



**PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED FOR
Wednesday, January 16, 2019**

From: Loren Brown <loren.brown@vancebrown.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 20, 2018 4:51:32 PM
To: North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan; Lee, Elena
Subject: NVCAP Meeting Comments - November 15, 2018

11-20-2018

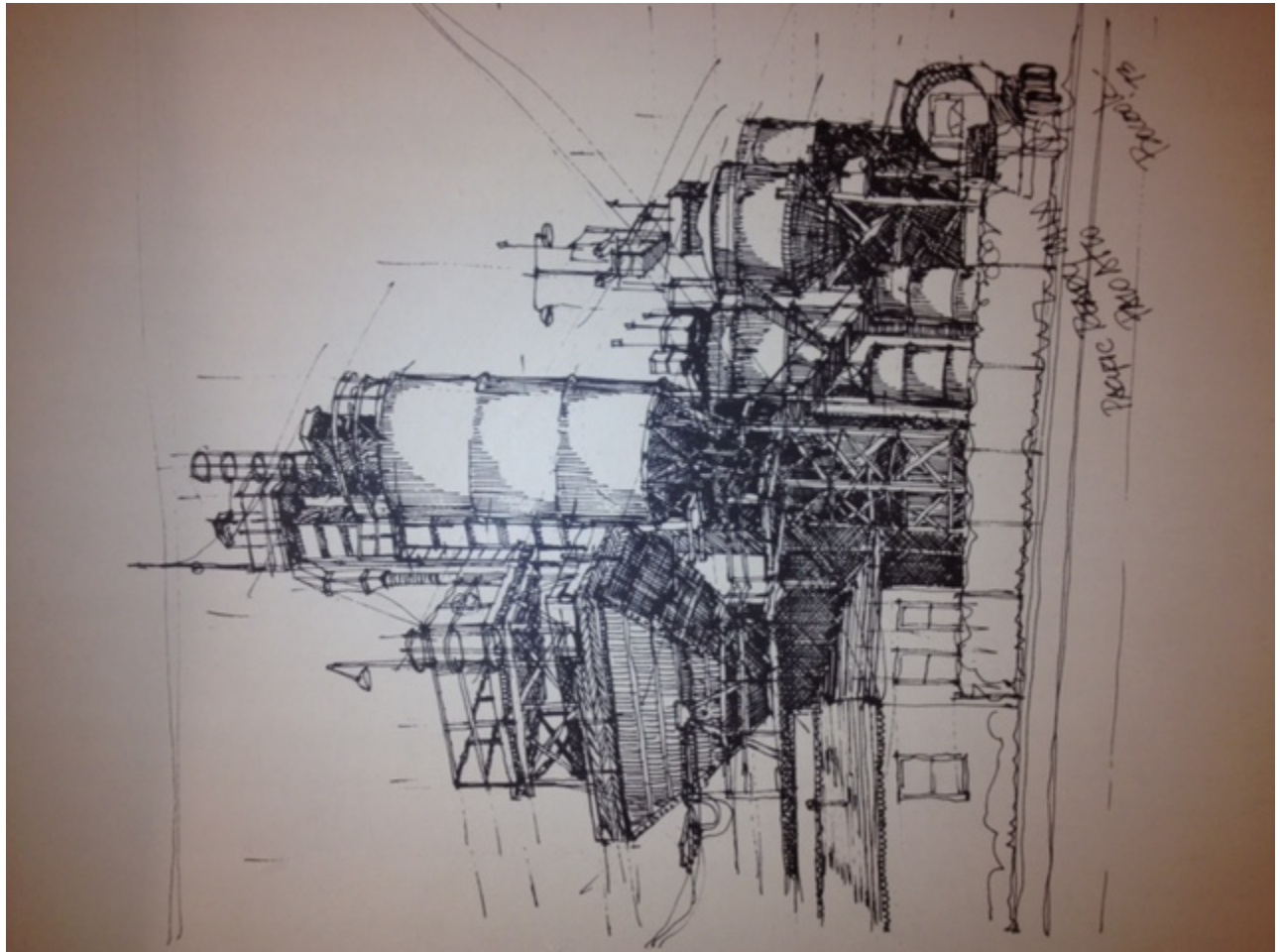
Emily/Elena,

I attended the NVCAP Working Group Meeting on November 15, 2018. I wish to submit the below comments for consideration.

