CITY OF
PALO ALTO

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 **November 18 and December 2, 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.

Greetings,

I appreciated the discussion of grade separation, and all the work you have all done up to this point on this issue.

According to this guardian article, people are leaving California very rapidly now.

https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/nov/15/leaving-california-exodus-move-out-movers

Certainly, if there is any truth to it, we should wait to see what happens before we spend a lot of money on grade separation, and it seems other construction may not be warranted either. Not only might we not have the ridership, but we MIGHT be facing a huge loss of revenue if all these taxpayers move out, and have a huge fiscal crisis. Grade separation will be expensive, and even electrification. It seems we should declare some sort of halt to these things, until the situation sorts itself out. This MAY not just affect the Palo Alto economy, but all of California, Cal train as well as the Palo Alto budget.

I DID appreciate the discussion of low cost alternatives, fences, and blue lights etc. These we might pursue more.

Thanks for your time, and stay well from the virus,

Ken Streib

From:	Arnout Boelens
To:	Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Cc:	Nadia Naik
Subject:	Design concept Embarcadero Road
Date:	Sunday, November 29, 2020 9:10:19 PM
Attachments:	embarcaderoKingsley.pdf

Dear XCAP members,

I have been working on a concept to turn Embarcadero into a complete street and create a better connection between Bryant and the Caltrain underpass. The design is attached to this email.

Given that various mitigation options are being considered along Embarcadero Road, I hope that this design will be considered. The guiding principle for this design has been to increase road safety and create a stress-free connection between Bryant St and the Caltrain underpass which can be used by road users of all ages and abilities.

Kind regards,

Arnout Boelens

from Kingsley to Embarcadero

a safe street for everyone

Arnout Boelens

ampboelens@gmail.com

November 22, 2020

Summary

- Currently, there is no bicycle infrastructure along Embarcadero Rd, and the connection from Bryant St to Town & Country, PALY, and Stanford is a key **missing link** in the bicycle network.

- The goal of this design is to make improvements along the north side of Embarcadero Rd to turn this section of the road into a complete street. i.e. a street for all road users, of **all ages and abilities**.

- The guiding principle for this design is to increase **road safety** and prevent unnecessary traffic deaths.

- This design is inspired by **alternative 2** of the Embarcadero Road/El Camino Real Corridor and Intersection Improvements Project from 2016 (City of Palo Alto 2016a). As was approved by city council on September 19, 2016, this design **can be combined with alternative 1** with a protected intersection at Kingsley and Embarcadero.

Why promote bicycling in Palo Alto?

Climate emergency

- Increased bicycle use means lower greenhouse gas emissions (Harms and Kansen 2018)
- 2030 Target: Increase bike mode share, including work commute trips, from 7% to 25% (City of Palo Alto 2016b)

Traffic congestion

- Building walking and biking infrastructure can result in a significant mode shift away from single occupancy vehicles (SOVs) (Koska and Rudolph 2016)
- Goal T-2: Decrease delay, congestion, and vehicle miles travelled with a priority on our worst intersections and our peak commute times, including school traffic. (City of Palo Alto 2017)

Economy

- Cyclists shop more locally, and more often (Haubold 2016)
- Policy B-4.6: Encourage and support the operation of small, independent retail businesses and locally-serving professional services. (City of Palo Alto 2017)

## How to increase adoption of bicycling among the general population?

Develop programs to foster a bicycling culture and design **infrastructure** for **all ages and abilities** (Oldenziel and de la Bruhèze 2011).

