

From: Serge Bonte [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 10:04 PM
To: , Public Works <Public.Works@mountainview.gov>
Cc: Kamei, Ellen <Ellen.Kamei@mountainview.gov>; Hicks, Alison <Alison.Hicks@mountainview.gov>;
 Matichak, Lisa <Lisa.Matichak@mountainview.gov>
Subject: re: 11/28 CTC Meeting - Agenda Item 5.1 Transportation Center Plan and funding update

CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL - Ensure you trust this email before clicking on any links or attachments.

Honorable Committee Members

The cost explosion and the resulting funding gap are very alarming for this project.

I support most of the proposed cost savings but would encourage you to minimize impacts on the core of the project: the tunnel as once built, we won't be able to change much of it (like widening it as our population grow and more people want to go downtown on both sides of the track).

I never thought the Evelyn Ramp was necessary, so my suggestion is not only delay but ditch if all together. Not having the ramp (and its tons of concrete and asphalt) could actually improve the proposed design for the new Public Safety Building.

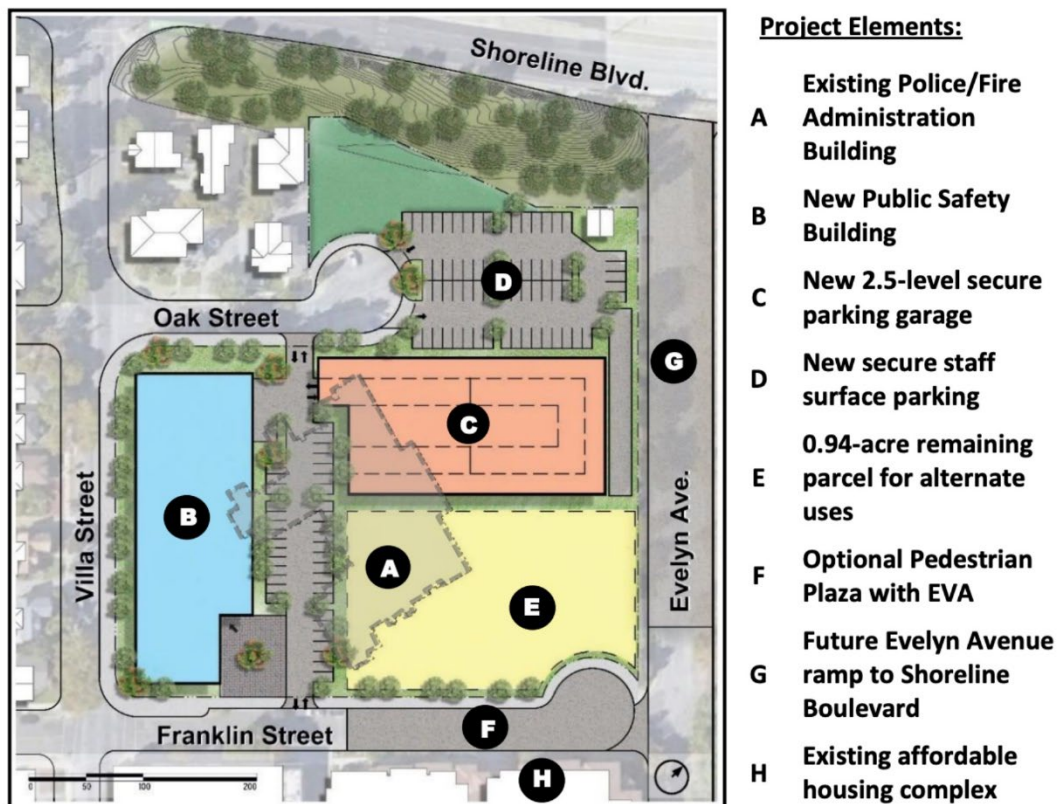


Figure 5: Site Layout and Project Elements

Imagine if instead of the ramp shown in G, that dead end section of Evelyn were to become a green linear park with walking path and bike lane. Certainly a more pleasant journey than going under or along side a ramp. Should parcel E become affordable housing, I'm sure the residents would love have a park ...as their back yard.

re: funding gap, I am against delaying / cutting any existing Active Transportation projects (many of them -like the El Monte corridor- have been delayed too many times already). I am also against delaying the other grade separation project at Rengstorf, residents have been waiting for too long already (Rengstorff is a route to school, kids on either side go to Los Altos High School, they have to cross these tracks twice every day with no close by alternative)., In my view, delaying Rengstorff over a project downtown would also raise some equity issue.(given the demographics differences between the two neighborhoods).

