

Expanded Community Advisory Panel (XCAP)

THIS PACKET INCLUDES:

A compilation of emails (public comments, etc) submitted to the XCAP email box, XCAP@CityofPaloAlto.org, between **July 15 and July 22, 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: [Hyunkyu Lee](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [Council, City](#)
Subject: feedback on factsheet
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 1:23:07 PM

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Hello XCAP members,

I would like to thank you for your hard work to make better Palo Alto.

I have reviewed the revised factsheet and found that the Churchill partial underpass plan did not include several very important neighborhood considerations.

1. There will be no landscaping on Alam from the south of Coleridge to the north of Kellogg, which is a great risk factor for pedestrians walking on Alma street.
2. For houses on Alma, as the landscaping is removed, the proximity from their front yard to Alma street is increased, and so does the safety concerns/noise from cars on Alma.
3. The Kellogg bike/pedestrian tunnel has safety concerns due to its narrow entrance and sharp turns.

It would be great if you could modify the factsheet to include those concerns. For those who walk on and live on Alma street, those are very serious issues.

Best regards,
Lee

From: [Roland Lebrun](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Cc: citycouncil@cityofpaloalto.org
Subject: Plan Bay Area (PBA) 2050
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 3:24:15 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

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It looks like **Santa Clara** Caltrain grade separations made it to PBA 2050 Phase I via the VTA (not Caltrain) wish list

- Measure B Caltrain Grade Separations (900M)

- **Assistance to Member Agencies to study future Caltrain Grade Separations not covered in 2016 Measure B (\$125M)**

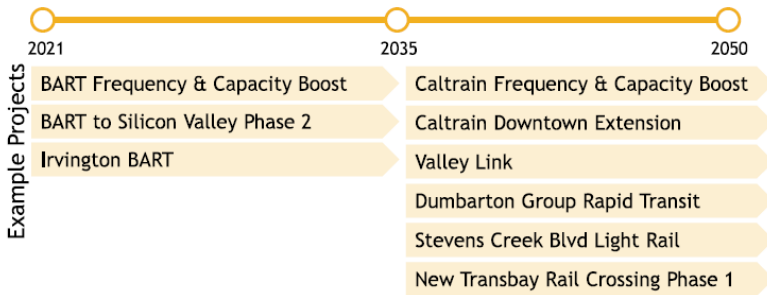
<http://santaclaravta.iqm2.com/Citizens/FileOpen.aspx?Type=4&ID=9553>

Other lower-cost investments include: **Caltrain grade separations**

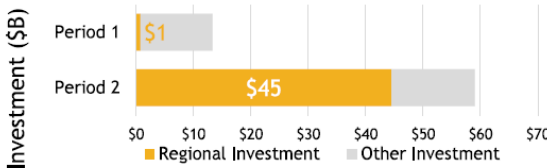
<http://mtc.legistar.com/gateway.aspx?M=F&ID=29bf3272-7e20-470b-9bda-d16d528d927f.pdf>



Expand and Modernize the Regional Rail Network



Other lower-cost investments include: Caltrain grade separations, SFO-Millbrae guideway improvements, various station enhancements, and more

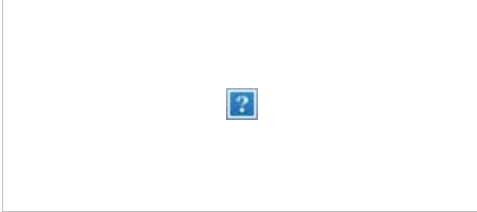


\$72B

<https://mtc.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=8650692&GUID=45AD9139-8C1B-4F51-9EF1->

[08DE5BBDD82B](#) (slide 13)

Here is what Caltrain submitted and why it died (look for "Caltrain" in "final findings")
<https://mtc.ca.gov/our-work/plans-projects/horizon/project-performance-assessment>



