

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 **October 14 and November 10, 2020 at 12:00 pm approximately.**



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: [Tirumala Ranganath](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: Elevated Rail option needs to go !
Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2020 3:58:55 PM

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Dear Sirs,

As a resident of the Meadow/Charleston neighborhood, I am writing to express my serious concern in regard to the so-called " Elevated Rail " option. The way I see it, those residents whose homes border the rail tracks along Park Blvd need to be accorded more voting privileges. These are the households that have to live with the consequences of any decision to go with this option, indefinitely. City residents who live away from the immediate neighborhood, can have opinions but they don't have to put up with the day in and day out issues of serious noise pollution, as well as the loss of privacy in their own backyards as well as the unsightly view that they are stuck with.

The issues associated with having to account for two creek crossings, such as pumps as well as the necessity to make sure stagnant water is not allowed to accumulate have solutions that are part of the project. A tunnel option might be preferred but the economics of it will have to be weighed against the trench option. The question of funding needs to be addressed like any other infrastructure project ! Isn't it true that a smoothly functioning rail line project benefits commuters as well as other users, on a continuing basis from many many years to come ? Also there needs to be a search for the best (cost effective) construction outfit needs to be on the table. Just because the leading candidate happens to be local doesn't necessarily mean the public gets the best deal ! The party that organizes and pays for the project needs to be very cost conscious, especially in these times.

The trench option needs to be the top candidate while the " Elevated Rail " option has to be eliminated from consideration, given the overwhelming opposition to it from the residents most impacted by it (living along Park Blvd, right adjacent to the tracks !). Thanks for hearing me out.

Sincerely,

T.R. Ranganath (Greater Ventura/Meadow resident)

From: [William Robinson](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: Sharing a pro trench file from my work 2 years ago
Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2020 2:57:32 PM
Attachments: [Road over trains Compton CA.pdf](#)

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William'Rob' Robinson, member PABAC (Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee), Palo Alto since 2005

What it looks like when driving, cycling or walking across TRAINS in a TRENCH.

Images copied from Google Maps 2D, 3D and Street View. Travel to “Compton at Alameda, Compton, CA” for this particular crossing. Upon inspection of most of the other 29 crossings, extremely few pedestrians or bicyclists are captured by the street view cameras. No evidence of bike lanes can be seen. Why? Apparently south Los Angeles hosted small and large manufacturing. Residential neighborhoods filled in later. Similar growth occurred historically SF to Redwood City. Most grade separations have depressed the roadway or put rail above; up until now, moving rail under road is under consideration.

If Meadow and Charleston passed over a trenched CalTrain, the distance would be about ½ shown. What strikes me as a motorist, pedestrian and cyclist is the safety of the flat roadway. Everything is fully visible. William Robinson October 14, 2018



Train in trench under road Compton, CA 2002
Shoofly rail in foreground with gates in disuse,
150 freight trains daily pass 33 feet below on 3 tracks.
Reduced noise 90%, pollution 54%. train pollution 28%
30 similar crossings over 10 mile trench.
Length of entire project 20 miles, cost \$2.4B.

From: [Kathy Jordan](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: fyi - SF rent prices decline 31%
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2020 11:13:12 AM

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Hi all:

Just wanted to provide another data point for the XCAP.

Thanks.

Kathy Jordan

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/S-F-rent-prices-plunge-as-much-as-31-15644663.php>

S.F. rent prices plunge as much as 31% — steepest decline in U.S., new report says

From: [David Kennedy](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: October 28, 2020 XCAP Meeting
Date: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 6:38:09 PM

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Has a notice, agenda and link to tomorrow's Zoom meeting been sent out or did I miss it? Could you please send it again? Thank you.

David Kennedy

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From: [Kathy Jordan](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [Council, City](#)
Cc: [Emily Mibach](#); [Gennady Sheyner](#)
Subject: Vast migration of over 14 million Americans coming due to remote work
Date: Friday, October 30, 2020 11:33:49 AM

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<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/10/28/vast-migration-of-over-14-million-americans-coming-due-to-remote-work.html>

Fyi - regarding remote work and it's implications for the need for costly grade separations.

Fourteen million to 23 million Americans are planning to relocate to a new U.S. city or region due in part to the growing acceptance of remote work, according to Upwork's Remote Workers on the Move report released Thursday.

Companies of all sizes are adopting a remote work policy, and this is widening the talent pool for SMBs.

From: [Gary Lindgren](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#); [Nadia Naik](#)
Subject: Railroad Grade Separations Final Report
Date: Friday, November 6, 2020 2:08:02 PM

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Nadia and XCAP Committee,

Here are some suggestions for the final report that is being put together in Chapter 5.

1. Suggest a common style in writing the recommendations.
2. Have a list of 3 sections, Pro items, Con items, and Recommendations for next actions, if any.
3. The text for the Trench idea needs lots of work, now it has many questions, but has a list of Pros and Cons.
4. For the Viaduct, Trench, and Hybrid solution, have a Con item of “no separation of pedestrians/bikes.”
5. For the Charleston solution, recommend that more design work needed and remove the right turn path onto Alma going east on Charleston.
6. For the Meadow solution, recommend that the parking strip on Meadow east of Alma be removed and design a solution much like for Charleston. Also narrow the width of the pedestrian/bike path of the now present solution.
7. For the Charleston and Meadow solutions, suggest that most of the text put into an appendix as background information.

