

# Meeting Notes

## Town of Truckee Rail Crossing Feasibility Study Community Review Committee

### Meeting #3: Review Comparison of Alternatives and Alternatives Ranking

August 13, 2025

4:30 - 6:30 PM

Meeting Location: Truckee Town Hall - 10183 Truckee Airport Rd, Truckee, CA  
96161

#### Introduction

##### Town's Team

Dan Wilkins, Public Works

Alfred Knotts, Public Works

##### TranSystems' Team.

Lynne Marie Whately, Senior Planner

Marian Rule, Senior Engineer

##### CRC Members - 12 attendees out of 24 invited.

Berney Dewey, Member of Public

Bill Kenny, Member of Public

Cory Peterson, Placer County Transportation Planning Agency

Greg Smith,

Greg Zirbel, Truckee-Donner Historical Society (TDHS)

Paco Lindsay, Truckee Trails Foundation

Rolf Godon, Member of Public

Sara Van Sicle, Truckee North Tahoe Transportation Management  
Association (TMA)

Sophia Heidrich, Mountain Area Preservation (MAP)

x. Stephanie Olivieri, River Revitalization Steering Committee

xi. Bill Ramsey, Truckee-Donner Railroad Society (TDRRS)

xii. Lindsay Romack, Town Council

1) xiii. Kurt Reinkens, Member of the Public

##### a.

#### 2) Meeting Opening

Alfred Knotts provided an overview of the planning process, the purpose of the CRC and Meeting #3, and the current status of the study and the overall project development process, highlighting that additional funding will be required to further advance project development beyond the Feasibility Study phase

##### c.

#### 3) Presentation

The presentation portion of the meeting began with a welcome and an overview of the meeting goals. Following this introduction, the group revisited the site walk held on May 1, 2025, summarizing the meeting format and key observations and takeaways from the visit. An Evaluation Matrix was distributed to CRC members during the site walk and also shared via email, allowing members to provide feedback on location, structure types, accessibility, aesthetics, and other suggestions. A total of eight (8) CRC members submitted a completed matrix to the Town.

ix.

Next, the CRC members reviewed and discussed the input gathered to date, including the evaluation matrix exercise developed after the second CRC meeting and other inputs. Of the eight (8) survey responses received, Location A was identified as the preliminary preferred location alternative, and an overhead crossing with an elevator was identified as the preliminary preferred structure type. A detailed summary of the results is provided below:

Table 1 - Initial Location Scoring

Table 2 - Structure Type Scoring

- A total of 8 completed matrices were completed and returned to the Town.

**Initial Structure Type Scoring by 8 CRC members subsequent to the site visit**

Criteria	Overhead Ramp	Overhead Elevator	Undercrossing Ramp	Undercrossing Elevator
Ability to Gain Key Stakeholder Approval	2	3	1	1
Length of Crossing (end to end)	1	4	1	3
User Experience/Comfort	2	3	3	2
Safety/Potential for Crime	2	3	2	1
Visual Context within Historic Downtown	1	1	3	3
Constructability /Ease of Construction	2	2	1	1
Construction Cost	1	1	1	1
Weather-related Maintenance	2	3	2	3
General Maintenance Costs	2	3	2	3
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>

**Ranking**

- Preliminary Preferred Option: Overhead Crossing w/ Elevator
- Second Preferred Option Undercrossing w/ Elevator
- Third Preferred Option: Undercrossing w/ Ramp
- Least Preferred Option: Overhead Crossing w/ Ramps

Scoring in this summary has been inverted from the format used in the originally distributed evaluation matrix. In this summary, a score of 1 represents the lowest performance, while a score of 5 represents the highest performance. This adjustment was made to simplify interpretation, as higher scores in this version indicate more favorable or preferred options.

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One common comment during the site walk was that the CRC members were having trouble visualizing the size and mass of an overcrossing option. In response, the Town reallocated available project budget to develop renderings of an overhead crossing with an elevator at Location A, as these have emerged as the most preferred alternatives among participating CRC members to date.

The TranSystems team developed and presented an architectural rendering of what a proposed overhead crossing could look like, offering preliminary visualizations of how it would appear at Location A and in context to adjacent properties as well as greater Historic Downtown Truckee. The renderings included perspectives from an aerial and on-the-ground/human-scale point of view as well as from various distances to illustrate potential visual impacts. After the presentation, participants raised some aesthetic concerns, suggesting the use of darker or gray tones rather than lighter colors. At the same time, they noted several positive aspects: they appreciated the glass and openness of the structure for both aesthetics and safety, acknowledged that the staircase layout could wrap around the elevator, and liked that the structure was less visible than expected from many parts of Historic Downtown. One participant also suggested showing the view of Downtown from the structure itself, noting that people would likely enjoy that perspective. The Town explained that the current rendering is

conceptual and that detailed design decisions, including aesthetics, will be made in future phases with a focus on preserving Downtown's historic character.

A rough order-of-magnitude cost estimate was also presented, giving the CRC an initial sense of the potential financial requirements associated with the project. In summary, the cost estimate is as follows:

- Overhead crossing with elevators and stairs: \$11M to \$19M
- Overhead crossing with ramps and stairs: \$14M to \$21M
- Undercrossing with elevators and stairs: \$22M to \$26M
- Undercrossing with ramps and stairs: \$24M to \$28M

Following the presentation of the visual renderings and the rough order-of-magnitude cost estimate, the Town conducted an anonymous survey with CRC members in attendance using an app based real-time polling tool. Using a QR code, participants were able to vote again on their preferred location and preferred structure type, as well as identify key concerns and potential benefits of the project. A total of twelve (12) participants voted. **Appendix A** shows the poll results.