Basis on my Perspective:

My general contracting company (Vance Brown, Inc.) has operated in this area since the 1940's. Our first location was on Pepper Street. We moved to 2747 Park in 1960 when the Page Mill/Oregon Expressway was installed and we moved to our current location at 3197 Park Blvd in 1995. I have personal recollections of the area going back to the early 1960's. The area has always been hodge-podgy and neglected by the City of Palo Alto. HP built a new plant at the corner of Page Mill and Park in the 1950's, but beyond that, the neighborhood consisted of metal warehouse buildings (395 Page Mill), gas stations (Park and Sheridan), a Pacific Ready Mix concrete ready-mix plant (Park and Page Mill), auto repair shops, contractor shops/offices (Vance Brown, Bleibler Iron, Jost Sheet Metal, etc.), single family houses on Olive, Pepper, etc.) and the current Fry's site which then housed warehouse use and a discount big-box retailer named Maxi-Mart that sold appliances, etc. The train spur behind the Fry's site was still active. The streets lacked street trees of any size - and still do, except for some portions of Park Blvd.). There were no bike lanes, no R&D offices, no tech (other than HP) and no apartments on Park Blvd. Polly & Jake's antique business was still thriving at Page Mill and El Camino. In the 1980's, some redevelopment of the properties on Park Blvd started to occur (3101 Park brick building, Hobach law offices at Park/Oregon, BMW car dealership and HP/Agilant building at Page Mill and Park).

Local Palo Alto architect, Bill Bocook sketched the Pacific Ready Mix concrete batch plant and metal storage buildings (located at 2785 Park Blvd.) in 1972:



Below are the metal storage buildings located at the rear of 2785 Park.



My comments/observations/thoughts from the Nov. 15th meeting:

1. The GM zoning along Park Blvd. between Oregon Expressway down to Lambert is archaic zoning. The GM zoning only exists in two locations within the City. While the GM zoning should be maintained in the area near San Antonio and Charleston, the GM zoning on Park should be revised to only allow tech/offices or multi-family housing (No property owner will utilize their sites for any other use approved in a GM zoning anyway - because the highest and best uses now are R&D/office/apartments).
2. The NVCAP area is dominated by two large tracts of land; the Fry's site and the 395 Page Mill site. If the character of the neighborhood is going to be transformed from the hodge-podgy and neglected current status, these two parcels have to be the central and main pieces of redevelopment. The 395 Page Mill site is currently just tech office space and very unexciting architecture at that. The City needs to incentivize the zoning for this this property in order to result in a near-future redevelopment to a mixed-use that is creatively done to become the gateway of this area from California Avenue. Likewise, no mount of NVCAP planning effort will be worth anything if a near-future redevelop of the Fry's site does not also occur.

