Baumb, Nelly

From: Inder Monga <imonga@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 20, 2020 6:54 PM
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel; Council, City; Shikada, Ed; Kamhi, Philip; Gaines, Chantal; Reshma Singh
Subject: City Council Meeting Agenda Item. #7 (September 21, 2020)
Attachments: Community letter to XCAP City Council July 28 2020 FINAL.docx

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Date: September 20, 2020

Dear Honorable Council Members:

We are writing with deep concern with regard to the Expanded Community Advisory Panel (XCAP) update report. This will be covered under Agenda item #7 for the City Council meeting scheduled for Monday, September 21, 2020.

We would like to highlight three major concerns that make the idea of Churchill closure inequitable, biased, and likely dangerous:

1.
2. There are critical facts, significant citizen opinion,
3. safety concerns, and important uncertainties that have not been taken into account, due to which a hasty decision should not be taken to close Churchill
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5.

6.
7.
8. The XCAP process itself has become flawed and membership
9. not representative of the Palo Alto neighborhoods. The current vote should be accounted as 6-3-5, since 5 of the original members have since left (and not replaced), including the sole member who was disproportionately expected to represent all the neighborhoods
10. of North Palo Alto and the Embarcadero corridor.
11.
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14.
15. The traffic study has egregious gaps: it is inadequately
16. goal-posted to 2030, and does not take into account any local community ground-truth of dangerous traffic patterns. The proposed “mitigations” exacerbates the already beleaguered Embarcadero crossing by dumping the congestion and safety burden at the Embarcadero

17. intersection that serves five regional destinations: An international university Stanford, regional retail and offices at Downtown Palo Alto, Town and Country village, and two high schools Castilleja and Palo Alto High. Most importantly, the "mitigation" plan
18. mitigates only a limited metric, the "level of service", with little concern for the walkability, bikeability and safety of our school-children.
19.

This is not just our voice alone. The PAUSD Superintendent's note to XCAP expresses their serious concerns about Churchill closure. 56% of Southgate residents have voiced the importance of keeping Churchill open in a recent neighborhood survey as the original cloverleaf design for Churchill (with eminent domain issues) is not under consideration any more.

Similar concerns were communicated in a community letter to the Council, City Managers, and XCAP on July 25th (attached).

Please see below, details on each of these issues.

Dramatic shift in vehicle traffic patterns and potentially, the rail corridor

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- There has been a dramatic shift in commuting patterns, with large segments of the population now permanently
- teleworking including from companies in downtown SFO locations. The old Caltrain projections cannot be trusted for future planning given the unprecedented COVID era. It may well be that the frequency of trains would at best be status quo to pre-COVID, which
- makes any changes at Churchill a moot point.
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- Vehicular traffic patterns have, and will continue to change significantly, that negates any forward projections
- of the traffic study. Any decisions made on an outdated traffic study that could not forecast post-pandemic scenarios would not be appropriate.
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- Any unsubstantiated decisions taken without incorporating the scenario analyses mentioned above would tie
- up the City's hands unnecessarily or make it difficult to retract.
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PAUSD input ignored and not mitigated in XCAP vote/recommendation

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- The PAUSD Superintendent's concerns in an email to the XCAP and Council have largely been ignored. Even in the
- document
- shared by XCAP with you today, the only issue documented for consideration is that "may negatively impact student
- safety related to bicycle commuters".
-

This selective highlight by XCAP ignores the impact on buses and maintenance vehicles where Churchill is the preferred single entry/exit point. The children could be spending much more time in buses during peak times. Additional text from the letter is shared verbatim below:

> *"PAUSD deploys 22 busses each day to various parts of Palo Alto and East Palo Alto. Currently, our busses cross Alma Street at Churchill over 20 times per day as part of routine business. This does not include athletic or other extra-curricular trips. Our only entrance to our transportation yard is on Churchill. Practically speaking,* ***a closure of Churchill would force every bus onto El Camino to make a right or left turn****.*
>
> *Our Maintenance and Operations fleet crosses Alma and Churchill approximately 175 times per day. This includes vans, trucks, and trailers.* ***As described for our busses, the maintenance yard also depends upon a single entry/exit point on Churchill.****"*

This example does not give the Palo Alto citizens confidence that the issues brought up by the stakeholder community are being taken seriously by the XCAP in their deliberations and their vote.

Traffic study and mitigation analysis is inadequate

The traffic study has serious flaws that have been brought up by the community members several times. The community members even had to commission an external professional evaluation which underscored the flaws in the analysis. The data presented to the community in the VR townhall site is based on that flawed traffic study, influencing the opinions of the people. Some of the points stated before:

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- The traffic study uses a highly limited level of service (LOS) metric for automobiles and ignores the impacts to the very
- busy school/community bicycle and pedestrian route that runs along Embarcadero. Traffic calming devices or bike routes along the road would not adequately mitigate the heavy regional traffic impact in the new unsubstantiated design.
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-
- The traffic study does not even provide a current count of cars traveling Embarcadero and other affected neighborhood streets
- because the consultants were not asked to do so. It makes no sense to design a plan that routes thousands more cars onto Embarcadero Road and neighborhood streets when there is no baseline count of the number of cars that take this busy roadway before mitigations
- are enacted.
-

-
- The report did not address even the intersection level
- of service (LOS) and operating conditions at the new signalized intersection of Embarcadero Road/Kingsley Avenue. This should be addressed both for automobiles, pedestrians and bicyclists.
-
-
-
- The report does not adequately calculate the true cost of changes to the Embarcadero/Alma bridge that will be required to
- implement the mitigations suggested.
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This disruptive pandemic is an opportunity for City Council and the people of Palo Alto consider a holistic view of ALL the crossings in town (including Palo Alto Avenue), make evidence based decisions, incorporate the principles behind the Comprehensive Plan, address inconsistencies in XCAP guidance, remove any neighborhood bias by improving representation of the various impacted communities, and proceed with a more harmonized view of the city inclusive of both east and west sides of the tracks.
The Churchill closure idea has already started to polarize the community. Without appropriate study, new post-COVID scenario analyses, and community-ground-truthed mitigation, the inequity propagated will completely fracture the Palo Alto community, compromise the safety of our children and irreparably damage the livability of our town.
Honorable Council, your decision will impact the City for decades, and careful consideration and response to these points is needed.
Thank you, and in appreciation,
Reshma Singh and Inder Monga

Date: July 25th, 2020

Dear City Council, City Manager, and Palo Alto Expanded Community Advisory Panel,

We would like to acknowledge and thank the tireless work being done by the XCAP committee, the city staff and the City Council as all of us work through the challenging issues of grade separation across the multiple crossings in Palo Alto.

This letter is from a collection of residents of Professorville, Southgate and the Embarcadero Corridor who have been actively participating in and monitoring the deliberations of the XCAP and City Council regarding mitigation of the Caltrain corridor's effect on the Churchill crossing and beyond. We are strongly of the view that neither the XCAP nor the City Council has developed **sufficient data or community input** to adopt specific recommendations or approve a specific solution for this crossing at this time. Moreover, in light of current circumstances and uncertainties, we believe that the **adoption of a recommendation now is both unnecessary and inappropriate**.

The points below articulate the sentiments of the neighborhood residents:

Pandemic Phase Change

The pandemic has caused a radical, possibly permanent "phase change" in our environment in a number of ways:

Caltrain: A projected increase in the number of commuter trains prompted the discussion of grade separation in Palo Alto (https://connectingpaloalto.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2020-07-08_Item3a_Memo-to-XCAP-from-Chair.pdf - Item 1.1). However, ridership is down 95%+ since March, with as few as 15 riders per train (PA Daily Post, 'Caltrain tax battle escalates,' 7/20/20).

Moreover, as we heard from Caltrain representatives last week, deep funding issues all but guarantee that Caltrain won't increase the number of trains in the foreseeable future. Caltrain's pre Covid 19 business plan, calling for increased service (increased number of trains), has been paused (https://www.caltrain.com/projectsplans/Business_Plan.html), and Caltrain has shifted its focus to recovery planning.

Vehicle Traffic and Remote Work: Because of the Covid 19 crisis, car usage has dropped substantially throughout Palo Alto and Silicon Valley (https://www.ite.org/about-ite/covid-19-resources/covid-19-traffic-volume-trends/) as substantial numbers of commuters have shifted to working remotely. Even though the shift was occasioned by the pandemic, a May 2020 Bay Area Council survey of 100 businesses found that 20% of the firms surveyed expect to go fully remote post-Covid 19. Executives in the other

firms surveyed said they expect only 74% of their workers to return to working in the office. Just today, Siemens announced it will permit its employees to work remotely up to three days/week - permanently (https://www.inc.com/justin-bariso/this-companys-new-2-sentence-remote-work-policy-is-best-ive-ever-heard.html?cid=search), while Google announced its employees can work from home for another year, until July 2021 (https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/07/27/895734132/google-employees-can-work-from-home-until-july-2021).

