours. That was the recommended option to use in the noise and vibration updated report. The moderate option that Caltrain used has 268 trains per day, but that would review the differentiation for the noise and vibration on different alternatives. That would not be good for the purposes of this Group's selections. They will always go through the additional noise and vibration analysis as part of the environmental impact report, so it is suggested using 114 trains per day. The report will be updated and brought back on July 15.

Chair Naik reminded XCAPers there will be meetings every week going forward. Caltrain will be coming next week.

## **7. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 6:14 P.M.