Project Performance Assessment | Metropolitan Transportation Commission

This is the third time that MTC has conducted a wide-ranging evaluation of major transportation projects. This cycle, the most robust to date, evaluated projects independently using a uniform methodology. Central to this analysis was a benefit-cost assessment to quantify the

mtc.ca.gov

From: [carlin otto](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: XCAP Noise and Vibration Report
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 4:48:18 PM

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Page 14 of Paul Burge's slides:

Since the noise from a train on **top** of a viaduct will spread farther (wider afield) than noise from **down** in a trench, this page needs to describe the noise level for houses at rows 3 and 4 so that people can see the difference in **HOW MANY CITIZENS** (houses) will be affected by each solution.

NOTE: the neighborhoods on both sides of the track, south of East Meadow are almost completely **single-level** residential.

The vast majority of these single-story houses are under 20 feet tall.

So the noise, generated at 20-25 feet high, will travel and travel and travel with nothing to stop it.

Paul's response to this question during the meeting was not adequate !

His response did nothing to lower my concern about this issue.

I am sure there are many people like myself.

From: [Yokum Taku](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: Comment letter regarding Churchill Partial Underpass/Kellogg Avenue tunnel
Date: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 4:45:01 PM
Attachments: [XCAP letter re Kellogg Avenue tunnel 7.21.2020.pdf](#)

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Please see the attached letter and include in the XCAP meeting materials.

July 21, 2020

Dear Expanded Community Advisory Panel:

Thank you for your service to the City of Palo Alto. I have virtually attended three XCAP meetings and reviewed the materials, minutes and videos of numerous previous meetings. Your efforts are appreciated.

I live on the 100 block of Kellogg Avenue and this letter has been reviewed by 15 households on the block.

The residents of the 100 block of Kellogg Avenue universally oppose any Churchill Crossing proposal that includes a Kellogg Avenue tunnel and some residents are prepared to affirmatively take actions to block the project if it is the recommended alternative.

In evaluating the Churchill Partial Underpass alternative which includes the Kellogg Avenue tunnel, XCAP should consider the following:

1. There are less expensive alternatives to facilitate grade separation at Churchill Avenue.

The Churchill Partial Underpass is significantly more expensive (\$160M to \$200M) than the Churchill Closure alternative (\$50M to \$65M). This spending is unwarranted if Caltrain use does not increase as planned due to increased work from home and less commuting, as Caltrain ridership has decreased by 95% during the COVID-19 pandemic. Churchill Closure can be the first step before undertaking a more costly alternative.

There is significant opposition to even the 1/8 cent tax in San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties that is expected to generate \$100 million a year simply to cover ongoing Caltrain operating costs. In this environment, there is little public and political appetite for a costly infrastructure project when less expensive alternatives are available.

2. The acquisition of private property to facilitate the Partial Underpass will not meet the standard for exercising eminent domain.

The Churchill Partial Underpass requires the acquisition of private property along Alma and Churchill, which is projected to cost \$26M to \$32M. Although AECOM may believe that these are “slivers,” they intrude on lots that are relatively small in the first place. Reactions from residents along Alma have been extremely visceral. The residents along Alma would like greater visibility on the exact amount of property acquisition envisioned by the Partial Underpass alternative.

The XCAP committee has received a primer from Norm Matteoni on eminent domain issues during its February 5, 2020 meeting. Please note that one of the standards that he noted was that “the project is planned or located in the manner that will be most compatible with the greatest public good and the least private injury.”

Given that there are other viable solutions to facilitate the Churchill Crossing that do not require the acquisition of private property, there are significant issues in meeting the standard on minimizing private injury. The deliberations and discussion of XCAP provide a clear record of potential alternatives that do not involve private property acquisition.

3. The Partial Underpass requires approval of Caltrain to encroach on a right-of-way and approval is uncertain.

According to the fact sheet and discussion by AECOM, the Partial Underpass appears to encroach on a Caltrain right of way. As discussed by Sebastian Petty, the representative of Caltrain during the XCAP meeting on July 8, 2020, it is unclear whether the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board would approve such use in light of the need for flexibility to preserve the ability to use four tracks in the stretch affected by the Partial Underpass.