Covid 19 Timeframe: There may still be a lengthy wait before a Covid 19 vaccine is developed and made available for everyone, which portends continued social distancing and continued associated impact on mass transit, including Caltrain. "Even if the optimists are right and a COVID-19 vaccine is approved for widespread use as early as this fall, it is likely to be in short supply at first." https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/06/line-forming-covid-19-vaccine-who-should-be-front

This phase change is causing a dramatic shift, **with virtual space being swapped for physical space**. "Work at home" and more dramatically "work anywhere" is the new reality for large portions of the workforce. We can't currently predict the future impact on either mass transit or traffic.

Caltrain Corridor Study

At the same time, Caltrain is commencing a two-year study of grade separations along the entire rail corridor with the aim of producing coordinated design, construction, and funding solutions and streamlining the exceptions process. Palo Alto may well forfeit the benefits of this process if the City proceeds with recommendations for Palo Alto grade crossings before it is even underway.

XCAP Representation

When the City Manager and City Council reconstituted the CAP as the XCAP, the neighborhood representatives who served on the CAP largely stayed in place and pledged to shift their focus from neighborhood engagement and advocacy to a community-wide perspective. New members from various constituencies were supposed to further broaden the group's expertise. Representation has now dropped from 14 members to 9, including 4 of the 5 members who represented the broader view (PAUSD, Chamber of Commerce, Friends of Caltrain, and a rail crossing safety organization). Ongoing lack of representation from Stanford and Palo Alto Bike/Ped safety groups clearly adds to this concern. Moreover, with the resignation of Megan Kanne, the CAP/XCAP member who originally engaged with the communities north of and around the western portion of Embarcadero, residents in those neighborhoods are concerned that their voices are not being heard.

Similarly, a large portion of Southgate residents who favor a solution that keeps the Churchill crossing open, share the same worry. Further, neighborhoods adjacent to Embarcadero

corridor, which will be impacted by any decision, are troubled by the lack of community outreach.

We understand that a primary goal of XCAP and City Council is to garner broad community support for grade crossing decisions. With the disruptions caused by the pandemic, plans to engage the community through Town Halls and other means have not been enacted, which should itself be a reason for pause.

Traffic Studies and Mitigation Proposals

As XCAP and City Council Members may be aware, the traffic studies conducted by Hexagon failed to take into account a number of critical, real-world factors likely to shift their analysis. Examples of such factors include population and traffic increases in line with Caltrain and regional projections, the interactions between peak hour traffic and the large numbers of bicyclists and pedestrians traveling to Palo Alto schools, among others. Requests from both XCAP members and the public to address these issues have yet to be addressed. There are a number of other areas in which the Hexagon's report appears incomplete and inadequate.

- 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. Indeed, Embarcadero Road is an official Palo Alto bicycle route, but that fact not reflected in the conceptual design
- While the traffic study looks at impacts of increased rail traffic and various rail crossing alternatives to car traffic, it does so in a limited way, focusing only on wait times at a few intersections (LOS). Effects of closure or other rail separation alternatives on Vehicle Miles Traveled, total transit times, or other important measures are not considered.
- The traffic study does not even provide a current count of cars traveling Embarcadero and other affected corridors because the consultants were not asked to do so. It makes no sense to design a plan that routes thousands more cars onto Embarcadero Road when there is no baseline count of the number of cars that take this busy roadway before mitigations are enacted.
- Similarly, the traffic analysis fails to provide a count of bicycle and pedestrian traffic and to base mitigation proposals on the study of interactions between cars and bike/ped traffic. 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 bike/ped crossings and 100 cars that stopped or "paused" at the stop sign; however that data has not been considered in the mitigation plan.
- 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.

Requests from both XCAP members and the public to address these issues have yet to be answered.

In addition to our concerns about the traffic study, we question the cost allotted to the Churchill closure alternative and associated mitigation plan, as well as the characterization of the engineering challenges represented in the Summary Matrix and Factsheet. Specifically, we

anticipate that retrofitting and substantially expanding the Embarcadero overpass will likely entail considerable time, seismic upgrades and other technical challenges, and substantial expenses that are not reflected in the current documentation. We are aware of no detailed, publicly available analysis of this part of the project, so any plans that include modifications to the overpass are merely speculative at this time.

As a result, the rosy conclusions about the efficacy of the proposed mitigations on Embarcadero are not viewed as credible by most area residents.

Palo Alto Avenue Crossing

Changes to the Palo Alto Avenue crossing will have reverberating effects on other crossings in town, particularly Embarcadero, Oregon, and El Camino Real, with spill-over effects on neighborhood streets. It is unrealistic and unfair not to consider how residents may be affected by changes to Palo Alto Ave when choosing among alternatives elsewhere, like Churchill crossing and Embarcadero traffic mitigation.

XCAP Deliberations

XCAP is going into deliberations before these issues can be raised and discussed in front of the City Council and changes in guidance formulated. Currently, XCAP can only issue recommendations based on incomplete and overly-conceptual traffic studies, a soon-to-be-outmoded Caltrain review process for grade separations, and other work done pre-COVID.

We do recognize that the XCAP was given a charge to provide these recommendations. However, that charge was based on certain underlying assumptions at that time, assumptions which are now outdated and no longer valid. Given this, any recommendations the XCAP makes based on outdated assumptions, may also end up - outdated.

Time to Pause

The new normal in work and commute patterns is an opportunity for the City Council, XCAP, and the City Manager. With increased Caltrain service no longer a motivator, there is no driver for Churchill closure, and postponing a recommendation for the time being is a viable and workable option. There is time to do what needs to be done, namely to address the following issues and developments:

- Caltrain's changing operating plans
- Possible shifts in work/commute patterns throughout Silicon Valley
- Gaps in neighborhood representation & drop in the diversity of the committee's members
- Omission of the impact of the Palo Alto Avenue crossing
- Major inadequacies in the existing traffic/mitigation analysis
- Opening of possibilities with Caltrain's comprehensive study of rail crossings across the entire corridor and reconfiguring of their exceptions process

More positively, this disruptive pandemic should be seen as an opportunity for City Council and the people of Palo Alto to pause the current process and regroup, in order to consider a holistic view of ALL the crossings in town, incorporate the principles behind the Comprehensive Plan, address inconsistencies in XCAP guidance, remove any neighborhood bias by improving representation of the various impacted communities, and proceed with a more harmonized view of the city inclusive of both east and west sides of the tracks.

XCAP's Excellent Work

We reiterate our appreciation of the volunteer XCAP committee and their committed engagement over the past year. Although we believe they are not in a position to issue recommendations, their efforts should not go to waste. City Council, Staff, and Palo Alto residents will benefit from the review of what they have learned about the many constraints and considerations involved in modifying our at-grade crossings, as well as their qualitative assessments of the alternatives. They are also in a uniquely qualified position to articulate the questions that remain to be answered and the aspects that need to be studied further.

Our Request

With all due respect to the City Council, the City Manager, the volunteer XCAP committee, and the Palo Alto citizens, we request that XCAP's **goal be modified to acknowledge the dramatically altered state of current affairs** as well as the limitations of their investigations and analyses, and to **refrain from making final recommendations**.

Sincerely

Inder Monga
Reshma Singh
Michael Chacon
Mary Chacon
Rachel Kellerman
Tom Kellerman
Kathy Jordan
William Chandler
Susan Newman
James O'Donohue
Steven Carlson
Husna Hashmi
Jahangir Hashmi
Dexter Girton
Sara Girton
Beverly Sarver
Dan Nitzan
Susan Nitzan
Susan Mitchell

Terry Rice
Barbara Hazlett
William (Butch) Hazlett
Lisa Nissim
Katherine K Wilson
Lucia Ugarte
Rich Spott
Rob Levitsky
Carl Dowds
Margaret Kim
Nancy Patterson
David Schellinger
Caroline Japic
Haris Japic
Eileen Fagan
Loreto Ponce de Leon
Karen Hohner
Yoriko Kishimoto
Prasad Chakka

Baumb, Nelly

From: YORIKO KISHIMOTO <yoriko12330@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2020 12:59 PM
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel; Council, City
Subject: Problems with Churchill closing traffic analysis
Attachments: Memo-Churchill Avenue At-Grade-Xing.pdf

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

Dear Chair Naik and XCAP members (and Honorable City Council):

We commissioned Dr. Michelle DeRobertis, P.E. a licensed traffic and civil engineer to review the traffic report that is the basis for your decision on the proposed Churchill closing.