One approach to design bicycle infrastructure for all ages and abilities is to use the five design principles for bicycle infrastructure (Talens et al. 2016):

- **Cohesion:** cycle from anywhere to everywhere
- **Directness:** create short and fast routes
- **Safety:** avoid differences in speed and mass
- **Comfort:** minimal stops and nuisance
- **Attractiveness:** create infrastructure that people enjoy using

Policy T-4.2: Continue to construct traffic calming measures to slow traffic on local and collector residential streets, and **prioritize traffic calming** measures for safety over congestion management. (City of Palo Alto 2017)
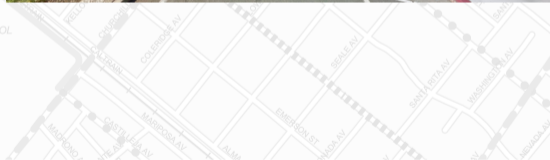
Why Kingsley to Embarcadero?
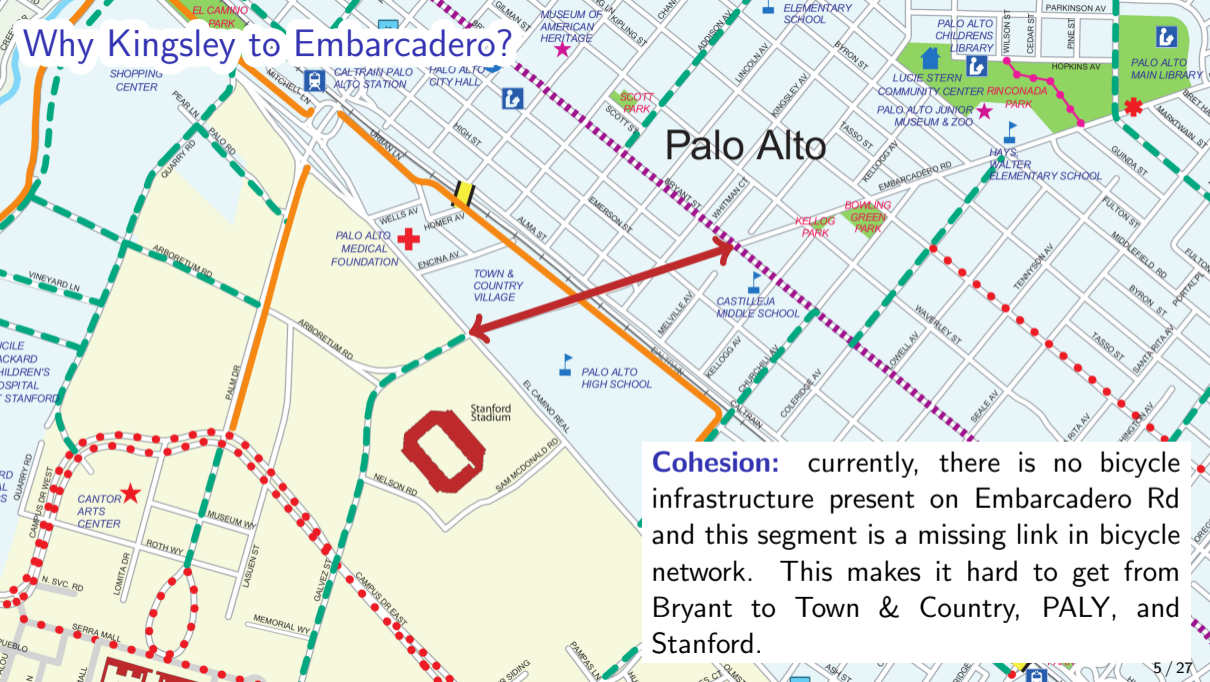
Cohesion: currently, there is no bicycle infrastructure present on Embarcadero Rd and this segment is a missing link in bicycle network. This makes it hard to get from Bryant to Town & Country, PALY, and Stanford.

Why Kingsley to Embarcadero?

Current situation: there is room for significant improvement compared to the current situation. This can be illustrated by looking north along Emerson St and east at High St as indicated by the red arrows.

Why Kingsley to Embarcadero?

