



Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning
817 Montgomery Street
Mountain View, CA 94041

June 21, 2016

Mountain View City Council
City Hall, 500 Castro Street
PO Box 7540
Mountain View, CA 94039-7540

Re: Item 7.1 on 6/22: Castro St. Rail Crossing Grade Separation Plan

Honorable Mayor Showalter and Members of the City Council:

Regarding the grade separation plan for the Castro Street rail crossing, the Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning supports Alternative 4 with some distinct and critical alterations that we strongly feel are worth studying further.

Accordingly, we encourage you to select Alternative 4 in this week's meeting, but also to direct staff to explore alternatives to the Evelyn/Shoreline ramp.

We are concerned that this ramp will make Shoreline even more challenging for bicycles, pedestrians, and particularly the parents who use this section of road to access Stevenson and Theraukauf schools. The proximity of the Villa, Wright—and then possibly Evelyn lights—combined with the Central Expressway ramps will also degrade the motor vehicle experience. Shoreline needs to remain a “class A” effective passageway for motor vehicles, both to support the efficiency of community and employer shuttles and to keep cars off of smaller neighborhood roads that are better for bikes and pedestrians.

We believe staff should put additional effort into exploring ramp alternatives, such as a ground-level route at the Public Safety Building, or removing street parking on Villa and making that street a more efficient connection between Shoreline and Castro. Going further, making the 100 block of Castro St. car-free is an appealing option to our constituency, and it's one we don't think has been adequately investigated. Car-free business areas can be even more vibrant and active than they would be otherwise.

We appreciate Alternative 4's active transportation connections under the train tracks and Central Expressway, especially with the critical separation between bicycles and pedestrians. Please ensure that the ultimate design prioritizes pedestrian and bicycle access at Castro and Evelyn as well. We want to avoid a terrible pedestrian

experience like the one at Villa and Bush, where pedestrians often have to wait for three different light cycles just to cross those two streets.

In addition, we strongly encourage you to direct staff to propose more concrete plans for transit connections on the north side of Central Expressway. We understand this is meant to be included in Phase II of the Transit Center Master Plan, but we are concerned that evaluating this portion of transit connections separately from the grade separation plan will severely constrain the possibilities available to make those key connections work. Redirecting shuttles, buses, and car-share services to pickup locations north of Central will reduce the impact that closing the Castro/Central crossing will have on neighborhood routes to Castro—such as Dana, Church, and Villa Streets.

Thank you for your consideration,
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deb Henigson', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Deb Henigson
for the Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning

cc:

Linda Forsberg, Transportation and Business Manager

Michael Fuller, Public Works Director

Dan Rich, City Manager

Lorrie Brewer, City Clerk's Office

About Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning

The Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning is a group of local volunteers dedicated to making Mountain View as beautiful, economically healthy, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian accessible, and affordable as possible. MVCSP member interest and expertise covers areas such as housing, transportation, the environment, the economy, and beyond!

For more information, see <http://www.mvcsp.org>.

To contact us, send email to mvcsp.info@gmail.com.