How to close the gap? My suggestion would be for the City to first get a firmer grasp on the costs for both grade separation project and for the public safety building. Then put a bond on the ballot like our school districts do to build/maintain their schools. This voter would support it. In contrast, the TOT measure you are considering won't come even close to the needed funding and it's also not dedicated to these specific projects.

Sincerely,

Serge Bonte

From: Daniel Hulse [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 6:35 PM
To: , Public Works <Public.Works@mountainview.gov>
Subject: Council Transportation Committee Agenda Item 5.1

CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL - Ensure you trust this email before clicking on any links or attachments.

See my attached letter on Agenda Item 5.1 of the 11/28 Council Transportation Committee meeting.

Thanks,
Daniel Hulse

Dear Mountain View City Council Council Transportation Committee:

I am writing about the proposed value engineering and scope reduction of the Mountain View GSAP project. While it is disappointing that project scope needs to be revised, doing so with the best interests of the city in mind is the most responsible way forward for this project. With that in mind, it is of utmost importance to **ensure that designs at a minimum continue to provide a pedestrian crossing under central expressway**. This crossing is key to ensuring the project is effective at serving the area north of the station, as well as providing the benefits of improved pedestrian connectivity promised by this project—indeed, a pedestrian tunnel under central expressway could have the effect of reducing cross-track car trips while diverting existing bike traffic off of high-injury corridors like Shoreline and onto safe, low-stress routes like Stierlin and a (post complete streets) Moffett.

However, we should also **treat this exercise in value engineering as an opportunity** to deliver a better design which will meet the needs of the city while satisfying budgetary requirements. While many changes are needed to make this happen, one of the highest-impact changes would be to **cap Moffett at Central Expressway in lieu of delivering both bicycle/pedestrian tunnels, delivering a single tunnel instead**. This tunnel could end in a newly-pedestrianized area at the end of Moffett Boulevard and would yield the following benefits:

Delivering needed pedestrian access at reduced cost

Functionally, the goal of the bike/ped underpasses in the GSAP is to create safe routes north of the Caltrain station that avoid car conflicts. As such, the main reason to deliver two tunnels instead of one is the ability to enable bicycles and pedestrians to avoid crossing moffett blvd at grade. If moffett were capped, there would be sufficient car-free space at the end of moffett to easily travel between moffett and Stierlin instead. While this would introduce some redesign costs, **we could expect at the very least a savings comparable to the adobe tunnel deferment in Table 7 of the committee report (\$26-28.6 million) without the listed drawbacks**.

A simpler, single-tunnel design could further reduce issues inherent to the two-tunnel design.

Specifically, a single tunnel could ramp directly onto Moffett (a more central, higher-interest street than Stierlin) and eliminate the need for a dedicated elevator at the adobe plaza. It would additionally **eliminate bicycle/pedestrian conflicts** which would arise at the fork of the tunnel and make it easier to separate cyclists from walkers.

Providing further opportunities for Value Engineering

A simpler, single-tunnel design has the potential to further reduce project costs by increasing construction flexibility. Since Moffett access to Central Expressway would no longer be an issue, this area could be used as a staging/construction area for much longer than the current plans. Additionally, since this tunnel could be built directly onto Moffett Boulevard, there would be some potential to reduce tunnel length from the existing designs, which (1) run diagonally and (2) require additional buffers to separate them from the vehicle right-of-way. Finally, it could reduce the size needed for the concourse where the tunnels are planned to diverge, which could reduce the volume of material to remove.

Setting the stage for the Moffett Boulevard Precise Plan

Council has indicated that they want the Moffett Precise Plan area to become an “extension of downtown” in the hopes that Moffett will become a slow, activated street with restaurants and retail. As a part of this, the GSAP has already proposed a road diet with bike/pedestrian improvements on each side of Moffett boulevard. Given the existing changes to downtown Mountain View since the original planning for the GSAP, **capping Moffett seems well aligned with the overall vision for the Moffett Precise plan to reduce high-speed through-traffic as much as possible**. This change would thus be a low-cost, high-impact move to achieve this vision while mitigating the effects of an overall scale-back of the project.