3. With the exception of newly planted trees along Park Blvd, the NVCAP area lacks large shady street trees that are common to Old Palo Alto, South Park, Professorville, etc. The City needs to make an effort to transform the tree canopy in this entire area to one having large shady trees (i.e. London Plane or Sycamore).
4. There are two parcels of land that are currently used as infrastructure; the City's electrical substation on Park Blvd and the AT&T telephone switch center on Lambert Street. If these current uses are ever discontinued, the City should consider what uses for these two properties would make the best sense. If AT&T plans to vacate their facility, the City should consider purchasing the building and surrounding land for either additional park or for affordable housing.
5. Even with the new stop light at Park Blvd. and Page Mill, the intersection is still a disaster. Cars travelling northbound on Park that want to turn left on Page Mill can never make the left turn during evening peak hours because there is never a gap in the queue of cars travelling southbound on Park that are turning right onto Page Mill to get onto the expressway. Consider making Page Mill from Park Blvd going west two lanes from the Park/Page Mill intersection - with one lane dedicated to each of the two subgroups of cars that are trying to get on Oregon Expressway during peak hours. Even if the two lanes only are for 150 feet before they have to merge together, it would solve the problem for the cars trying to turn left at the light onto Page Mill. Page Mill Road is plenty wide to allow two lanes of traffic for this distance.
6. Do not add broken shards of glass to sidewalks (for aesthetic purposes) in the NVCAP area similar to California Avenue sidewalks (as suggested by someone at the meeting). The quality of the workmanship on California Avenue is absolutely awful and the glass shards are a hazard.
7. The work done to date by Perkins + Will ignores all aspects of locating increased density or development adjacent to major train stops (i.e. Cal Train station). Extend the Pedestrian Transit Overlay District (PTOD) zoning overlay (around the Cal Train station at California Avenue to the intersection of Lambert and Park). This will allow/encourage residential development of properties on Park Blvd. (3101 Park, 3197 Park, 3241 Park, that are within walking distance to the Cal Train station at California Avenue. The existing PTOD zoning that was enacted back in the 1990's was based on a far smaller distance to the train station (1/4 mile) than what current industry PTOD thinking is (approximately 1/2 mile radius).
8. Revisit the Perkins + Will "Travel Distances - Walking" chart (page 10) and "Existing Pedestrian Connectivity to Nearby Destinations" chart (page 23) included in the Working Group Meeting #2 Handout. The time durations shown as walk distances are unreasonably slow. For example (see page 23), it just does not take 15 minutes for an average person to walk from the corner of Page Mill and Park Blvd. to the California Avenue train station. For example, Google Maps shows that the distance from Cafe Machiavello (located at the corner of Park Blvd. and Page Mill Road) to the California Avenue Train Station along Park Blvd. is only a 7-minute walk and only a 6-minute walk if one walks through the Cal Train parking lot. The walking times shown on Google Maps are less than 50% of the time listed in the

Planning Consultant's chart. If such information is going to be used to make decisions, then it ought to be accurate. I have walked these distances before and I believe that the times listed in Google Maps are far more accurate than what the Planning Consultant has shown on their charts.

Remove some of the unpopular destination routes from the chart (i.e. not many people are walking to Safeway, Hoover Park or El Carmelo School from California Avenue, nor are people walking from the corner of Lambert/El Camino to College Terrace Library).

9. Several years ago in 2014, the City underwent an extensive planning process to evaluate the Park Blvd. Corridor from California Avenue to Lambert Street (i.e. California Avenue Area Concept Plan). Why didn't the City adopt those recommendations? Is the City using the results of that work in this study? If not, why not? Take that study out of mothballs and see what we can use in the current study.

10. One of the planners spoke about people suggesting neighborhood planning concepts and then proceeded to give Portland's Pearl District as an example. Unless the City is willing to increase the density of this area by a factor of 5 or 10, the Pearl District is not an appropriate example to mention by the planner. The Pearl District has high-rise condominiums/lofts and includes a large retail component. Examples tossed out to the public should be realistic to the City's willingness to densify the area. The planner should suggest 6-10 examples for the public to review and comment on.

11. Methods often used to unite neighborhoods are sidewalk treatments, paving surfaces, street widths, signage, landscaping, benches, fire hydrants, street lights/poles. Are there other methods? Can the planning team suggest more methods as well as examples of where the methods have been successfully used (with images to communicate the intended vision for the neighborhood)?

12. This neighborhood is littered with RVs camping for weeks at a time (including some amount of trash on the adjacent sidewalks). I have spotted up to eight RVs parked within a 2-block section on Park Blvd. This is not a neighborhood where we want a continuous presence of RV dwellers. Once cited by the City, the RVs simply rotate to another location and then back again. The City has underperformed in addressing this issue (i.e. lack of installing signage reflecting the City's ordinances, lack of prompt enforcement of violators, etc.). This issue needs to be addressed by City Council or else all the NVCAP planning efforts, hardscape improvements, softscape improvements will be for naught.