Gary

Gary Lindgren
585 Lincoln Ave
Palo Alto CA 94301

650-326-0655

[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: [Karen Kalinsky](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Subject: XCAP Feedback on Chapter 5 Underpass Alternative-- Executive Summary
Date: Tuesday, November 10, 2020 11:58:15 AM

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To: Cari Templeton and Nadia Naik
From: Karen Kalinsky
RE: Feedback on Chapter 5 Underpass Alternative-- Executive Summary and Meadow Dr Section

The Chapter 5 Underpass Alternative-- Executive Summary says, “In addition, the design created by the consultants for Meadow differs significantly from what was originally proposed.” I think it would be more accurate to say, “In addition, the design created by the consultants for Meadow differs significantly from what was originally proposed, **largely due to the constraints of Meadow Drive being a much narrower street than Charleston.**”

This would be more accurate since I believe that AECOM and Hexagon modified the design due to fact that the narrower width of Meadow Drive meant that they deemed it unrealistic to include a safe roundabout (or even a U-turn movement) and room for a safe bike lane, without additional Property Acquisitions.

Additional text from the Meadow Drive section of Chapter 5/Underpass also doesn't include these important factors (see below).

Thank you, Karen Kalinsky, E. Meadow Dr resident

Meadow Drive As explained above, the original XCAP concept presented to the City Council for approval did not include a map of Meadow, or any drawings but was described as similar to Charleston but with the bike/ped path on the south side of meadow. Meadow is more narrow than Charleston, but also has much less traffic than Charleston.

And the text below diagram from community member proposal says,

XCAP Underpass Concept “The red box in the drawing explains that the concept for Meadow is similar [to Chalreston] but that the bike/ped crossing would be on the South side of Meadow.”

--

Karen Isaacs Kalinsky

kalinsky@stanford.edu

From: [Karen Kalinsky](#)
To: [Expanded Community Advisory Panel](#)
Cc: [Shikada, Ed](#)
Subject: XCAP Final report and ranking of criteria
Date: Tuesday, November 10, 2020 11:37:38 AM
Attachments: [Kalinsky to XCAP Ranking Criteria 20201110.docx](#)

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

To: XCAP members
From: Karen Kalinsky
RE: XCAP Final report and ranking of criteria
DATE: November 10, 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Please add XCAP Rankings of Criteria-- preferably in Chapter 5 "Recommendations and Rationale" as context for Pros & Cons for each alternative; and repeat in Chapter 3 "Criteria" -- in addition to 'City Council Criteria' and 'Engineering Considerations from AECOM'.

I see that Chapter 5 – Recommendations and Rationale includes Pros & Cons or "Advantages and Challenges" in each alternative section. I hope that Chapter 5 will also include XCAP's ranking of criteria to provide context for evaluating each alternative. While I am quite sure that XCAP members generally agree with the City Council criteria, I would also like to see Chapter 3 "Criteria" include an XCAP ranking of its highest criteria, which would be ranked **after** the City Council Tier 1 and Tier 2 Criteria, and the Engineering Considerations from AECOM. I believe that that XCAP's ranking of these criteria will be of critical importance in providing expert background and information to the future City Council's decision making process.

Without these XCAP rankings, you will not sufficiently and succinctly capture all of XCAP members' extensive expertise; investment in studying the constraints and opportunities for the crossings; and listening to and giving weight to community concerns. If XCAP reported, say for example, on its next 3-4 highest ranked criteria, and perhaps statements summarizing XCAP members' positions on the next 3-4 in criteria after those, i.e. those which have a significant degree of mutual support, or votes by XCAP members.

There have been many verbal contributions from XCAP – both during the go-around to each XCAP member for the Churchill crossing, and the rather more abbreviated go-around for each member's "leanings" on the Meadow-Charleston crossings. During these comments, members expressed their concerns – which so far appear to be just listed in the "pros and cons" or "advantages and challenges" in the Chapter 5 under each alternative. For example, individual XCAP members expressed the following ideas and concerns which might be worked into ranking criteria:

- a) Is there a way that the cost of the Trench could be lowered significantly? Thereby making it a viable alternative?
- b) How can we avoid the impacts on residents of Property Takings? -- including concerns that "fair market value" may not be enough to buy a comparable home in Palo Alto. And, there is more invested in one's home than what monetary reimbursement can come close to compensating for.
- c) Meadow Drive is narrower than Charleston Road-- and therefore the same alternative or

modifications may not work as well for both

d) Longer construction times will lead to gridlock that many residents are going to be very frustrated with, but they (for the most part) have not figured out how to factor this into their preferences.

e) There is a significant portion of the residents in the neighborhoods closest to the tracks who are very opposed to any alternative that results in visual impacts.

f) Many would like to see the safety that ped/bike separation would afford, but who are also concerned for those pedestrians and cyclists who would find going down and up a grade very difficult.

You may, indeed, plan to include such concerns in your Final Report, but including a ranking of criteria in your report at the beginning of each Chapter 5 Alternative will add valuable insight and weight to your report's conclusions.

Thank you for the thoughtful and diligent work you are doing for Final Report to submit to the City Counsel.

Karen Kalinsky, E. Meadow Drive resident

--

Karen Isaacs Kalinsky

kalinsky@stanford.edu

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