Directness: riding on the sidewalk, the current infrastructure provides an indirect route with sharp corners at both High St and Emerson St.
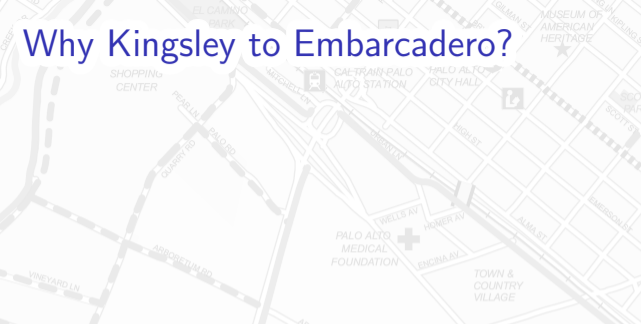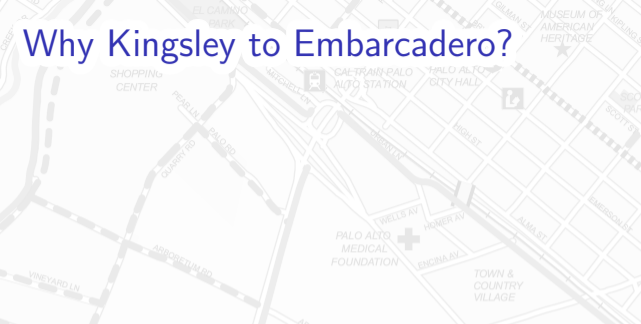
Why Kingsley to Embarcadero?

Safety: the existing infrastructure is unsafe to walk and ride. Cars turn from Embarcadero Rd onto Emerson St at high speed, parked cars block the view down Emerson St, and cars exit Embarcadero Rd at high speed without using their indicators at High St.

Why Kingsley to Embarcadero?

Comfort: the sidewalk is very narrow, making it hard to pass pedestrians and other bicyclists. In addition, because of the narrow sidewalk there are a number of sharp corners that are hard to navigate at both High St and Emerson St.

Why Kingsley to Embarcadero?

Attractiveness: the current route is unattractive and stressful to navigate for bicyclists and pedestrians due to the proximity to high speed traffic and dangerous crossings.

From Kingsley to Embarcadero

- A design is needed that is safe for **all ages and abilities**

- The presented design is:
    - **Cohesive**
    - **Direct**
    - **Safe**
    - **Comfortable**
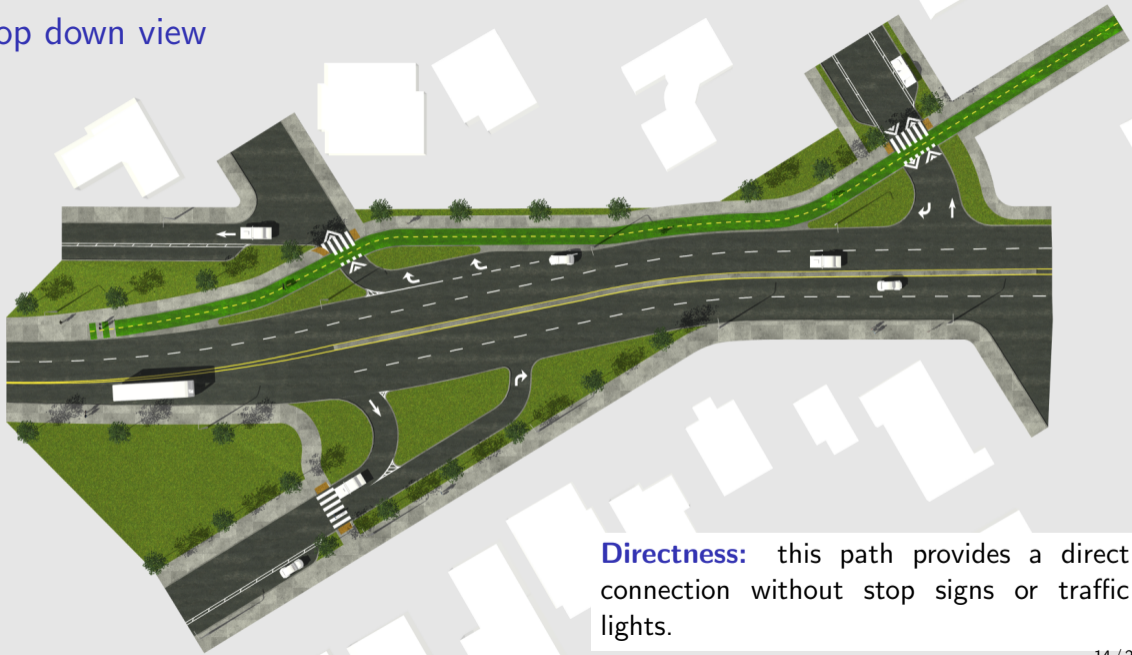   - **Attractive**

