



June 8, 2021

Mayor Carlos Romero  
Vice Mayor Ruben Abrica  
Members of City Council  
City of East Palo Alto  
2415 University Avenue  
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

Submitted by email: [cityclerk@cityofepa.org](mailto:cityclerk@cityofepa.org)

Subject: Transportation Assessment including proposed but not-guaranteed projects

Dear Mayor Romero and Members of City Council,

The Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge and the Sierra Club's Loma Prieta Chapter would like to bring certain, specific points to the Council's attention for its Transportation Study Session for the Ravenswood Business District Specific Plan Update.

While we have significant concerns about the potential impacts of the overall expanded development proposed and the extraordinary transportation impacts that would inevitably follow, in this letter we call your attention to certain inclusions in the 06/08/2021 Transportation-related Staff Report provided for this meeting.

*Question #4:* In its Report, Staff lists five questions and also makes recommendations for each. Question #4 is: Should the transportation assessment be based on existing, known projects or on transportation projects that are being discussed but are not guaranteed to occur?

We believe the **Staff Recommendation** is realistic:

"Staff recommends that the City only approve new development based on the current capacity and known, achievable transportation improvements at this time. Long term and potentially unachievable transportation improvements (such as the Dumbarton Rail) should not be assumed in the current methodology. If and when any of these projects that significantly increase roadway capacity or reduce vehicle trips are underway, the City can reevaluate additional potential increases in development in the RBD."

We add the recommendation: **Delete Cooley Landing ferry service from all future considerations.**

1. In communication with Staff, Planning Manager Jane Mark of the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) provided information explaining that under deed restrictions, Cooley Landing cannot be used for ferry services. The deed is held by Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST). This fact alone should end ferry consideration.

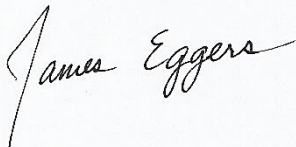
2. The Water Emergency Transit Authority concluded a study in the last year of potential new, non-harbor ferry landings in San Francisco Bay. Its recommendations *excluded* all locations south of the Dumbarton Corridor due to safety and environmental impacts.
3. Two types of ferries are considered locally at locations away from harbors:
  - a. Trimaran: These boats require a channel for shore access. Cooley landing faces a wide, broad mudflat with no channel within it because it has no outflow from a stream. An engineered channel would have very negative environmental consequences, be very expensive and regulators may not permit it.
  - b. Hovercraft: On a mud flat, ferry-size hovercraft require an acre of concrete landfall, both for landing and to avoid loading/unloading in the mud. This action would destroy mudflat critical to foraging shorebirds and bring long-term noise impacts and wake-induced erosion to adjoining marshes.
4. History: In its time Cooley Landing was a successful site for cross-bay transport for transport purposes, largely materials. At low tide at Cooley Landing is an open mud flat ergo not navigable by even flat-bottomed boats. Schedules for arrival and departures were set around high tides with times varying daily, year-round. Ferries need same time, every-day schedules.

We appreciate your attention to these comments and your time given to full consideration of the RBD SP Update Study Sessions.

Sincerely,



Eileen McLaughlin  
Board Member  
Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge



James Eggers  
Executive Director  
Loma Prieta Chapter Sierra Club