The impact of closing the Churchill at-grade crossing on the following aspects of the road system **have notable omissions** in the August 2020 and November 2019 traffic studies. They include:

1. Analysis of capacity of Embarcadero Road underpass. "This is not to suggest that the Embarcadero underpass should be widened.. , but only to state that when comparing the pros and cons and the financial implications of all the options, the cost of widening the Embarcadero under crossing (and Alma bridge) may need to be included in the cost of the "Churchill closure" scenario to compare to the cost of the "Churchill grade separation" scenario and the cost of the "Churchill partial underpass".

2. Future traffic volumes were for the year 2030. However, 2030 is only ten years out. Often, future traffic analyses use a future horizon year of 20 to 25 years in the future, especially for projects that are expected to be in place for decades, as this would be.

3. The traffic study analysis of the diverted trips impacts was restricted only to impacts on automobile travel and only at intersections. Automobile level of service (LOS) at intersections is not the only element of the roadway system that could be impacted by capacity constraints.

4. The report did not address the intersection level of service (LOS) and operating conditions at the new signalized intersection of Embarcadero Road/Kingsley Avenue. This should be addressed both for automobiles, pedestrians and bicyclists.

5. Proposed designs are likely to be found not able to be "fixed" by mitigation. "If this project were to be pursued, many design details would need to be worked out with regard to maintaining access to existing residential driveways on Embarcadero Road, Kingsley Street (sic), High Street, and the Embarcadero slip ramp" More clarity on what exactly the impacts would be, if these design details cannot be worked out, would be appropriate before an alternative is selected. The traffic study does not mention that **it is likely that these impacts of the mitigation itself cannot be mitigated and that the solution to avoid these impacts is to preserve a Churchill roadway crossing**.

6. Impact on emergency vehicle and transit travel time.

There are six pages of comments, attached for your review.

Finally, we attach here a link to an excellent article on the flaw of trying to shoe-horn in ped/bike access only after proposed auto operations have been designed. The bike/ped infrastructure are foundational to the quality of life in Palo Alto and should be designed as a priority, not after thought. https://cityobservatory.org/the-myth-of-pedestrian-infrastructure-in-a-world-of-cars/

Thank you,

Yoriko Kishimoto
Rob Levitsky
John Hackmann
Rachel and Thomas Kellerman
Michael Chacon
others

Memo

September 15, 2020

To: **Yoriko Kishimoto**

From: **Michelle DeRobertis, P.E.**

Subject: **Churchill At-grade Xing Traffic Analysis**

This memorandum presents comments and observations on the traffic studies of the impact of closing the Churchill Avenue, Palo Alto at-grade railroad crossing and the proposed mitigation. I have reviewed the August 13, 2020 memo from Hexagon which also contains the November 26, 2019 traffic study, also by Hexagon. The latter refers to a TJKM traffic study, which I did not review.

These comments take into account the forthcoming Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) guidance on conducting multimodal traffic studies[1]. ITE recognizes that a major shortcoming of many traffic impact analyses is that they often neglect to analyze the impact of roadway changes and/or land developments on other roadway users besides automobiles. The new ITE recommended practice is that traffic studies should address not only impacts on automobile traffic but also impacts to transit service, pedestrians, bicyclists, and sensitive areas such as residential streets. Thus, the following comments reflect the need to evaluate traffic impacts on all modes, including transit travel time, pedestrian and bicyclist circulation and sensitive areas such as residential streets, not only auto level of service.

REVIEW OF TRAFFIC STUDIES

The August 13, 2020 study of the closure of the Churchill Avenue at-grade crossing describes the following as the options:

- Do Nothing- maintaining the existing at-grade option.
- Complete closure of the Churchill Avenue roadway rail crossing while maintaining pedestrian and bicyclist access by the construction of a nonmotorized undercrossing.
- The partial underpass of Churchill Avenue; this would create a Tee intersection at Alma Street with Churchill Avenue access to and from the west, as shown in Figures 3A and 3B of the August 2020 study.
- Proving a grade-separated roadway crossing. The study identified this option as a viaduct, an elevated structure for the railroad. (Presumably other reports addressed other alternatives of providing grade separation including a roadway undercrossing of the railway, or by undergrounding the railroad).

[1] ITE Recommended Practice - *Multimodal Transportation Impact Studies*, expected publication in 2020.

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MMD. .. ..

It is recognized that the "Do Nothing" alternative (retaining the existing at-grade roadway crossing) is not feasible given the proposed increase train frequencies. Thus one of the other options above must be chosen. The costs associated with these options and their associated mitigations and other necessary new infrastructure were not presented in the traffic study and are not the subject of this review.

This review focusses on the analysis of the impacts of the complete closure option as presented in the November 2019 traffic study. The study addressed the traffic diversion from the intersection of Churchill Avenue at Alma Street to Embarcadero Road due to closure of the existing at-grade crossing of Churchill Avenue. This memorandum presents comments in these main areas:

- Assignment of the diverted trips
- Future analysis year
- Assessment of impacts of the diverted trips
- Mitigations measures and analysis of the impact of the mitigation measures

1. Assignment of the Diverted Trips

The traffic study evaluated how and where existing Churchill Avenue traffic would divert to other routes to cross the railroad. While the traffic volumes were not described in terms of vehicles per day, based on the turning movement volumes, it appears that approximately 7,000 vpd use the Churchill at-grade crossing, 5,000 of which are to and from Alma Street and 2,000 proceed east on Churchill Avenue.

The impacts of these diverted automobile trips away from the intersection of Churchill Avenue at Alma Street was the basis for assessing the impacts of the closure of Churchill at-grade crossing. The traffic study identifies the existing AM and PM peak hour turning movements, and Figures 7A and 7B depict the path that the diverted traffic is predicted to use. The traffic study then analyzes the impacts of the diversion of these auto trips. For simplicity, this discussion will refer to the AM peak hour volume, unless noted.

<u>Figure 7A Eastbound movements</u>

- Eastbound right turn movement from Churchill onto southbound Alma Street (150 trips): the majority was assigned to Oregon Expressway. This seems like a reasonable assumption.

- Eastbound left turn from Churchill onto northbound Alma Street (89 trips): It unclear where this movement was assigned. Figure 7A shows that 89 AM trips as being assigned to an eastbound left turn at the intersection of Embarcadero and Alma, but this left turn is not possible. The way to make this movement (turn from eastbound to northbound) is to enter the Embarcadero Road underpass heading east and then use the slip ramp to Kingsley Avenue as a loop onramp onto Alma Street. Thus these additional trips (89 AM and 127 PM or about 1000 vehicles per day) would use the section of Kingsley Avenue heading westbound and then would turn right onto Alma Street.

Figure 7B Westbound Movements

- Southbound right turn from Alma Street onto westbound Churchill (157 AM): this movement was assigned to Lincoln -Emerson via a left turn from Alma Street onto Lincoln Avenue to access Embarcadero Road. This was then mitigated by assigning them to turn left onto Kingsley Avenue to access Embarcadero Road.

- Northbound left turn from Alma to westbound on Churchill (199 AM): 97 of the 199 AM (and 94 of the 190 PM peak hour trips) appear to be diverted to turn left at Oregon Expressway. This seems to be a reasonable assumption. It is unclear where the remaining ~100 vehicles per hour (vph) were assigned during both the AM and PM peak hour. It appears as if some if not all of the remaining 100 vph would be diverted to the Lincoln Avenue -Emerson Street route to access Embarcadero Road to head west. The report states:

> "Traffic from Alma Street that wants to head west on Embarcadero Road must use Lincoln Avenue to Emerson Street. The amount of traffic going "around the block" to access Embarcadero from Alma would increase by 157 vehicles during the AM peak hour and 97 vehicles during the PM peak hour."

Thus, it does not appear that any of the northbound left-turn movement was assumed to divert to this route. If the 100 extra trips from the northbound left-turn movement were assumed to divert to this route also, then the projected diverted volume would be 157 + 100 = 256 AM peak hour trips, and about 97 + 100 = 194 PM peak hour trips. This is about 2000 vehicle per day (vpd) that would use the Lincoln-Emerson route or the alternate route recommended as mitigation.

2. Future Analysis Year

Impacts of the closure of the Churchill Avenue at-grade crossing were assessed by comparing existing conditions with two scenarios: existing volumes with the closure and future volumes with the closure. Future traffic volumes were for the year 2030. However, 2030 is only ten years out. Often, future traffic analyses use a future horizon year of 20 to 25 years in the future, especially for projects that are expected to be in place for decades, as this would be. A 2013 City of Palo Alto Memo (ID # 4327) titled "Traffic Impact Analysis Guidelines and Traffic Model Update"[2] cited the year 2035 as the future analysis year, which at the time was 20+ years in the future.