Top down view

High

Emerson

Kingsley

Embarcadero

Kingsley

Cohesion: this new bicycle path provides a missing link in the cycling network from Bryant to Town & Country, PALY, and Stanford.

Directness: this path provides a direct connection without stop signs or traffic lights.
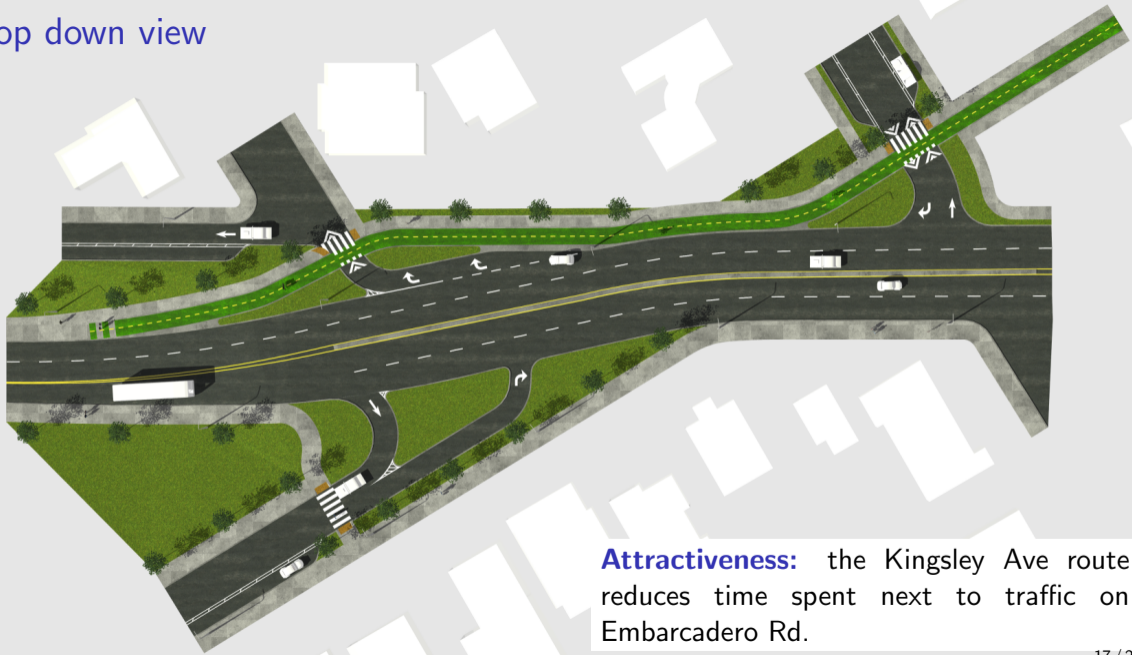
Safety: separate facilities are provided for motorized traffic, pedestrians and bicyclists.