Melissa Reggiardo of the San Mateo County Transit District indicated in an email on April 17, 2020 that:

“While the City could initiate the RCUP review process to have Caltrain staff review the compatibility of the proposed use of JPB property for the access facilities, the City’s proposal would most likely be found to be an incompatible use of JPB property. In order to be considered for an exception to the RCUP and be considered compatible, the onus would be on the City to show via conceptual designs that a potential future four track segment would not be precluded in this area – then it would be possible for the encroachment to be potentially viable as a nonrailroad use of JPB property. It’s important to note that even if the City did this and the proposal was able to be considered “potentially viable” by receiving a compatibility exception through the RCUP, it would still need to undergo substantial design, engineering, and regulatory review before it would be approved as a use for JPB property. Some of the proposed improvements require encroachment inside Caltrain’s right-of-way, especially during construction.”

4. The Kellogg Avenue tunnel creates conflict with Castilleja School traffic.

Don Austin, Superintendent of the Palo Alto Unified School District in his February 20, 2020 letter to Ed Shikada, Palo Alto City Manager indicated that “Palo Alto High School averages a little under 1,000 bicycles ... [of which] a majority of bicycles enter from Churchill.”

Please note that Castilleja School is located on the 200 block of Kellogg Avenue. If approximately 500 bicycles are routed to Kellogg Avenue, there will be conflict with Castilleja School traffic, creating an unsafe environment.

5. The tunnel eliminates on street parking on the 100 block of Kellogg Avenue.

The Kellogg Avenue tunnel eliminates on street parking for a substantial portion of the block. The residents of the 100 block of Kellogg Avenue would like more clarity on the extent of parking loss on the block. There are over 15 cars parked on Kellogg Avenue on any given day.

Eliminating parking on Kellogg Avenue will create serious inconvenience for the residents of the 100 block of Kellogg Avenue. Many residences do not have space for more than one car in their

driveways. Please note that there are three flag lots on the block where residents rely on street parking. People that live on Alma or are visiting people that live on Alma, in particular the multi-family residential units, also park on Kellogg Avenue as there is no parking on Alma.

Furthermore, please note that Castilleja School is on the 200 block of Kellogg Avenue and numerous residents of the properties surrounding Castilleja School have “no Castilleja parking” signs. The cars displaced from the 100 block of Kellogg Avenue will spill over to areas on the 200 block of Kellogg Avenue and Emerson Street, which will exacerbate parking tensions in the neighborhood.

6. Driveway access on Kellogg Avenue will be extremely adversely affected.

Residents’ ability to get into their driveways will be hampered. They will only be allowed to enter and exit their driveways in one direction. The pedestrian/bike tunnel exits in the middle of Kellogg Avenue – and there will be dividers to protect to bike lane in the middle of Kellogg. This means that people on the north side of Kellogg will be forced to turn right toward Alma – and then forced northbound on Alma. People living on the south side of Kellogg would be forced to turn right toward Emerson.

It will be extremely difficult for larger vehicles, especially SUVs and minivans, to turn out of driveways at a ninety-degree angle into a fairly narrow one-way lane. This will be impossible with a trailer attached to a vehicle. Imagine backing out of a driveway and having to sharply turn ninety degrees into a narrow lane. This is much less than the amount of space in a typical parking lot to make the same maneuver.

7. The tunnel is unsafe.

The pedestrian/bicycle tunnel is unsafe as it is only 10 feet wide and ends at a T-intersection. Imagine hundreds of Palo Alto High School students going through a 10-foot tunnel that ends at a T requiring a sharp turn at the other end. Although representatives of AECOM tried to address these concerns on the fly while questioned during the June 17, 2020 meeting, the ability to design a tunnel that meets the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists is unclear given the width limitation of 10 feet due to the width of Kellogg Avenue and need for the tunnel to abruptly end in order to integrate with the existing bike path before running into the Palo Alto High School football field.