13. The strip of land bounded by Park Blvd. Oregon Expressway, the railroad tracks and the City of Palo Alto's electric substation should be zoned for increased density. These properties generally have no immediate neighbors on at least two sides (railroad tracks and Park Blvd) that will be impacted by the density and or construction. Thus, it seems like a good location for denser housing projects. Smaller sites cost more to develop housing than larger sites, so incentives for smaller sites may need to be proportionately higher than larger sites.

14. The mere identification of housing-eligible sites does not do enough to incentivize the actual construction of more housing. Reconsider the zoning incentives and modify if increased housing goals are serious.

15. Remove all of the 150' offsets from creeks unless the City wants such offsets on their own property. These are 20-feet high x 30-feet wide concrete-lined flood channels often times passing through or adjacent to private property. These are not public parks where one can go have a picnic nor should private property owners have to provide public access to the creeks (or incur development restrictions associated with such offsets).

Thank you,

Loren Brown

From: Ken Joye [<mailto:kmjoye@gmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, November 29, 2018 12:10 PM

To: North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan

Cc: Rebecca Sanders

Subject: questions for NVCAP from working group meeting #2

The [presentation](#) at the 15 November 2018 meeting of the NVCAP working group raises a number of questions. Please forward these questions to the members of the working group; I would appreciate any response to them which you may provide prior to the January working group meeting.

(1) R-1 rezoning — **Do staff or consultants propose that existing R-1 parcels be rezoned?** Do staff or consultants propose something in particular to exceed the Housing Element estimate (mentioned with RHNA percentage on page 42-of-48)? Why is there a distinction made between single family homes and contiguous parcels [owned] by a single entity (page 28-of-48 and 29-of-48)?

(2) connectivity and destinations — various pages of the presentation discuss pedestrian volume on particular streets and how some streets may be considered “barriers”. **Do staff or consultants propose use of eminent domain to seize existing R-1 parcels on Olive Ave to extend Ash St?** What are the destinations that would be served by doing so? To what extent does choosing the intersection of Olive Ave & Ash St as the origin of the heat map represent embedded bias (page 10-of-48)? A putative intersection of Acacia Ave & Orinda St would be closest to the center of the study area, why was that geographic point not chosen for the heat map? Who would be served by transit *through* the site and why is that desirable (page 14-of-48)?

(3) affordable housing — on page 43-of-48, the potential for congestion is rightly listed as a concern. **In the list of barriers to market rate residential development, shouldn't the desire which residents have expressed for more affordable housing also be listed as a community concern?**

(4) uncontrolled crossings — on page 24-of-48, should Ash St & Page Mill Rd be list as an uncontrolled crossing? **Does doing so imply that the City considers that a place where pedestrians should cross Page Mill Rd?** Should a barricade and directional sign be erected on the sidewalk directing pedestrians to nearby controlled intersections instead? Similarly, is it proper to have a “westbound” arrow at the

intersection of Lambert Ave & El Camino Real, given that on the opposite side of El Camino Real lies the parking lot of [CPI](#)?

(5) site availability — on page 43-of-48, there is a statement about 16 of 19 “opportunity sites” identified in the housing element. **Is there a citation to the 2030 Comp Plan which one could follow to see a list of opportunity sites?**

(6) methodology — Is the methodology used by the consultants to gather volumes of pedestrians, bicyclists and parked cars described in a document posted on the NVCAP www site? Was data about people's travel collected exclusively from census data for residents of Census Tract 5107 Block Group 1 (page 18-of-48)? If that is true, how does the data relate to the bullet regarding businesses, TDM, etc?

(7) key destinations — on page 22-of-48, the map shows a number of nearby places. Can you change the scale slightly and add these destinations: [Barron Park Elementary School](#) College Terrace Library, Ventura Community Center, CineArts movie theater at Palo Alto Square? (Given that El Carmelo Elementary School is shown on page 23-of-48, should that also appear as a key destination?)

