

McGill, Pam

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 9:11 PM
To: City Council
Cc: BPAC Communication
Subject: 2/13 meeting agenda item 5 -- Public comment re GSAP
Attachments: Traffic projections, with and without Evelyn ramp.jpg

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To: Mountain View City Council
From: Joel Dean, [REDACTED]
Subject: Followup to 1/23 Council meeting on GSAP

Kudos to Council for prioritizing Rengstorff's grade separation over Castro's. According to the North Bayshore Precise Plan, Castro used to have about two-thirds as many track crossings as Rengstorff, and the two locations had similar accident histories. Now that Castro crossings have already been reduced by 70-75%, and can be reduced to zero without spending megamillions, there is no logical choice but to proceed with Rengstorff.

I support scope reduction for the Castro project if the core elements include closing Castro fully, implementing a pedestrian scramble phase, and prohibiting right turns on red at both corners of Moffett and Central Expressway. If the interim improvements are successful, they could be made permanent even after the tunnel is completed. One of the speakers at the 1/23 meeting expressed an aversion to sharing the tunnels at the Palo Alto Caltrain station with bicyclists who refuse to dismount. I share her sentiments, and also prefer level walkways to staircases. Giving people alternatives would be a welcome change from Hobson's choice, and would increase crossing capacity in the process.

The interim connection between Castro and Evelyn ought to be composted. If it is meant to serve only bikers and walkers, it is unnecessary -- they can go around the barriers already. If it serves motor vehicles too, it is a hazard to pedestrians and cyclists, and makes the City's professed commitment to active travel modes look farcical. Eliminating the S-curve and Evelyn ramp would enable a significant expansion of the Transit Center plaza. That would provide a more suitable welcome than the current clutter to visitors arriving from across the expressway.

There will inevitably be disagreement about whether or not to construct the ramp from Evelyn to Shoreline. Council and public commenters at the 1/23 meeting felt that further traffic counting and studies are needed to clarify the effects of doing or not doing the ramp. I agree. There is already enough data to get Kimley-Horn's projections about what will happen, but it is a little out-of-date, presented in a standard format which is incomprehensible to most of us, and profuse enough to induce a terminal case of data fatigue.

To establish a new baseline for existing conditions, Council could have fresh traffic counts done before connecting Castro to Evelyn or closing off Castro completely. Another set of counts would be taken a suitable time after Castro is closed, to establish a baseline for 'no-ramp' conditions. Video recordings would be made of critical street segments -- traffic counts not accompanied by visual evidence can be deceptive. When the data are compiled and reported, it would be immensely helpful if turning movement counts were combined into total intersection approach volumes and displayed on simplified maps of the street system. A sample of what this would look like is attached. The underlying data are Kimley-Horn's, the arithmetic compression is mine. I can't guarantee either. Word of warning: do not assume anything is gospel just because it was belched out by a computer. Always do a reasonableness check.

Thank you for your attention.