3. Assessing the Impacts of the Diverted Trips

The Hexagon November 2019 Traffic Study stated that 24 intersections were evaluated by a prior TJKM traffic study and that the TJKM study determined that the closure of the Churchill Avenue railroad crossing would create significant impacts at eight study intersections. Hexagon disagreed with two of the impacts, but agreed with impacts six intersections. Thus the Hexagon report proceeded to discuss

[2] Department of Planning &Community Environment available at https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/38140

the six intersections for which it also recommended mitigations. (Comments on these mitigations are discussed in the next section).

The traffic study analysis of the diverted trips impacts was restricted only to impacts on automobile travel and only at intersections. Automobile level of service (LOS) at intersections is not the only element of the roadway system that could be impacted by capacity constraints or other problems due to increased traffic. In addition, increased traffic also impacts other modes and sensitive areas. These are discussed further below.

Impacts on other roadway elements

The impact of closing the Churchill at-grade crossing on the following aspects of the road system do not appear to have been evaluated in the August 2020 and November 2019 traffic studies.

1. The Embarcadero Road underpass. The volumes for this location were not presented for any of the three scenarios: existing conditions, existing volumes with Churchill closure, and future year with Churchill closure. In order to assess the full impact of the Churchill closure on automobiles, the following should be analyzed for the Embarcadero Road underpass under all three scenarios: the average daily traffic volume (ADT), the AM peak hour volumes, and PM peak hour volumes. Furthermore, as stated above, 2030 is not typical future scenario; the future year should be 2040 or beyond. This is not to suggest that the Embarcadero underpass should be widened, but only to state that when comparing the pros and cons and the financial implications of all the options, the cost of widening the Embarcadero undercrossing may need to be included in the cost of the "Churchill closure" scenario to compare to the cost of the "Churchill grade separation" scenario and the cost of the "Churchill partial underpass".

2. At the unsignalized intersections, the LOS of the impacted turning movements were not presented. The LOS for the unsignalized intersections was presented with the note "Average delay is reported for the worst approach at one-way stop intersections. LOS F is not substandard unless a signal warrant is met". However the specific movement or movements experiencing LOS F were not identified nor was the increased delay or increased queue length associated with that movement, for example for the left turn from Alma Street onto Lincoln Avenue. For three unsignalized locations, the recommended mitigation was a traffic signal, so perhaps this was why no further analysis was presented.

Impact of increased traffic on other modes and sensitive areas

1. Impact on bus travel times due to increased traffic on Embarcadero Road was not assessed. Concentrating more traffic on fewer roadways adversely impacts public transit because buses are limited to using these fewer roadways which now carry more auto traffic.

2. Similarly concentrating traffic onto fewer roadways increases the impact to pedestrians and cyclists who use those roadways. The impact on Bicycle LOS or level of traffic stress due to additional automobile traffic on Embarcadero Road was not assessed. The impact on bicycling and pedestrian conditions on Embarcadero Road should be assessed at two locations: west of Alma Street and east of Alma Street.

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3. Impacts of the closure of the Churchill at-grade crossing and the increased traffic on Embarcadero Road underpass on emergency vehicle response time was not addressed.

4. Impacts of increased traffic on pedestrian delay and bicycle delay at signalized intersections was not assessed.

5. Residential streets. The traffic studies did not address the adverse impact of the diverted traffic on Lincoln-Emerson residential streets, only stating that this route was "circuitous" for vehicular traffic. It is implied that this "circuitousness" is the reason for the recommended mitigation. The traffic study did not address the adverse impacts of the additional traffic on the residents of these streets. It instead recommended an alternative to the use of Lincoln Avenue and Emerson Street which involves the use of another residential street—Kingsley Avenue. This impact on Kingsley Avenue was not stated nor evaluated. The impact of additional traffic on residential roadways is not due to capacity but due to livability and safety concerns.

4 Mitigation and Impacts of the Proposed Mitigation

The November 2019 traffic study states that six intersections would have significant impacts but that they could be mitigated. The main mitigation affecting Embarcadero Road and its environs is to encourage diverted traffic to turn onto Kingsley Avenue to access Embarcadero Road westbound instead of using the Lincoln-Emerson route to access Embarcadero Road westbound. Other diverted trips onto Kingsley are the eastbound trips that wish to head north on Alma Street.

The report analyzed the intersections affected by the traffic diversions and developed mitigation measures. However, mitigation measures themselves can have impacts. The impacts of the following proposed mitigation were not evaluated:

- The study proposed three new traffic signals, at the intersections of Alma Street/ Embarcadero slip ramp; Alma Street/Kingsley Avenue; and Embarcadero Road /Kingsley Avenue. While the report evaluated the intersection level of service (LOS) of the first two intersections with signal operation, it did so only for automobiles. The LOS experienced by pedestrians and bicycles was not evaluated.

- The report did not address the intersection level of service (LOS) and operating conditions at the new signalized intersection of Embarcadero Road/Kingsley Avenue. This should be addressed both for automobiles, pedestrians and bicyclists.

- This impact of the new signalized intersection at Embarcadero Road at Kingsley Avenue on transit travel times on Embarcadero Road was not assessed. The impact of the two new signalized intersections on Alma Street on transit travel times was also not addressed. Note this is in addition to the impact on transit travel time of the increased traffic on Embarcadero Road discussed above.

- The traffic study did not address the fact that Kingsley Avenue is a residential street with single family home frontage. There would be additional north and southbound traffic on Kingsley Avenue. The resulting queue of traffic waiting to turn left onto Embarcadero Road at new signal at Embarcadero Road/ Kingsley Avenue and the westbound traffic turning right onto Alma Street from Kingsley Avenue

would impact the existing residents. The annoyance factors of noise and pollution were not addressed nor was the length and duration of each queue.

- The report states the following with respect to the recommend mitigation to route diverted traffic from Lincoln-Emerson to Kingsley Avenue:

> "If this project were to be pursued, many design details would need to be worked out with regard to maintaining access to existing residential driveways on Embarcadero Road, Kingsley Street (sic), High Street, and the Embarcadero slip ramp"

More clarity on what exactly the impacts would be, if these design details cannot be worked out, would be appropriate before an alternative is selected. The traffic study does not mention that it is likely that these impacts of the mitigation itself cannot be mitigated and that the solution to avoid these impacts is to preserve a Churchill roadway crossing.

- The traffic study states that at the intersection of El Camino Real & Embarcadero Road "significant traffic impacts would occur due to reassigned traffic." It then recommended additional turning lanes (a westbound left-turn lane and a northbound right-turn lane) along with "signal optimization". The impacts of these "improvements" on pedestrians and bicyclists were not evaluated nor was signal optimization. Signal optimization often means longer signal cycle lengths. While it is true that models show this can reduce the average delay experienced by motorists, they also show that longer signal cycles almost always increase the delay experienced by pedestrians and bicyclists. One could argue that pedestrians and bicyclists are disproportionately impacted by the wait at long signal cycles. The impact of these mitigation measures, both the turning lanes and the signal changes, on pedestrians and cyclists should be evaluated.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The August 2020 and November 2019 traffic studies on the impacts of the closure of the Churchill Avenue at-grade rail crossing focussed solely on automobile operations. In the evaluation of the diversion of auto trips that would occur if Churchill at-grade crossing were closed, there was no analysis of the impact of additional auto traffic on the other users of Embarcadero Road e.g., on transit service, emergency vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians. Furthermore, the future analysis year, ten years in the future, is not consistent with a typical planning horizon year of 20 years. There was no evaluation of the impact on the residential streets. Lastly there was no analysis of the impacts of the mitigation measure themselves, particularly on pedestrians, bicyclists, and residential streets. The study states that "many design details would need to be worked out". Many questions remain with respect to the impacts of the closure of Churchill Avenue at-grade crossing, and further analysis would be appropriate before a decision is made with respect to this alternative. Alternatively, the solution to avoid these impacts is to preserve a Churchill roadway crossing.

The following issues were not addressed in the November 2019 or August 2020 traffic studies.