At least seven families on the block have elementary school age children. None of them feel safe with a tunnel on the street given the potential for people to lurk in the tunnel. The potential volume of bicycle traffic and the narrowness of the tunnel make it extremely dangerous for pedestrians to use the tunnel.

8. The widening of Alma is unsafe.

The police already regularly stop speeding cars on Alma. Removing the traffic light at Churchill will cause cars to move faster on Alma. Removal of the planter strip and having the cars closer to the Alma sidewalk will make the Alma sidewalk even more dangerous to walk along.

9. A tunnel on Seale would be a better alternative than a tunnel on Kellogg.

The Kellogg Avenue tunnel appears like an afterthought to the Partial Underpass proposal. If XCAP believes that a pedestrian/bicycle tunnel is necessary in connection with the Partial Underpass, then a tunnel at Seale Avenue would be a better alternative. Of course, there are negative aspects of any tunnel that would simply be shifted to another street. However, a Seale Avenue tunnel would eliminate conflict with Castilleja School traffic and parking, among other things. Seale Avenue is already one of the primary bicycle paths in the city for students to get to Walter Hays Elementary School, Greene Middle School and Palo Alto High School. Having the tunnel exit into Peers Park would allow for a safe exit from the tunnel with less sharp turns and less design limitations. There is already a bicycle route from Peers Park along Castilleja Avenue into Palo Alto High School. In addition, Seale is approximately midway between Embarcadero and California Avenue.

As described above, the residents of the 100 block of Kellogg Avenue are universally opposed to the Kellogg Avenue tunnel proposal.

Yoichiro Taku

From: [Gary Lindgren](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: Spreadsheet Updates
Date: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 10:30:25 AM

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Dear XCAP Committee,

The new spreadsheets are excellent. I can see that a lot of work went into this update. On the **Meadow-Charleston Evaluation of City Council-Adapted Criteria Criteria**. For Row A, Underpass: you put one evaluation for both for both Meadow and Charleston. Somehow the evaluation needs to be separated. For Charleston 2 blue symbols is correct. However for Meadow, I would give it 2 orange symbols as only 38% of possible turns are possible.

For Row C, Hybrid and Viaduct: pedestrians and bikes are not separated, shouldn't there be some orange symbols here, just a question?

Churchill, Row A, Partial Underpass: this should not be 2 blue symbols as there is not cross-traffic. For residents west of Alma, one blue symbol is appropriate, but for residents east of Alma, 3 orange symbols as only right turns are allowed.

XCAP Matrix: Cari- great work! Lots of details, I'm sure hours and hours went into this. For Row A, Partial Underpass, the color should be orange. There is no cross-traffic possible. The Partial Underpass works good for users west of Alma, but poor for residents east of Alma as only right turns are allowed.

One more thing, change "electric engines" to "electric motors" in the text.

A full underpass design for Churchill should be evaluated. There will be tradeoffs because property will need to be acquired. But we to bring this out in the open and evaluate the positive impacts compared to the Partial Underpass, the Viaduct, and full closure.

Also need to redo the design for Meadow underpass in order to allow for all 8 turns, then the tradeoffs can be evaluated with more property acquisition vs. the benefits.

Great work all.

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: [Glenn Fisher](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: Updated Matrix
Date: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 4:27:13 PM

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Dear XCAP,

Thank you for the updated version of the Matrix. While one could argue details about the exact rating of any component of one of the alternatives, I found it instructive to look at the overall results. I assigned numeric scores to your ratings (-3 to +3) and summed them. I also assigned a score to the cost (-1 for the least expensive and -3 for the most) and to the CalTrain design exceptions (-3 for unlikely to be accepted to +3 for no exceptions).