(8) errors — on page 8-of-48, a dotted green line appears to suggest that there is a Class III Bike Route in place on Alma Street; how was that determined, given the contents of Table 3-4 (page 3-18) or Map 3-4 (page 3-23) of the [2012 Bicycle + Pedestrian Transportation Plan](#)? On page 19-of-48, the legend mentions crosswalk enhancements by "Caltrain and Private developer"—that should be [Caltrans](#)

From: Ken Joye kmjoye@gmail.com

Sent: Wed 12/5/2018 6:55 PM

To: North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan

Cc: Rebecca Sanders rebsanders@gmail.com

Subject: homework assignment from 2nd working group meeting

At the NVCAP working group meeting in November, people were asked to submit three photographs of things they would like to see/discuss at the January meeting.

While I am not a member of the working group, of course, I would like to ask that you include these three photos with the others which are submitted.

thanks for considering this input,

Ken Joye

Ventura neighborhood

3357 Park Blvd:



At the intersection of Park Blvd & Chestnut Ave, there is a one-way barrier to block cut-through traffic. I propose that this be considered for placement at the R-1 parcels on Pepper Ave and Olive Ave which are closest to El Camino Real. This would prevent cut-through traffic from El Camino Real headed to the corner of Page Mill Rd & Ash St. A mature oak tree like that depicted above would be a huge bonus (!).

3500 Ramona St:



When the Alma Plaza shopping center was re-done, the above pedestrian/bicycle path was put into place so that residents of the existing R-1 neighborhood could continue to have access to shopping. I urge the working group to consider where in the North Ventura subject area it would make sense to have multi-use paths in lieu of full streets; that is, make it possible for residents to go where automobiles cannot.

624 High Street:



In anticipation of beginning construction downtown on this block between Hamilton & Forest, the contractors have built a covered walkway so that pedestrian access is not impeded on the side of the street where work will be done. As Park Blvd is the primary access to the California Ave shopping district for current residents of the Ventura neighborhood, please consider building a covered walkway on the “west” side of Park Blvd where construction is taking place. Please note that the above mitigation does not make any special accommodation for bicyclists; as the Fry’s site is bordered by a Palo Alto-designated Bicycle Boulevard, a key mitigation would be to keep the construction zone from impinging upon bicyclists traveling “south”.

From: Cedric de La Beaujardiere <cedricdlb@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday 12/21/2018 5:52 PM
To: North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan
Cc: Rebecca Sanders rebsanders@gmail.com
Subject: Broken link for 3rd NVCAP mtg in Jan

Thank you. Will the January meeting be a visioning exercise?

I would like to share a link to a video for the committee members consideration.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oWgry4YI-cA>

The whole lead up is interesting and gives context, and at time 17:00 he starts to describe a system that could apply to the NVCAP in order to address issues around community benefit rather than displacement from the redevelopment which may occur. I'd like to get this idea into the minds of the committee members ahead of their visioning exercise, especially those who are inclined towards addressing issues of social economic justice.

If sending you this link is not the best mechanism to bring this to the committees attention, please let me know what is.

Thank you, and happy holidays and new year,

Cedric de La Beaujardiere

From: David Adams [mailto:david_94306@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, December 17, 2018 9:22 AM
To: North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan <NVCAP@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Subject: Perkins + Will PPT presentation

Dear Ms Lee,

Thank you for your work in ensuring that the NVCAP process runs as smooth as possible.

At Working Group (WG) 2, a slide show was presented by consultants Perkins + Will. This slide deck was not made publicly available, or distributed to WG members, prior to the meeting. Accordingly, discussion and input from the WG members and the public was abbreviated. I ask that, for all future WG meetings, all documents are made publicly available and distributed to WG members in advance of the meeting.

Additionally, the slide deck presented was a summary of findings. The consultants must have produced a full report that has not been made public. Would you kindly make the full report publicly available.