1. The traffic studies did not address how the increased traffic and traffic congestion on Embarcadero Road will affect the following:

- Public transit travel time on Embarcadero Road and Alma Street
- Emergency vehicle response time in the Embarcadero Road and Churchill Avenue corridors.
- Bicycle LOS or bicycle level of traffic stress on Embarcadero Road
- Bicycle or pedestrian delay at existing signalized and unsignalized intersections.
- Impact of new signals on public transit travel time, on both Alma Street and Embarcadero Road and on pedestrians and bicycle LOS
- Impact to pedestrians and bicyclists of proposed mitigation measures at the signalized intersection Embarcadero Road and El Camino Road (additional turn lanes and "signal optimization").

2. There was no assessment of capacity of the Embarcadero Road underpass under current and future conditions. If it is at or near capacity now or in the future year scenario, it would be appropriate to consider the cost of widening the Embarcadero undercrossing in the cost of the "Churchill closure" scenario, (for example when comparing the cost of the "Churchill grade separation" scenario to the Churchill closure scenario).

3. The future analysis year is 2030. 2030 is only ten years out, while often traffic analyses use a future year of 20 to 25 years in the future. This is especially appropriate for projects that are expected to be in place for decades. This could have implications when assessing whether or not the Embarcadero Road underpass is sufficient to accommodate diverted traffic from Churchill.

4. It appears that the analysis did not account for all the traffic that would divert to Kingsley Avenue. The study only specifically identifies the 157 AM peak hour trips that formerly were turning right from Alma onto Churchill (and the corresponding PM peak hour trips) that would divert to Kingsley if the proposed new signals were provided. But there appears to be another 100 AM peak hour trips that were turning left from Alma onto Churchill that are unaccounted for. There is also the 89 left turns (AM peak hour) and 127 left turns (PM Peak hour) currently eastbound on Churchill turning left onto Alma Street that would use the slip ramp onto Kingsley Avenue to go northbound on Alma Street.

5. The traffic study did not address impacts on residential streets due to the diversion of auto trips from Churchill Avenue. Mitigation for the circuitous route of using Lincoln-Emerson was to direct this traffic to use Kingsley Avenue. The traffic study did not address the issue that residential streets have different considerations beyond "capacity". It did not describe the magnitude of the impact of the additional traffic on Kingsley Avenue, such as describing the existing traffic volumes and the future volumes with traffic diversion. The mere presence of more cars in a public space or residential street changes the ambience of a location, and this is a quality beyond which is measurable by traffic capacity

and safety metrics. This was recognized over 50 years ago by Colin Buchanan in *Traffic In Town*[3]*s* and will be addressed in the forthcoming ITE Recommended Practice *Multimodal Traffic Impact Studies*.

It is likely that an analysis of these issues would find significant and unavoidable impacts. The solution would be to choose a different alternative such as a grade separation or partial underpass at Churchill Avenue. A partial underpass would have much fewer impacts since approximately 5,000 vpd to and from the west would not be diverted to Embarcadero Road. The partial underpass retains a T - intersection at Churchill Avenue and Alma Street, thus all movements to and from the west of Alma Street could remain on Churchill Avenue and would not use Embarcadero Road. The August 2020 report did not fully evaluate the route of the traffic that would still be diverted with a partial underpass, but it would be much less than under full closure alternative.

Full roadway grade separation would retain the most accessibility not only for cars but also for transit, emergency vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians, in both corridors. There would be no traffic diversion to Embarcadero Road and thus there would be no diversion to either Lincoln-Emerson or Kingsley Avenue to access Alma Street.

The way to avoid the adverse impacts of both the diversion caused by the closure and the proposed mitigation measures themselves is to preserve roadway access across the railroad tracks at Churchill Avenue. This could be accomplished by several design options including: (a) providing a partial underpass, i.e., maintaining a T intersection at Alma and Churchill, as shown in Figure3A and 3b of August 2020 study; (b) providing a roadway grade separation such as the viaduct; (c) providing a roadway grade separation by undergrounding the railroad and maintaining level street crossings for automobiles, bicyclists and pedestrians; or (d) a hybrid option such as partial undergrounding the railroad combined with a roadway overcrossing. The latter would reduce rail noise, visual impacts and may reduce other impacts, compared to the viaduct option.

[3] [3] Buchanan, Colin. 1963. *Traffic in Towns: A Study of the Long Term Problems of Traffic in Urban Areas.* London: Her majesty's stationery office.

Baumb, Nelly

From: khurshid gandhi <khurshidgandhi@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2020 4:39 PM
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel; Transportation; Council, City
Subject: Grade Separation comments Sept2020

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

Hello,

I live in the Charleston – Meadows neighborhood and I would like to bring up a few points and my preferences for the imminent grade separation happening in Palo Alto

1. Over two years ago, the Charleston-Meadows neighborhood submitted a petition signed by almost 600 individuals stating their preference for an underground option for the trains. I urge you to consider that petition and know that that the preference still holds good. Now that the tunnel has been ruled out, we would like to see the trench alternative move forward. You can also find the petition here **https://drive.google.com/file/d/1klcrioBxfiCyueO2F-ECz-TlfpJH-ihe/view?usp=sharing**. Also, relatively recently San Gabriel constructed a trench. I would urge that the costs be looked at closely to make sure that the estimated costs presented to the citizens of Palo Alto are realistic and justifiable. https://www.theaceproject.org/san-gabriel-trench-grade-separation

2. My personal preference -- only if a trench were absolutely impossible -- would be an option satisfies the following:

(a) keep the roads at grade level: While many options provide under and over passes for bike/peds, that is not optimal. Even a 20 ft wide lane to be shared by peds, children, bikers, wheelchairs, strollers and double strollers, joggers, older folks using walkers or lugging along wheeled crates would not be enough area. Any level of a grade to these bike/ped makes it more unfriendly for the younger and older bike/ped users. Having a grade has many problems: Difficulty for bike/peds (specially at either end of the age spectrum), cars and traffic accelerating on the downward grade, line of sight obstruction which always makes the area a bit more unsafe, pooling of water during heavy rains and many more.

(b) No necessity of eminent domain. We love our neighbors and neighborhood and don't want anyone to be compelled to either have a decrease in house value or to move out.

(c) All turning intersections at Meadows and Charleston **have to be accessible** by traffic as well as bikes/peds. This is extremely important to maintain connectivity in the neighborhood and to prevent traffic from being funneled into neighborhood side streets.

3. I am opposed to the underpass and hybrid options due to the above. I feel like the underpass is the worst offender due to the comments in #2 above. Also, to someone holding a hammer, every problem looks like a

nail. I hope that is not the case with AECOM and hybrids. While AECOM has a lot of experience building hybrids in the bay area, and they be most comfortable with building hybrids, I do not think that the hybrid is the best solution for Charleston-Meadows.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely

Khurshid Gandhi

Baumb, Nelly

From: Kellerman, Thomas W. <thomas.kellerman@morganlewis.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 19, 2020 2:57 PM
To: Council, City
Cc: Rachel Kellerman; Expanded Community Advisory Panel; Shikada, Ed; Kamhi, Philip
Subject: City Council Meeting September 21, 2020 - Agenda Item #7
Attachments: Rail - Final Traffic Letter 7_22_20.docx; XCAP Letter - September 11 2020.docx

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Palo Alto City Council
Palo Alto, California

Dear Honorable Council Members:

We are writing with regard to Agenda item #7 for the City Council meeting scheduled for Monday, September 21, 2020 concerning the update report to be delivered on behalf of the Expanded Community Advisory Panel ("XCAP").

As the Council considers the recommendations of the XCAP with respect to the Churchill Avenue rail crossing and determines the appropriate next steps to be taken by Council, we urge you to postpone any decision on modifications to this crossing until such time as more complete information is available. Attached to this message are two letters that we have previously submitted to Council that describe in more detail the issues and concerns raised by several citizens with respect to this decision. These issues can be briefly summarized as follows:

Too Many Uncertainties

- There are several important factors affecting this crossing that are currently incomplete. The extent of Caltrain's future operations are uncertain and will not be known for some time. In addition, Caltrain is intending to conduct a study of its entire corridor and adopt recommendations, which will have an important impact on the ultimate design decisions to be adopted by the City Council.
- Palo Alto adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 2017 that is specifically intended to guide major strategic planning decisions such as the rail crossing modifications under consideration. The City Council has not conducted any meaningful analysis of the guidelines set forth in the Comprehensive Plan in reaching these conclusions.