For the Meadow/Charleston, the final cumulative values are:

Viaduct -2
Hybrid -10
Underpass -13
Trench -22
Tunnel -25
Tunnel/at grade freight -33

Ranking them by cost/score yields the order

- 1) Hybrid
- 2) Underpass
- 3) Viaduct

However, the combination of reduction of travel options and taking of property makes Underpass a less desirable alternative.

In the end, it comes down to the alternatives of costlier but faster construction (viaduct) vs. cheaper but more pain from construction (hybrid).

For Churchill, the alternative is clearer; closure significantly impacts cross-town travel and the viaduct's 1.6% grade requirement is extremely unlikely to be accepted by CalTrain, leaving the underpass as a highly preferred alternative.

From my perspective as a resident of South Palo Alto (Adobe Meadow), I strongly prefer either the hybrid or viaduct for Meadow/Charleston and the Underpass option for Churchill.

Thank you for your hard work in devling into the details that makes it easy to compare the options and come up with a clear preference for this Palo Alto resident.

Glenn Fisher

From: [omar_hadidi](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Cc: [Council_City](#); [omar_hadidi](#)
Subject: Grade Separation at Churchill Ave
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:56:47 AM

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

Dear XCAP members

My name is Omar Hadidi, and I live in Southgate.

I'd like to thank you for your efforts and dedication in relation to this critical matter that will have a long lasting impact on the City of Palo Alto for decades to come.

I would like to echo the sentiments of other community members and voice my strong support for Churchill Closure with Mitigations, given the 2 suboptimal alternatives of the Partial Underpass and Viaduct. These 2 alternatives are much more costly and, worst of all, will be permanent eyesores that will forever change the character of our neighborhood. This is too high a price to pay in order to shave off a few minutes from our commutes.

One important point to stress, that has also been expressed by others, is that Palo Alto currently has more railroad crossings than other cities in the Bay Area, even if we make adjustments for population. With the closure of Churchill, we would still have the most railroad crossings per capita.

Regarding the Draft of XCAP Findings, Chapter 4, we request the following change, namely, to make clear in Section B on Traffic Congestion, Page 9, that the LOS (Level of Service) at all the 7 intersections that would be impacted by Churchill Closure is **CURRENTLY F or E**, and that in the year 2030 with mitigations, the LOS on 5 of these 7 intersections would improve to A, B, or C. On the remaining two intersections (El Camino & Page Mill and El Camino & Embarcadero), the LOS will slightly degrade by at most half a minute from the current minute or so. Embarcadero will remain at its current LOS of E, and Page Mill will degrade from E to F. See the Hexagon Report, Appendix A, Table 6 vs. Table 4.

The bottom line is that overall traffic in Palo Alto will improve with only minor degradations at a couple of intersections. And please keep in mind that we are talking about the year 2030, with very frequent train trips.

Thanks for your time.

Yours sincerely
Omar Hadidi, MD MBA

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Sent from my iPhone

From: [Young-Jeh Oh](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Cc: [Council, City](#)
Subject: Grade Separation at Churchill Avenue
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:55:42 AM

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My name is Young-Jeh Oh and I live in the Southgate area.

Once again, I'd like to thank you all for your efforts and dedication in regards to this matter.

My family and I strongly favor the closure of Churchill with mitigations at Embarcadero & Oregon Expressway and a bike/pedestrian underpass. We support closure because of cost, safety, traffic-friendliness, and the preservation of the character of our charming neighborhood. We would like to stress that we prefer that Churchill stays open, but not at the price of setting up a concrete monstrosity in our midst. We strongly oppose the 2 other proposed alternatives, namely the Partial Underpass and the Viaduct, as both the partial underpass and the viaduct would result in the aforementioned monstrosity, as a cursory look at Figures 2 and 3B in the Hexagon Final Traffic Report makes painfully apparent.