Since an adequate opportunity to review the slide deck was not possible at WG 2, I have since studied it and have the following issues, questions, clarifications. I'm sure the majority of these questions would be adequately addressed if you released the full report.

1. All pages

There is no description of the data collection mechanisms and methodologies, how the raw data is aggregated into meaningful graphics, timestamps and statistical methods used.

2. Page 6

Since the congestion at the intersection of ECR and Page Mill is so bad, is there any intention by planning staff to encourage cut-through (rat-run) traffic through the NVCAP area?

3. Page 7

The exact location of data collection on Olive is especially important since the ECR end suffers greatly from cut through traffic but the Park Blvd end not so much.

4. Page 10

What is the rationale for using the Olive/Ash intersection as the starting point of the map? Why wasn't a location chosen that is central to the Fry's site?

5. Pages 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14

A theme of these pages is connectivity through the site. Are you aware that Olive Ave is a row of R1 houses? Are you considering rezoning Olive to thereby facilitate 'penetration and connectivity'?

6. Page 13

Why is 'enhanced walking and cycling volumes on streets like Olive Avenue and Lambert Avenue' a good thing and why is it of much concern to the consultants? If I lived in a condo on the Fry's site and I wanted to walk to California Ave wouldn't I logically walk along Park Blvd? Why was this route not mentioned or evaluated? Does this indicate that pedestrian and bicycle improvements on Park Blvd are not being considered as part of NVCAP?

7. Page 14

Why was the frequency and convenience of the bus and train routes not examined? A simple search using Google Maps shows the following results for travel times from the NVCAP site:

Gunn High School 35 minutes

Stanford University or Stanford Hospital 40 minutes

Century 16 1 hour

San Francisco or San Jose 1.5 - 2 hours

Foothills Park impossible

Do you consider these travel times acceptable? Why was this type of data not included in the consultants presentation?

8. Page 15

The 522 is listed as a route serving NVCAP, however, there is no 522 stop between California Ave and Arastradero. Can you please explain how this route is relevant?

9. Page 17

The study shows 'Significant levels of on-street parking still evident prior to 7am and after 7pm indicating on-street residential parking volumes are high'. How are staff going to use this data in their considerations of what to do on the NVCAP site?

10. Page 18

I find it very difficult to believe some of this data. For example, experience suggests that you can't get very far in 19 minutes? Was this data collected some time ago? Is this data obsolete as soon as this survey was published since it doesn't take into account the new offices coming on-stream on Park Blvd?

11. Page 23

These 'destinations' are of questionable popularity. Was a survey performed to see how many people go to Sarah Wallis Park? Are you really suggesting that someone would walk from the NVCAP site to Hoover Park? There appear to be errors with the map. For example, the California Ave Caltrain underpass appears to have moved to the south.

12. Page 26

Why have the existing trees on the Fry's site been left off the map?

13. Page 28

Why is it relevant to show single family homes owned by individuals?

14. Page 29

Why is it relevant to show ownership of contiguous parcels by single entity?

15. Page 29

Why are some of the 'contiguous' parcels displayed as single parcels?

16. Page 34

The study confuses cause and effect. The fact that there are a 'large number of single-person households' indicates that the houses in the area are generally smaller than average. The houses were built in the mid-1900s so they create the demand, not the reverse. Similarly, there aren't a large number of single-person households in Old Palo Alto because the houses are much larger not because single people don't want to live there.

17. Page 35

Please define 'surrounding area'.

18. Page 42

Are staff or consultants proposing something in particular to exceed the Housing Element estimate?

19. Page 43

Since the public have yet to be consulted on this project, how do the consultants know what the community concerns are? Some community concerns not listed are:

- Impact on schools
- Impact on infrastructure (roads, sewage etc)
- Need for public transportation
- Impact on community services (libraries, police, fire etc)
- Impact on drinking water
- Impact on site and area drainage
- Impact on the water table
- Market rate vs more affordable housing

Thank you and regards
David Adams