Incomplete Mitigation Analysis

- The proposed closure of the Churchill crossing is based in significant part on a conceptual mitigation proposal included in the traffic report prepared by Hexagon. There are several inconsistencies and significant gaps in traffic report that need to be addressed before a determination can be made. Specific issues to be addressed include the following:
    - The traffic report solely addresses "Level of Service (LOS)", which only measures the volume of vehicular traffic capable of crossing through an intersection in a set amount of time. This metric does not take into consideration the effect of a traffic design on pedestrian and bicycle safety or on the quality of surrounding residential streets. There are significant pedestrian and Bicycle

safety concerns in adjacent streets (such as the Embarcadero bicycle route and underpass) that have not been analyzed or addressed.
  - The traffic study did not calculate the current volume of traffic on Embarcadero Road and, accordingly, it is not able to model the traffic patterns and bottlenecks that may be expected once the mitigation plan is implemented.
  - The traffic report does not adequately assess the true cost of feasibility of changes to the Embarcadero/ Alma Street bridge that will be required to implement the mitigation proposal.
  - The traffic study only considers projected traffic through 2030. By the time a design is constructed and put in service, it will likely be 2027 or 2028 at the earliest, so this planning parameter is clearly inadequate.

Proposal Does Not Fulfil Council Mandate

- In June 2018, the City Council adopted a resolution that requires the Council in connection with the approval of any proposal regarding the Churchill crossing to "implement appropriate actions to minimize redirected traffic onto residential streets in adjacent neighborhoods and commit to adopting appropriate mitigations to address the impacts". The closure proposal does not yet achieve this mandate.

Importance of Equity

- Equity is an important requirement in adopting any proposal. If traffic is to be redirected from one neighborhood to another, it is incumbent on the City Council to ensure that adequate mitigations are implemented and that the burden is shared by all members of the community, not just the residents of a few streets.

The bottom line is that the process to date has been conducted in an isolated and short-term focused manner. The decisions before the Council are fundamental long-term planning issues that will affect the design and livability of our City for many decades to come. There has been very little effort to think through these designs in a truly comprehensive way. The decision to postpone any discussion of a Downtown Plan and the Palo Alto Avenue crossing until after making these decisions is shortsighted in the extreme. It is obvious to anyone who spends time in the Northern half of Palo Alto that Palo Alto Avenue, Downtown and the Embarcadero corridor are a highly-integrated community of vehicular traffic, bicycle and pedestrian activity, and residential, retail and commercial use. Moreover, decisions are being proposed without obtaining meaningful input from several impacted neighborhoods, the adjacent commercial interests (including both Downtown and Town & Country), PAUSD or Stanford. To spend hundreds of millions of dollars to redesign specific arteries for this portion of the City while ignoring the effect on the rest of the related area would be a poor use of precious funds and will likely result in an unacceptable City design.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues.

Thomas W. Kellerman
Rachel H. Kellerman

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kellermanr@yahoo.com

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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 though 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

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

September 11, 2020

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

Ladies and Gentlemen:

During the discussion of the two bike/ped tunnels on Churchill Avenue at the last XCAP meeting, one member suggested completely closing Churchill to all cars except for residents to improve safety for bikes/peds who are using the tunnel. This is a laudable goal but would once again bring even more traffic to the Embarcadero corridor, as the current traffic pattern relies on Churchill as one of the routes to Alma. The closure of Churchill/Alma to vehicular traffic would further endanger bike/ped crossings on the other bike/ped path heavily used by Paly students north of Embarcadero. This is hardly an equitable solution to the bike/ped safety problem that exists around Paly, Town and Country and Stanford.

We request that no bike/ped tunnel recommendation move forward that completely closes Churchill to car traffic for the following reasons:

1. Churchill is the only street south of Embarcadero that directly connects Embarcadero to Alma. Removing this artery will push even more traffic onto Embarcadero and the Embarcadero Slip Road, further exasperating the already difficult traffic bike/ped safety situation that closure would bring to this area. Putting a traffic light further south on a street not connected to Embarcadero will not mitigate this problem.
2. Traffic relocation away from Churchill resulting from this proposal is unrelated to the closure of the at-grade crossing and accordingly it is not an appropriate decision for XCAP to propose.
3. No traffic analysis has been done on this option. In fact, as Hexagon pointed out, they never studied traffic on Embarcadero pre-COVID at all.
4. As has been previously noted multiple times, no serious analysis has been done by local bike/ped experts that city planners usually consult to analyze these options. We suggest that XCAP recommend further study for the Churchill bike tunnel options instead of making a definitive choice.
5. XCAP can suggest further study of a bike/ped tunnel at Seale that would relieve congestion at Churchill as an interim step while better plans are designed for Churchill.

Lack of representation from the Embarcadero corridor, University South, and Professorville neighborhoods means that suggestions like these often do not get challenged during XCAP deliberations. We ask that XCAP members reach out to concerned citizens when appropriate.

Thank you for your continued efforts.

Very truly yours,

Thomas W. Kellerman
Rachel H. Kellerman

Cc: Palo Alto City Council
Ed Shikada, City Manager
Philip Kamhi, Chief Transportation Official

Baumb, Nelly

From: Barbara Ann Hazlett <bthazlett@aol.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 19, 2020 7:56 PM
To: Council, City
Cc: Shikada, Ed; Kamhi, Philip; Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Subject: Rail - Churchill Ave. Closure

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

Dear Palo Alto City Council:

I am writing regarding the XCAP's recommendation, based on a 6-3 vote, to close Churchill Ave. at the tracks. This will be noted in their Rail Communications update to you, agenda #7, at the 9/21/20 Council meeting. As you know, this closure would be detrimental to the University South, Professorville, Embarcadero Corridor and Southgate neighborhoods. To close Churchill would dramatically and unfairly burden these neighborhoods. Thousands of cars (per the traffic consultant) would be re-routed daily onto Embarcadero. Frustrated drivers would most certainly divert to the residential streets to ease their commutes. The Southgate neighborhood would be isolated from the rest of Palo Alto. This closure would eliminate our already meager east west conduits, which are imperative for citywide response and safety matters. Also, as you know, the conceptual mitigations that have been proposed are seriously flawed.

Further, in their Churchill closure related mitigation discussion, XCAP wrote, and I quote, "explore Closing Churchill to cars on the East side of Alma - - only home owners and their guests would use the road". I imagine they will welcome emergency response if needed, but they forgot to add that to their wish list (oops). You can't make this up. Read their 9/16/20 deliberation notes. This has nothing to do with at-grade rail crossings and is certainly not within the scope of their charge from Council. I am deeply concerned that this depleted committee is biased. Apparently, the true intention is for Churchill Ave. to be entirely closed to protect their neighborhood from traffic, not to solve an at-grade crossing issue. Who doesn't want less traffic on their streets! Professorville and Embarcadero corridor residents are more than happy to go down that slippery slope. Therefore, we suggest closing Cowper, Waverley, Bryant, Emerson, High St., the Embarcadero slip road, Lincoln Ave., etc., etc., because the Churchill closure will render these streets more dangerous. To transport the traffic to other neighborhoods and create serious connectivity issues is outrageous and irresponsible.

As importantly, The COVID pandemic has created a paradigm shift with virtual space being swapped for physical space. Companies are embracing work at home for large portions of their workforce. One consequence is the plummeting of the use of mass transit. With such dislocations, no one can currently predict what the impact will be to train ridership, traffic, or work locations. Clearly the grade separation exercise needs to be put on PAUSE. It is a colossal waste of time, money and destruction of a town to address an issue whose underlying assumptions are no longer valid.

Best Regards,

Barbara Hazlett
Professorville, Palo Alto

Brettle, Jessica

From: Seth Wu <sewuzy@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 1:15 PM
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel; Transportation; Council, City
Subject: Charleston-Meadow Separation

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

Dear Transportation Department Staff, XCAP members, and the City Council of Palo Alto,

My family has lived in the Charleston Meadows neighborhood for 39 years. It is a wonderful community. While we live two very short cross streets away, train noise has been a constant annoyance that disturbs our peace and our sleep. I have reviewed the design options and urge you to **please choose an option that puts the train tracks below ground.**

Our preferences are in the following order:

1. Train Tunnel. Least disruptive to neighborhood life.
2. Train Trench. Less disruptive.
3. Road Underpass. Disruptive to roadside property by eminent domain?

These are the only options that would keep the train noise level manageable for our neighborhood, and the only options that is not aesthetically horrible.

Please do **not** choose any option that raises the height the train travels on, as that would greatly increase the volume of train noise. Additionally, please consider the visual impact of the design. When I pass under concrete viaducts in other communities I always feel sorry for the people who live in the neighborhoods divided by such a structure and who have to look at the ugly monstrosity every day.

I realize that these may not be the cheapest options and perhaps not the easiest, We are creating something that all of us will have to look at every single day. It is not an overstatement to say that it could be an eyesore forever into the future if it is not done well. Palo Alto has an international reputation as a City of engineers and innovators. Let's honor that tradition by picking the best design for the community and then finding a way to make it happen.