Top down view
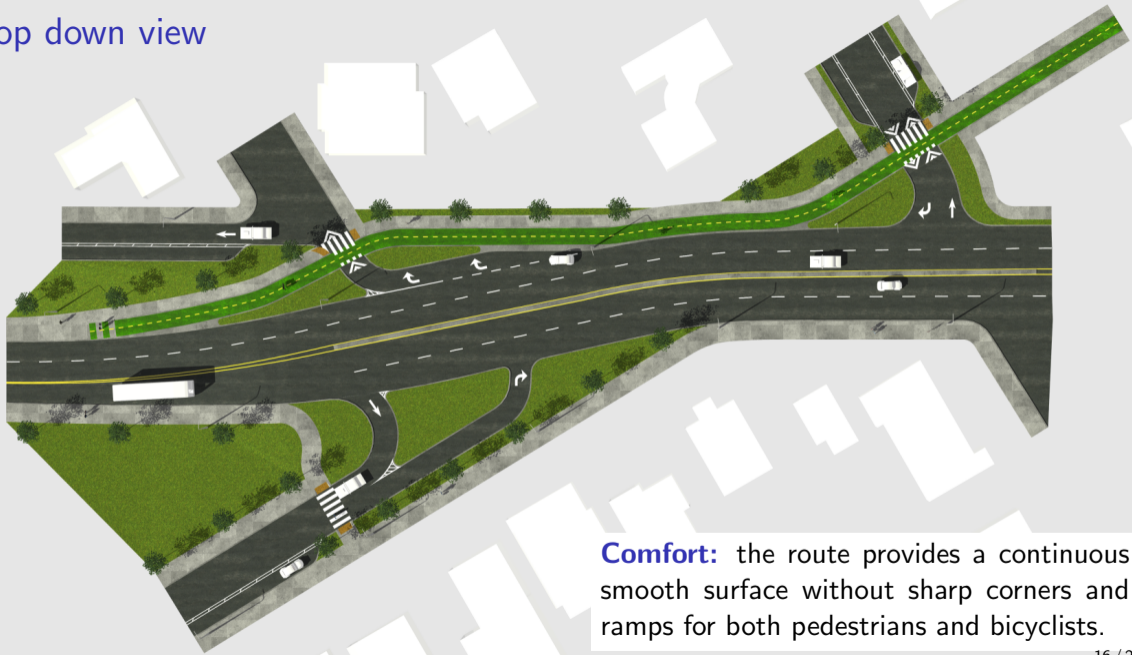
Comfort: the route provides a continuous smooth surface without sharp corners and ramps for both pedestrians and bicyclists.

Attractiveness: the Kingsley Ave route reduces time spent next to traffic on Embarcadero Rd.

Embarcadero: looking west

Embarcadero: looking west

Safety: the lane width is reduced to 10 ft to reduce speeding on Embarcadero Rd. The design vehicle for turning radii is DL-23 (National Association of City Transportation Officials 2013).

Embarcadero: looking east

Embarcadero: looking east

Comfort: The Caltrain underpass remains unchanged. To indicate the transition from the bicycle path to the mixed use underpass the transition is made of alternating green asphalt and concrete.

Emerson: looking south

Safety: to limit speeding, the lane width is reduced to 10 ft. Separate parking lanes are painted onto the street, including a door zone. This way the bulb-outs do not create a funnel for bicyclists and motorized traffic.

Emerson: looking south

Safety: Bi-directional bicycle lanes are more dangerous than uni-directional bicycle lanes. Therefore it is very important to slow down cars to 20 mph. Bulb-outs and speed bumps are both part of this effort. Street sign locations and sight lines need to be further investigated.

