

Date: October 10, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor Teresa Barrett and members of Petaluma City Council

From: Pete Gang

Re: Crosstown Connector Workshop, Exploring Petaluma's Options for Enhancing Community Mobility, Safety, and Connectedness (Agenda Item #3)
Meeting of the Petaluma City Council -- October 10, 2022

Dear Mme. Mayor and members of City Council:

I have read the [Staff Report](#) for the Crosstown Connector Workshop (Agenda Item #3) scheduled for today's City Council meeting.

I am focusing my comments on the proposed Rainier Crosstown Connector.

For all of my thirty+ years in Petaluma, I have been hearing about Rainier as if it were the elixir that would magically deliver us from our traffic woes. Like most of my fellow residents, I knew little else about Rainier.

According to public comment from a former City Council member at the September 23, 2019 Crosstown Connector Workshop, Rainier is "a development project rationalized as a transportation fix." By providing roadway access, it would facilitate development of 117 acres adjacent to the River: 69 acres that are currently zoned Residential (615 units) and 36 acres currently zoned Commercial (975,000 sf).

I would like to point out several understated points that doom this project:

1. The proposed roadway itself and the new commercial and residential development that it makes possible would encumber the 100-year floodplain with impermeable new development. Development in the flood plain is folly.
2. Further, given the reality of a rapidly warming planet and the inevitability of rising sea levels, it is irresponsible for us to be looking at historic 100-year flood levels. The 2017 California's suggests a possible 7.8 feet of sea level rise by 2100. Our determination of vulnerability to flooding must be forward-looking, not backward-looking.
3. In 2019, it was estimated that an additional \$66.4 million would be needed to complete the project. Today, that estimate has increased to \$92.3 million (based on start of construction in 2028) – a 39% increase in 3 years. Who among us is willing to predict actual project costs 6 years from now?
4. It is reported that the Rainier Crosstown Connector project results in a negligible change in Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT's). But have we evaluated the additional

VMT's that would result from the new commercial and residential development that Rainier makes possible?

Paradigms change:

Today, in the year 2022, with the City of Los Angeles as our witness, we understand that we do not solve our traffic woes by building more roads. Instead, we solve our traffic woes by making it safe and easy for people of all ages and abilities to get around town without a car.

Because it is clearly inconsistent with multiple city goals, I urge City Council to formally remove the Rainier Crosstown Connector from consideration as a vehicle throughfare.

As part of a Class I multi-modal mobility network, however, a Rainier Multiuse Trail (connecting to the Lynch Creek Trail and the SMART multi-use pathway) has the potential to deliver us from our traffic woes for a small fraction of the cost of a Crosstown Connector.

Thank you,

Pete Gang