Sincerely,

Seth Wu

Brettle, Jessica

From: Kellerman, Thomas W. <thomas.kellerman@morganlewis.com>
Sent: Friday, September 11, 2020 5:30 PM
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Cc: Shikada, Ed; Council, City; Kamhi, Philip; Rachel Kellerman
Subject: XCAP Report
Attachments: XCAP Letter - September 11 2020.docx

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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, California 94301

September 11, 2020

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

Ladies and Gentlemen:

During the discussion of the two bike/ped tunnels on Churchill Avenue at the last XCAP meeting, one member suggested completely closing Churchill to all cars except for residents to improve safety for bikes/peds who are using the tunnel. This is a laudable goal but would once again bring even more traffic to the Embarcadero corridor, as the current traffic pattern relies on Churchill as one of the routes to Alma. The closure of Churchill/Alma to vehicular traffic would further endanger bike/ped crossings on the other bike/ped path heavily used by Paly students north of Embarcadero. This is hardly an equitable solution to the bike/ped safety problem that exists around Paly, Town and Country and Stanford.

We request that no bike/ped tunnel recommendation move forward that completely closes Churchill to car traffic for the following reasons:

1. Churchill is the only street south of Embarcadero that directly connects Embarcadero to Alma. Removing this artery will push even more traffic onto Embarcadero and the Embarcadero Slip Road, further exasperating the already difficult traffic bike/ped safety situation that closure would bring to this area. Putting a traffic light further south on a street not connected to Embarcadero will not mitigate this problem.
2. Traffic relocation away from Churchill resulting from this proposal is unrelated to the closure of the at-grade crossing and accordingly it is not an appropriate decision for XCAP to propose.
3. No traffic analysis has been done on this option. In fact, as Hexagon pointed out, they never studied traffic on Embarcadero pre-COVID at all.
4. As has been previously noted multiple times, no serious analysis has been done by local bike/ped experts that city planners usually consult to analyze these options. We suggest that XCAP recommend further study for the Churchill bike tunnel options instead of making a definitive choice.
5. XCAP can suggest further study of a bike/ped tunnel at Seale that would relieve congestion at Churchill as an interim step while better plans are designed for Churchill.

Lack of representation from the Embarcadero corridor, University South, and Professorville neighborhoods means that suggestions like these often do not get challenged during XCAP deliberations. We ask that XCAP members reach out to concerned citizens when appropriate.

Thank you for your continued efforts.

Very truly yours,

Thomas W. Kellerman
Rachel H. Kellerman

Cc: Palo Alto City Council
Ed Shikada, City Manager
Philip Kamhi, Chief Transportation Official

Brettle, Jessica

From: Dena Seki <denaseki@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 12, 2020 11:39 AM
To: Council, City
Subject: Churchill Viaduct

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

I was very worried about the Churchill Viaduct since I live very close to embarcadero but it seems to be the option that has the highest reduction of the vibration caused by the freight trains going through at night. Is that accurate? If so, I strongly support it as the freight trains will vibrate my house at times and are very noisy.

Thank you,

Dena Seki

Brettle, Jessica

From: Apurb Kumar <apurbk@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 12, 2020 12:48 PM
To: Council, City
Cc: Expanded Community Advisory Panel; Transportation
Subject: Charleston Meadow - Grade separation Options - My Vote

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

Dear City Council Members-

I am sure you may have heard a lot from my fellow city residents. I wanted to add my voice to the same.

I am a resident of 4133 Park Blvd, Palo Alto.

I support the Lowered Rail options such as the Tunnel and trench options. There are several advantages to these and they outweigh the costs involved in the long run. I would not like any of us to lose our homes and hence oppose the EMINENT DOMAIN. I oppose road OVERPASS and any RAISED RAIL options. I support INCREASED SAFETY for all residents of our community.

Best Regards,

Apurb Kumar

4133 Park Blvd
Palo Alto, CA 94306

Brettle, Jessica

From: Jim Cornett <jbcornett@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2020 7:14 PM
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Cc: Council, City; citymanager@cityofpaloalto.org; Transportation
Subject: The Churchill Rail Crossing

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Dear XCAP Members,

Once again, I thank you for your many efforts and the many hours you have devoted to this important topic.

I'm writing here to express my disappointment in the recent XCAP decision to close the Churchill rail crossing. Such closure will require vehicular traffic to seek other routes to transit between Alma and El Camino Real.

To ease such dramatic shifts in traffic flow, I strongly support the partial closure option for the Churchill crossing. I recognize there still will be corollary traffic issues for Page Mill and Embarcadero with reduced volume on Churchill.

Traffic congestion is a continual challenge for Palo Alto. I fear that closure of Churchill (in contrast to the partial underpass) is the much less desirable choice.

Sincerely,

James Cornett
420 Sequoia Ave
Palo Alto, CA 94306

Brettle, Jessica

From: TOM CRYSTAL <tlcrystal@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2020 11:19 PM
To: Transportation; Council, City
Subject: Comments on Charleston-Meadow crossing options.
Attachments: XCAP_200913_Charleston-RRcrossing-options-comments.pdf

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

Attached is my condensed notes from discussions with several neighbors here in Walnut Grove neighborhood re the options studied and presented by the City so far, for accommodating the impending train changes at our several at-grade crossings.

pax
-Tom Crystal 650-799-9571

To: XCAP re Grade separation options for Charleston-Meadow
From: Walnut Grove neighbors (Adobe Creek, Alma, Charleston, Nelson)
Date: 13 Sept 2020

Exec-Re-cap: **The Underpass option is too harmful.**

Compliments: Your `Connectingpaloalto.com` site info is useful (and obviously expensive).

Options summary: Very roughly, the **four** options offered are of **two** classes, i.e., EITHER
"get the trains OOW": Trench: $800-950M and 6 years; Viaduct: $400-500M and 2 years. OR
"get the traffic OOW": Hybrid: $190-230M and 4 years; Underpass: $340-420M and 4 years.
ALL the options presented accommodate anticipated proposed train upgrades. advantaging that train-horns and crossing-bells are eliminated, and that traffic flows should improve.

These comments are from several Walnut Grove neighbors who are directly and long-term impacted (i.e., we ignore here all "temporary disruptions" like construction times and utilities re-engineering).
(1) Both of the train-moving options are significantly more expensive. These both could finally improve traffic disruptions. But the Viaduct option reminds us of BART in the East Bay so could still be a visual and noise aggravation locally.
(2) Both of the traffic-moving options could have flooding concerns, only mitigated by pumps. But more specifically, comparing your fact-sheets and videos on these two, **the Underpass option would be a disaster**: Its singular advantage over the Hybrid option is that bike & pedestrian track-crossings would also now be separated from the car-traffic, and thus safer (this is significant because Charleston is a designated school-corridor, NOT a residential-arterial, serving roughly 2/3 of all our district's K-12 students). In contrast, the Hybrid option would retain the current bike-pedestrian traffic crossing situations (no better, no worse). But there are problems, unconsidered, offsetting this advantage. Briefly, the underpass option completely undermines the 20-year efforts we have worked with the City for calming traffic along the school-corridor, by increasing traffic demands not only on Charleston, but also not seeing (as presented) that N&S-bound-Alma-into-Ely will be used by large numbers of commuters who "need" to go west, Alma onto Charleston, for simpler access to the roundabout, seriously harming our neighborhood for commuters' convenience.
Of the options studied, **the Hybrid option would be much preferred**.
(3) Today's P.A.Weekly reports that XCAP recommends CLOSING the Churchill crossing in response to the same design/planning pressures faced here. And obviously Meadow faces similar considerations. We suggest that Charleston also merits such CLOSURE consideration. It is not obvious that its commuter-value (from 280-to-101 for non-residents) is some how of higher value than our Palo Alto residents' sub-urban needs, especially for our kids' school-commutes along this corridor. Additionally, **this clearly cheapest quickest safest option** could engineer simply an underpass (post closure) for bike & pedestrian uses. Commute traffic options remain for them at San Antonio and Page Mill.
(4) There is no mention of any traffic OVERPASS options (as at San Antonio). At these costs, why not?

Tom Crystal, 3815 Mumford Pl, Palo Alto

Brettle, Jessica

From: Rahul Parulekar <rahul_parulekar@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2020 12:12 AM
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Cc: Council, City; citymanager@citypaloalto.org; Transportation
Subject: 'Trench' Option Preferred for Rail Crossing at Charleston Road (if the project is necessary at all)

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

Dear XCAP Council and others,

I am writing to you to express my deep concern about the plans for an Underpass at the Charleston crossing. I have studied the plan on your website and feel that the 'Underpass' option is not appropriate for our neighborhood for several reasons.