Regarding the proposed XCAP-generated Matrix, we ask that the criteria description on page 2, lines H.01 and H.02, be changed to Need or Want, instead of a hard Constraint that must be met. If these were really hard constraints, they would rule out Churchill Closure at the outset. Clearly that was not the intent of the City Council when they set up these criteria and charged the XCAP of evaluating Churchill Closure as one of the viable options for this intersection.

Finally, in response to the concerns of some Southgate residents that Churchill Closure would leave them cut-off from the rest of the city, we suggest that this could be amply mitigated for, even with Churchill Closure, by opening up some of the many streets in Southgate and adjacent areas that are currently blocked off.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,
Young-Jeh Oh

From: [Kellerman, Thomas W.](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Cc: [Shikada, Ed](#)
Subject: XCAP Traffic Study Comments
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 11:03:01 AM
Attachments: [Rail - Final Traffic Letter 7 22 20.docx](#)

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

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Please see the attached letter. Thank you.

Tom

Thomas W. Kellerman

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**Thomas W. Kellerman
Rachel H. Kellerman
1129 Emerson Street
Palo Alto, CA 94301**

July 22, 2020

Palo Alto Expanded Community
Advisory Panel
250 Hamilton Ave., #7
Palo Alto, CA 94301-2531

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We are writing with respect to the final traffic study delivered to the XCAP, as it relates to the alternatives with respect to the Churchill Ave. rail crossing. Some engaged citizens refer to the Churchill closure/traffic mitigation study as “perfect”, citing improved LOS ratings at various intersections. We respectfully disagree. In fact, one reason we object to the XCAP making any final recommendations for the Churchill crossing at this time is the flawed and confusing traffic study.

For the following reasons we urge XCAP members to withhold endorsing or rejecting any plan for Churchill until a full traffic analysis is completed and vetted by experts involved in city planning and transportation, bicycle and pedestrian advocates, neighbors and neighboring institutions such as schools and businesses, and the community at large.

Lack of Community Engagement

Even before the onset of the pandemic, the traffic study process lacked robust community engagement. Now that prospect is even more daunting.

Our neighborhood asked for and never received direct engagement between community members and city staff with the various traffic consultants. This type of interaction would have provided an opportunity to understand the assumptions underlying the study and provided direct “on-the-ground” input to the consultants to help inform their conclusions.

In addition, the bicycle community was never formally engaged in the mitigation evaluation process, and the views of Palo Alto High School students, staff and administrators were not included in the proposals regarding changes to this major artery to school. This lack of neighborhood engagement has led to confusion and frustration, and diminished the value of the conclusions expressed in the report.

Apparent Flaws in the Traffic Study

There are several areas where the current traffic study appears to be flawed or at least incomplete. For example, the current report describes mitigations that are different from the graphics linked to the mitigation text. Graphics 8A and 8B do not show the left-hand turn lane or light at the corner of the Embarcadero slip road and Alma, yet this mitigation is described on page 17 bullet point two. The consultants considered two designs for the Embarcadero/ Kingsley/ High Street area, but the report seems to be uncertain as to which design is being proposed. The two designs could have significantly different impacts on traffic flow and safety. Similarly, the projected traffic counts do not correspond with the anticipated changes. For example, the projected traffic flow indicates a decrease in the number of vehicles traveling through the Alma/ Kingsley intersection after the mitigation when in fact the point of the mitigation is to direct additional traffic to that intersection.

Limited Focus on LOS (Cars) Ignores Bicycle and Pedestrians North of Embarcadero & Does Not Follow Comprehensive Plan

The traffic study only looks at car traffic (LOS) and ignores the impacts to the very busy school/community bicycle and pedestrian route that runs along the north side of Embarcadero. This route is an official Palo Alto bicycle route, but it is not reflected in the conceptual design. Moreover, the traffic study does not count bicycle and pedestrians along the Embarcadero corridor because they were not asked to do so.¹ Residents did a daily count of bicycles and pedestrians that crossed the busy intersection of Emerson/Kingsley/Embarcadero between 7:30-8:30 am on a typical school day and counted 300 crossings and 100 cars that stopped or “paused “at the stop sign. On that day, they witnessed one near miss when a car did not fully stop causing a student to swerve aside to avoid being hit. Note that if the mitigation to add a left turn onto Alma from the Embarcadero slip road is adopted, the volume of traffic crossing the bike path to enter the slip road will be significantly increased.