High: looking east

25 / 27
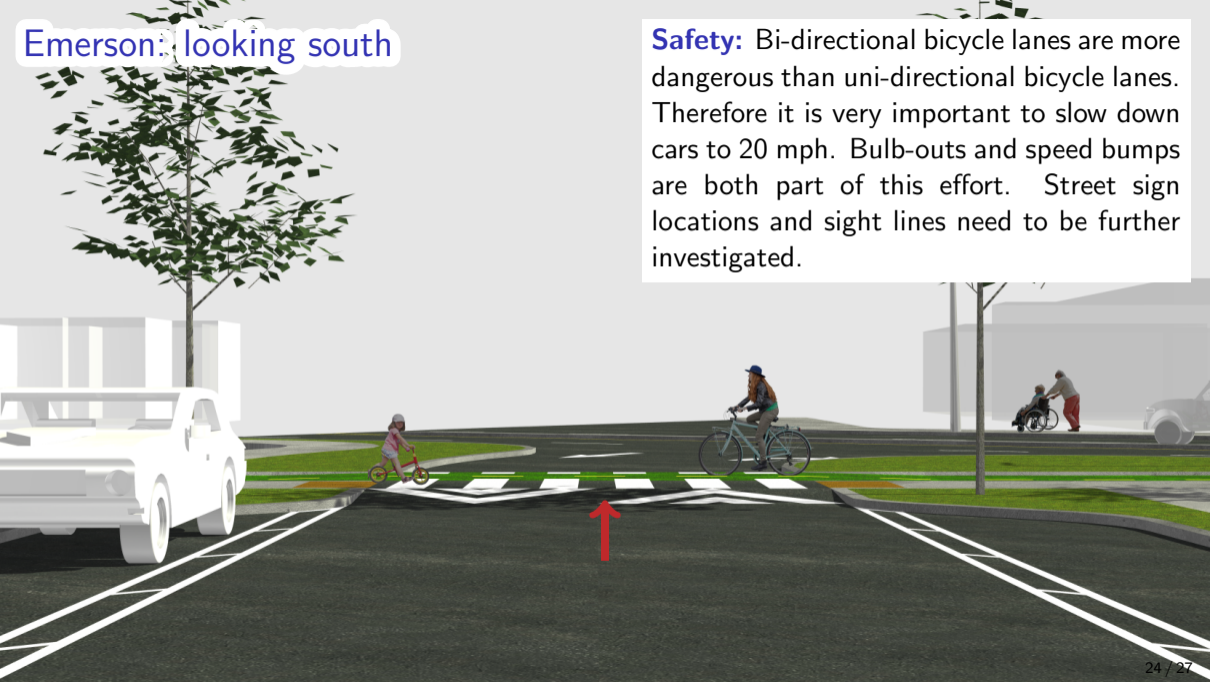
High: looking east

High: looking east

Kingsley: looking north

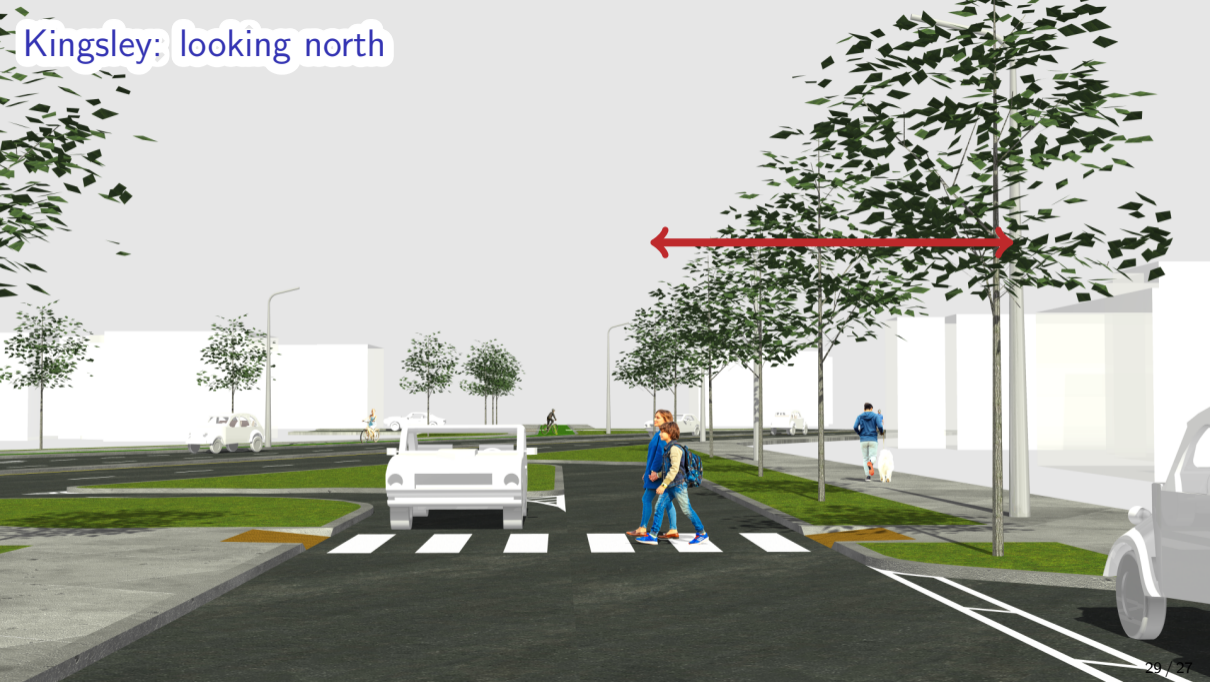Kingsley: looking north

Comparison to 2016 design

This design is inspired by alternative 2 of the Embarcadero Road/El Camino Real Corridor and Intersection Improvements Project from 2016 (City of Palo Alto 2016a).

Improvements on this design include:

- Separate facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Sidewalk (7 ft) and bicycle path (8 ft) both have the recommended width (Talens et al. 2016)
- Bicycle path is positioned in between the sidewalk and the roadway and is protected from the roadway by a buffer (1 ft minimum)
- Speed of motorized traffic is reduced to 20 mph on crossings with Emerson St and High St
- Parked cars do not block the view on Emerson St

Comparison to grade separation mitigation design

Provided PALY students can cross Embarcadero easily, this design has the following advantages:

- Separate facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Sidewalk (7 ft) and bicycle path (8 ft) both have the recommended width (Talens et al. 2016)
- Bicycle path is protected from the roadway by a buffer (1 ft minimum)
- Motorized traffic is calmed on crossings with Emerson St and High St
- Parked cars do not block the view on Emerson St
- Bicyclists and pedestrians are not exposed to cars cornering at high speed at the intersection of Kingsley Ave and Embarcadero Rd.