Negative impacts would be minimal

Capping Moffett Blvd at Central would have some impacts on cars and buses which over Moffett onto Central Expressway. However, it's important to stress how minor this would be. Firstly, between Shoreline, Middlefield, and Hwy 85, there are ample arterials and highways that can be used for car access in and out of the North Moffett area. Since there already is no car through-way provided to Castro Street, access to downtown via Moffett is a moot point. Additionally, a capped Moffett could provide the benefit of eliminating the need for a stoplight, increasing overall trip speed on Central Expressway. Secondly, while the 51 and 21 busses currently take this route, they already use shoreline to cross Central Expressway and could easily be re-routed onto shoreline via Middlefield with little loss of coverage (which in turn would be compensated for by the increased pedestrian access).

While this single change will not be enough to solely bring the GSAP project within budget, I hope that you will consider it as a part of an overall value engineering process that continues to prioritize bicycle/pedestrian station access.

Sincerely,
Daniel Hulse

From: Joel Dean [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 12:10 PM
To: Kamei, Ellen <Ellen.Kamei@mountainview.gov>; Hicks, Alison <Alison.Hicks@mountainview.gov>; Matichak, Lisa <Lisa.Matichak@mountainview.gov>
Cc: City Council <City.Council@mountainview.gov>
Subject: 11/28/23 CTC meeting agenda item 5.1 (GSAP cost)

CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL - Ensure you trust this email before clicking on any links or attachments.

From: Joel Dean, [REDACTED]
To: Council Transportation Committee
Re: 11/28/23 meeting agenda item 5.1 (GSAP cost)

As noted philosopher Mike Tyson allegedly said, "Everybody's got a plan till they get punched in the mouth." The finding that, one year after it was made and five months after it was presented to the CTC, Caltrain's cost estimate was 50% too low has punched the City's grandiose plan for the GSAP right where it hurts.

The worst way to react to this setback would be to encourage staff to continue its relentless pursuit of grant money to finance all the baubles, bangles, and bright shiny beads adorning the GSAP. Haste in getting to the head of the line at the public trough has gotten us into this fix. Submitting to pleas that "time is of the essence" would only make matters worse.

For potential cost savings, consider postponing the ramp from Evelyn to the Shoreline overpass. Anyone wanting to get from Evelyn to Shoreline can do so via Hope and Villa, as they do now without difficulty. If Evelyn is connected across Castro (and kills an occasional pedestrian in the process), the connection to Shoreline via Franklin and Villa is wide open. Either of these is superior to sending vehicles, many of them oversized, up a ramp to a three-legged bridge, which would interfere with operation of the Shoreline/Villa intersection. Not to mention that it is just another insult to pedestrians on the overpass, whose welfare gets only lip service from City staff. It also gets in the way of the equally odious Shoreline Pathway "improvements", which have been designed as if the Evelyn ramp won't exist. These projects are a double dose of poison.

Whatever you do, do not try to rush any construction so that more than one crossing of Central Expressway -- Moffett, Shoreline, or Rengstorff is closed at a time.

Eliminating the direct connection to the Adobe corner from the tunnel under Central Expressway would benefit more people than it mildly inconveniences. A forked intersection in the tunnel would inevitably lead to conflicts. Prohibiting right on red at both corners of Central and Moffett would be more than adequate compensation for anyone crossing Moffett on foot or bike.

Eliminating the tunnel entirely is not all that far-fetched. With Castro closed off, and right on red prohibited, a "scramble phase" where all motor vehicle traffic stops and pedestrians and bicyclists can

make any crossing. The signal timing could be the same as applied pre-pandemic, which allowed the intersection to operate satisfactorily, and the scramble phase would replace the former green phase for Castro. Currently, crossing Central on foot is relatively safe, given the volume of traffic, thanks to unlimited visibility, crossing on the level and separation between pedestrians and cyclists. Having to access a tunnel via a staircase adds an unwanted hazard. The CDC says that 10,000 people a year die in America from falling down stairs, with the elderly especially at risk. Adequate handrails are a must. And in the name of all that's holy, do not let some flaky artist decorate stairs or walkways. Consult a qualified occupational therapist if you want to know why.

This is an opportunity for Council to shift staff's attention from grantsmanship to paying attention to the gory details that can make or break a project. Please do not miss it.

Thank you for your attention.