¹ <https://connectingpaloalto.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Item3-Hexagon-Responses-to-XCAP-Traffic-Questions.pdf> Page 6

We recognize it is not the XCAP's job to solve all the bicycle and pedestrian problems in Palo Alto, but we ask that the XCAP recognize that this incomplete mitigation plan has the potential to make an already dangerous bicycle route worse. Traffic mitigation plans for this area should include a Kingsley/Embarcadero bike/pedestrian route that is safe enough to qualify for "safe route to school" designation.

Embarcadero Road Volume & Bridge Replacement Needs More Analysis

Embarcadero Road is a residential artery with over 200 driveways and should be analyzed differently than Oregon Expressway, which is a different roadway category.

In normal peak-hour traffic times, the traffic on Embarcadero moves glacially, especially through the tunnel. The addition of a light at Kingsley and Embarcadero is likely to create gridlock on Embarcadero during peak hours when traffic enters Embarcadero from Alma. There are assumptions but no clear analysis of how traffic congestion on Embarcadero Road will impact the busy neighborhood streets that surround Embarcadero and include Town and County shopping center, Palo Alto High School, Castilleja, Walter Hayes and Addison Elementary schools. Drivers using routing apps can easily navigate neighborhood streets as they attempt to avoid traffic congestion on Embarcadero Road. Because Embarcadero traffic has not been studied, the current mitigations seem insufficient to deter traffic cutting through neighborhood streets and are likely to worsen the already poor function of this artery. In the traffic consultant's presentation from February 2020, they indicate that studying Embarcadero would cost \$20,000. We have no idea if this figure is accurate, but we do know that understanding traffic volume increases on Embarcadero is essential for any mitigation plan to succeed.²

With respect to the Alma/ Embarcadero bridge, the traffic study expressly states: "Widening would require extensive modification or potential replacement of the existing bridge structure."³ This one sentence describes a huge undertaking that has not been described or analyzed. We question the cost allotted to this building project and the engineering challenges of whether building a new overpass are properly reflected in the new proposed matrix. The traffic consultant has not conducted any analysis of this project, nor has the city, so any plans regarding modifications to this bridge are merely speculative at this time.

² <https://connectingpaloalto.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Item3-Hexagon-Responses-to-XCAP-Traffic-Questions.pdf> page 5 & 6

³ https://connectingpaloalto.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2020-07-22_Item-3A_Traffic-Report_Churchill_MeadowsCharleston-Grade-Separation-Analysis.pdf P 17 Paragraph 2

Definition of Mitigation Does Not Align with Council Motion

The definition of mitigation that appears on a slide 5 of the January 8, 2020 traffic presentation is as follows: “Street system changes that would allow additional capacity to accommodate diverted traffic.”

We believe this definition of mitigation is insufficient and inconsistent with the resolution adopted by City Council in June 2018 ⁴. The definition proposed by Hexagon appears to focus exclusively on the volume of vehicular traffic that can be accommodated by an existing street. This definition does not consider the nature of the street in question (purely residential v. arterial), or the effect on pedestrians, bicyclists, residents, schools and businesses.

We urge the XCAP not to make any recommendation with respect to the Churchill Closure/mitigation option until there can be a more inclusive community process and thorough city planning analysis of this seemingly simple but very complex option.

Thank you for your tireless efforts on this challenging and important project.

Very truly yours,

Thomas W. Kellerman
Rachel H. Kellerman

Cc: Ed Shikada, City Manager

⁴ <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?t=83343.25&BlobID=65728> Part E