As was approved by city council on September 19, 2016, this design can be combined with alternative 1 of the Embarcadero Road/El Camino Real Corridor and Intersection Improvements Project from 2016 (City of Palo Alto 2016a). Alternative 1 would be greatly improved by the installation of a protected intersection at Kingsley and Embarcadero.

Conclusions

- Kingsley Ave to Embarcadero Rd is a known **missing link** in the Palo Alto bicycle network

- A design is needed that is safe for **all ages and abilities**

- The presented design is:
  - **Cohesive**
  - **Direct**
  - **Safe**
  - **Comfortable**
  - **Attractive**

References I

City of Palo Alto. *Embarcadero Road/El Camino Real Corridor and Intersection Improvements Project*. 2016. URL: https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/trn/transportation_projects/embarcadero_road_el_camino_real_corridor_and_intersection_improvements_project.asp.

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H. Haubold. *Shopping by bike: Best friend of your city centre*. Tech. rep. Brussels: European Cyclists' Federation, 2016.

L. Harms and M. Kansen. "Cycling Facts". In: *Netherlands Institute for Transport Policy Analysis (KiM). Den Haag: Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management* (2018).

References II

T. Koska and F. Rudolph. *The Role of Walking and Cycling in Reducing Congestion: A Portfolio of Measures.* Tech. rep. Brussels: FLOW Project, July 2016. URL: http://www.h2020-flow.eu.

National Association of City Transportation Officials. *Urban Street Design Guide.* New York: Island Press, 2013. ISBN: 978-1-61091-494-9.