- It will bring traffic and noise pollution closer to our homes thanks to the introduction of a roundabout right next to our homes. The residents of Walnut Grove, Greenmeadow and the Circles have tried so very hard over the years to reduce the pollution in our neighborhood and all their efforts will be undone in one fell swoop.

- Hundreds of school kids who use the rail crossing will be terribly inconvenienced both during and after construction of the Underpass. I am especially concerned about the increase in fast moving, heavy vehicular traffic on Charleston that would increase congestion and make it very hard for kids to comfortably bike/walk these streets as they have for years.

- This option will shut down Charleston and Meadow during the project thereby making it hard for the hundreds of kids who regularly use these roads to go to school.

I strongly feel the 'Trench' option is best for the community. More importantly, I would urge the council and others to revisit the project its entirety, given the impact COVID-19 is having on commute patterns. A large majority of companies are reducing the need to attend work daily (even post COVID) and that will reduce the burden on mass transit. In such a situation is the current project even necessary?

Rgds,
Rahul Parulekar
Resident of Walnut Grove, Palo Alto.

Brettle, Jessica

From: Keith Ferrell <ferrell.keith@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2020 7:05 PM
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel; Council, City; City Mgr; Transportation
Subject: Churchill Crossing

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All,
We live in the Southgate neighborhood, a few blocks from the Churchill train crossing. I would just like to implore you all to build the Partial Underpass at that crossing. The cheapest and "easier" option might be simply close Churchill, however, that is bound to create a litany of follow on problems.

This is not where the city needs to be thinking about saving money, it's about doing it the right way for the long term.

The city leaders need to step up and do what is right. The partial underpass benefits the greater number of people citywide. Closing Churchill benefits very few, if any, residents. You will essentially be cutting off 1/4 of the city in order to save some money. In the long run, it will end up costing the city an incalculable amount in indirect costs, including safety risks, increased traffic on residential, as well as major arteries, not to mention city-wide aesthetics and ease of movement.

Thanks
Keith Ferrell

Brettle, Jessica

From: Michael Brozman <mbrozman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2020 10:33 PM
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Cc: Council, City; citymanager@cityofpaloalto.org; Transportation
Subject: Please Do Not Open Park Blvd Through Southgate

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

Hi XCAP,

Thank you for your commitment and hard work so far. I attended my first committee last week and was impressed at the level of commitment, empathy and knowledge from the committee.

As a Southgate resident, I am disappointed in the recommendation to close Churchill but do fully understand that there is no clear answer here and that the recommendation comes after careful consideration and with legitimate arguments in its favor.

However, I wanted to express a STRONG concern about any mitigation efforts involving opening up Park blvd to run through Southgate. While closing Churchill is a loss for Southgate, it is a manageable one. Opening Park blvd would be devastating to the neighborhood as it causes multiple problems:

- During normal, pre-Covid times, Southgate has very high levels of foot and bicycle traffic, much of which is from children.
- Combined with narrow streets, opening this neighborhood up to increased car traffic would not only be **highly dangerous** to pedestrians/cyclists, but would also ruin the charm of the neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Michael
1652 Castilleja Avenue

Brettle, Jessica

From: YORIKO KISHIMOTO <yoriko12330@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 4:00 PM
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Cc: Council, City
Subject: Letter for XCAP

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

Dear Chair Naik and members of XCAP (copying Honorable City Council):

I heard about your split vote to recommend "close Churchill with mitigations".

* First, I note the vote was 6-3-5, or 6 yes out of total of 14 designated seats or LESS THAN A MAJORITY SUPPORT.

The original neighborhood representative from University South is gone, the Friends of Caltrain/green transportation person is gone, the PAUSD (school district) rep is gone, etc. - 5 seats of 14 are empty, leaving XCAP unbalanced and not the right body to make a recommendation like this. Better to provide alternatives with pros and cons, rankings or priority recommendations.

* Second, I appreciate the discussion about the bike/pedestrian "mitigations", especially the 2016 bike project that was fully funded and approved by the city council but abruptly removed this year. Please make yours a CONDITIONAL or provisional recommendation, conditional on the key bike/ped connections being approved and constructed and fully operational BEFORE next steps are taken.

* Third, the city has been trying to avoid just pushing the problem from one neighborhood to another.

* Finally, there are some potential fatal flaws with the traffic study that is supposed to be the basis for your recommendations. I'll pass those along soon.

Along with many residents in the Professorville/Embarcadero neighborhood, I continue to feel very strongly that we need more and bike/ped friendly routes across the tracks, not less. I'd be very pleased to have a network of crossings that are carefully designed to put bike/ped first - that would be a great improvement! One should be naturally inspired to get on a bike or walk if possible because we make it such a safe and pleasant way to get across town.

Thank you very much.

Yoriko Kishimoto
Former Mayor of Palo Alto
Resident of Embarcadero and Professorville
yoriko12330@icloud.com

Brettle, Jessica

From: Ellen Hartog <elh109@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 6:46 PM
To: Expanded Community Advisory Panel; Council, City
Subject: Meadow and Charleston Crossings

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

Dear members of the Xcap and City Council members,
I have been following the latest update calling to close Churchill and I ask myself - Why Churchill? It is right in the center for school crossings. I asked months ago why not close Meadow, it is the most convenient to close since it is a block away from another crossing. If the answer is traffic it will surely become the crossing most used since because of the traffic design suggested for Charleston does not have a left onto Alma!!! That is all crazy. Meadow is a small street and this is a much to elaborate crossing for a two lane road!!! I am horrified this is being purposed as a solution. The noise impacts of construction taking twice the time and property acquisitions when promised no property would be taken. This is going to destroy Charleston Meadows!! Two under- crossings within a block!! This is the worst choice. I will accept one underpass at Charleston that works for all !!and a bike pedestrian underpass at Meadow to allow safe crossing for children to go to JSL and handicapped to go to the grocery store on Alma as designed by the City. I do not understand when TWO crossings within a block of each other and the choice is to close Churchill instead of Meadow. It is doubled the time to construct and destroys Charleston Meadows into two separate areas taking property to do so from everyone for walls of concrete!! ugly ugly for a small neighborhood to absorb all the traffic is poor design. Meadow was never meant to be a crossing long term. It will further create problems within Charleston Meadows, Wilkie Way will be used as a short cut by commuters to turn left at Alma since Charleston does not allow for a left turn onto Alma !!! The design closes roads and takes property away that provide access for the residents and it is no joke that traffic will filter where it can into our newly physically divided destroyed neighborhood to make it only a commuter short cut and dangerous. Palo Alto is suppose to care about neighborhoods and I expect a better solution with all the time and effort spent by so many!!! We are next to a neighborhood Park and preschools! Speed bumps will need to be put which should have already been done. We are a walking community at all times of the day and night. The walkablity will be next to nothing and undesirable to walk when all the bikers are mowing pedestrians down - The underpass itself has a slope which will increase bikers speeds and how will you reduce the speed of bikers? A cross bar to go through only to get someone hurt! I am for the trench as it satisfies the needs and wants of the citizens. Save money by reducing crossings so to destroy less homes or

spend the money for a better solution. Under-crossings destroys homes and lives!! This is not a report I would accept.

Thank you for your consideration,
Ellen Hartog
330 Victoria Place

Brettle, Jessica

From: Sara Girton <girton.sara63@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 9:39 PM
To: Council, City; citymanager@cityofpaloalto.org; Transportation; Expanded Community Advisory Panel
Subject: XCAP Deliberations on 9/9/2020

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Hello All,

After hearing the deliberations about Churchill closure at the XCAP meeting on 9/9/2020 and reviewing the Deliberation Notes from that meeting, I would like to express some opinions:

- I am opposed to "Bike Option 2: Close Churchill to cars - only homeowners and their guests would use the road." There are several problems with that option:
    - It would force even more cars onto Embarcadero Road than the option for closing Churchill at Alma only. Embarcadero Road already has too much traffic and had traffic jams during peak traffic times before Covid-19.
    - The Deliberation Notes state "Residents would enter/exit Churchill from Emerson Street". There is no way to access Churchill from Emerson Street. Residents would have to enter/exit their neighborhood from El Camino Real.
    - After XCAP has spent so much time investigating options and getting input from traffic experts, I don't think more options should be introduced at this late date without time to study them thoroughly.
- I agree that the mitigations should include the 2016 Bike Project. It would save time and money to review that project rather than to start over from scratch. After reviewing that project, it could be decided where additional Bike/Ped paths will be needed.

Thank you for considering these opinions in your deliberations.

Sara Girton
1141 High Street, Palo Alto