R. Oldenziel and A. A. de la Bruhèze. "Contested spaces: Bicycle lanes in urban Europe, 1900-1995". In: *Transfers* 1.2 (2011), pp. 29–49. DOI: 10.3167/trans.2011.010203.

H. Talens, F. Heijnis, and R. van de Weerd, eds. *Design Manual for Bicycle Traffic.* CROW-Fietsberaad. Dec. 2016. ISBN: 978 90 6628 659 7.

From:	Glenn Fisher
To:	Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Subject:	Chapter 3.2 - Churchill Closing comments
Date:	Wednesday, December 2, 2020 7:56:14 AM

Hi,

I've read Chapter 3.2 carefully and am concerned that the current version does not provide ANY recommended pedestrian/bike solution, and glosses over the fairly major mitigations that are needed to maintain reasonable LOS at impacted intersections for vehicles. The report mentions a traffic light on the Alma-Page Mill off ramp intersections, but does not mention the many other intersections that the Traffic Report says require substantial and coordinated mitigation to maintain reasonable LOS.

In addition, the report does not note that many of these mitigations are outside the scope of the XCAP, since they impact intersections that have multiple jurisdictions, such as El Camino Real, and will take substantial time and effort by the City of Palo Alto to obtain the necessary agreements. And in some cases — particularly El Camino — other agencies may have alternative desired outcomes that prevent the required mitigations.

The report indicates that the traffic numbers using Churchill are between 700 and 800, and many of these car, to transit between Embarcadero and Alama will end up on residential city streets that are not designed to carry substantial traffic.

From the Traffic report, page 55:

Potential mitigation measures to alleviate the delay experienced at the intersections during the Existing Plus Project scenario could include the following:

1. At Alma Street/Lincoln Avenue, convert the westbound approach into a right-turn only lane and divert the left-turn movement onto Embarcadero Road. Additionally, at Alma Street/Embarcadero Road, convert the westbound movement from a right-turn only lane into a right-turn lane and left-turn lane. This would require the removal of a few parking spaces, restriping of the westbound approach, and signalizing the intersection of Alma Street/Embarcadero Road. Finally, the intersection of Alma Street/Kingsley Avenue would also be signalized. Both of these newly signalized intersections would operate on one controller. Both intersections of Alma Street/Embarcadero Road and Alma Street/Kingsley Avenue satisfy the peak hour signal warrants. Signal warrant sheets can be found in Appendix F.

2. At Embarcadero Road/Cowper Street, convert the northbound and southbound approaches into a right turn only lane and divert the through and left turn movements to the adjacent signalized intersection of Embarcadero Road/Waverly Street. Appropriate signing and striping would be required for the northbound and southbound approaches of Cowper Street.

3. At El Camino Real/Embarcadero Road, installing an additional westbound left-turn lane and an exclusive northbound right-turn lane. Changing the lane geometry of this intersection would also require optimization of the signal timings.

4. At El Camino Real/Oregon Expressway-Page Mill Road, installing a westbound right-turn lane from Oregon Expressway to El Camino Real and optimizing the signal timings would mitigate the additional delay caused by the project.

5. At Alma Street/Oregon Expressway WB Off Ramp and Alma Street/Oregon Expressway EB Off

Ramp, signalizing both off ramps operating with one controller. Under this scenario, Alma Street/Oregon Expressway EB Off Ramp satisfies the peak hour signal warrant. Signal warrant sheets can be found in Appendix F.

On the pedestrian/bicycle side, the two alternatives both have problems that have been repeatedly pointed out of either 90° turns that are difficult to navigate on a bike, or putting the ped/bike tunnel entrance in the middle of a street that requires crossing traffic to enter the tunnel.

Before this alternative can be considered feasible, I think it is incumbent upon the XCAP to provide a reasonable alternative that meets with Palo Alto biking community acceptance.

Thank you for your consideration,

Glenn Fisher
Adobe Meadow Neighborhood