The first question asked whether the Town should continue to pursue the project:

- Seven (7) voted in favor
- Three (3) voted against
- Two (2) stated that their support would depend on the alternative identified as the most preferred alternative(s) to advance in project development.

When asked about location:

- Nine (9) participants selected Location A as their preferred location alternative
- Two (2) selected Location C
- One (1) expressed no preference.

Regarding structure type:

- Eight (8) participants preferred an overhead crossing as their most preferred structure type alternative
- Three (3) preferred an underpass
- One (1) expressed no preference.
- All 12 participants favored an elevator over a ramp option.

A final set of questions focused on the concerns and benefits of this potential project. Participants highlighted beneficial themes such as connectivity, ease of travel, safe and needed crossings, activation of parking areas, and stronger connections between the new DEWBAYUMUWE? park, the Legacy Trail, and Downtown. Additional benefits included improved accessibility and activation of West River Street, better connections and direct access, new views and vantage points from the overhead crossing structure, improved mobility in Downtown Truckee, support for Town vitality, prevention of potential future fencing that could be initiated by Union Pacific Railroad, and safety as a feature and an opportunity.

Concerns raised by participants focused largely on potential negative visual and character impacts, as well as questions of cost versus benefit. Specific issues included the overall potential expense of the project, uncertainty around feasibility, perceived lack of significant time savings compared to existing routes, and the value of saving a 14-

minute walk may not justify the investment shown in the rough order-of-magnitude cost estimates.

CRC members also noted that the crossing may not serve bicycles effectively, that it could lead to additional growth or visual clutter, and that its ultimate use and value remained in question. A few participants also noted that any potential project could be costly and provide little to no meaningful benefit. Several participants also emphasized the importance of selecting the right location—one that would maximize connectivity and associated use—and raised considerations about connections to the Amtrak platform, proximity to Spring Street, redirecting at-grade crossings on West River and/or Donner Pass Road, and potential impacts on aesthetics associated with both the natural environment and Historic Downtown.

Finally, the discussion concluded with next steps, focusing on how the Town proposes the CRC's feedback and recommendations would be compiled, documented, and presented to the Town Council for further consideration and direction once the Feasibility Report is in draft form.

#### 4) Committee Questions and Comments

During the meeting, several technical questions and clarifications about the project were discussed and the comments are summarized below

- Deck of overhead in Location A is approximately 30 feet in height, and multiple stair configurations were considered, including wrap-around designs. The design team noted that various exterior options exist, including solid and dark gray, but tempered glass was preferred to maximize visibility for both users as well as the traveling public.
- The parking lot, on the north side adjacent to Location A and B, is leased from UPRR by the current building owner.
- Walking time across the structure is relatively short, about 1.14 minutes to cover roughly 230 feet. The sloped walkway takes approximately 7.43 minutes to walk, covering a distance of about 1,550 feet.
- The project originated from the 1997 Downtown Specific Plan and is included in more current documents, such as the Downtown Truckee Plan, and the 2015 Trails and Bikeways Master Plan.
- Regarding railroad fencing, it was noted that UP could install taller more obtrusive fences (chain linked security type fencing) if illegal crossings become a significant safety concern.
- Public feedback from the survey and meeting participants reflected a range of perspectives. Two (2) participants were opposed to the project while some members noted that walking distances of 11 to 14 minutes were manageable.
- Questions were raised about the plan for future sidewalks along West River Street, which are included in the long-term action plan (> 5 years), and connectivity improvements such as Reimagine Bridge Street were discussed.
- Some participants suggested alternatives, such as trolley access. At the same time, community interest in walkability, connectivity, and the ability to seamlessly connect the commercial center of Donner Pass Road with West River (and vice versa) and to enjoy the river corridor was highlighted, though cost considerations were recognized as significant.
- The Town emphasized that infrastructure planning should consider long-term horizons of 10 to 20 years. Staff stressed the importance of accurately capturing

input from the CRC for transparency. The CRC's role is to provide feedback from a wide range of community perspectives rather than reach consensus; the key question is whether the project idea should remain under consideration by the Town Council.

- Next steps include providing a draft of the Feasibility Report, including a public engagement summary, to the CRC for review and endorsement, with the potential for a follow-up meeting if additional clarification on draft content is needed. The report will eventually be presented to the Town Council for acceptance and then Caltrans as the final grant deliverable. Renderings and video simulation materials will be made available to the CRC
- One participant who is not in favor of the project expressed interest in presenting to the Truckee Downtown Merchants Association (TDMA), which they are a member. Town staff have provided informal updates to TDMA throughout the process and support this request.
- Overall, the staff felt the meeting provided valuable feedback to guide project decision making while providing transparency and facilitating desired community input.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of the next steps to finalize CRC input. Town Staff and TranSystems will summarize committee input from all three CRC meetings and provide a copy to the CRC in the coming month, prior to the Feasibility Report being presented to Town Council.

- **Draft Committee Input to be Distributed to the CRC for validation**

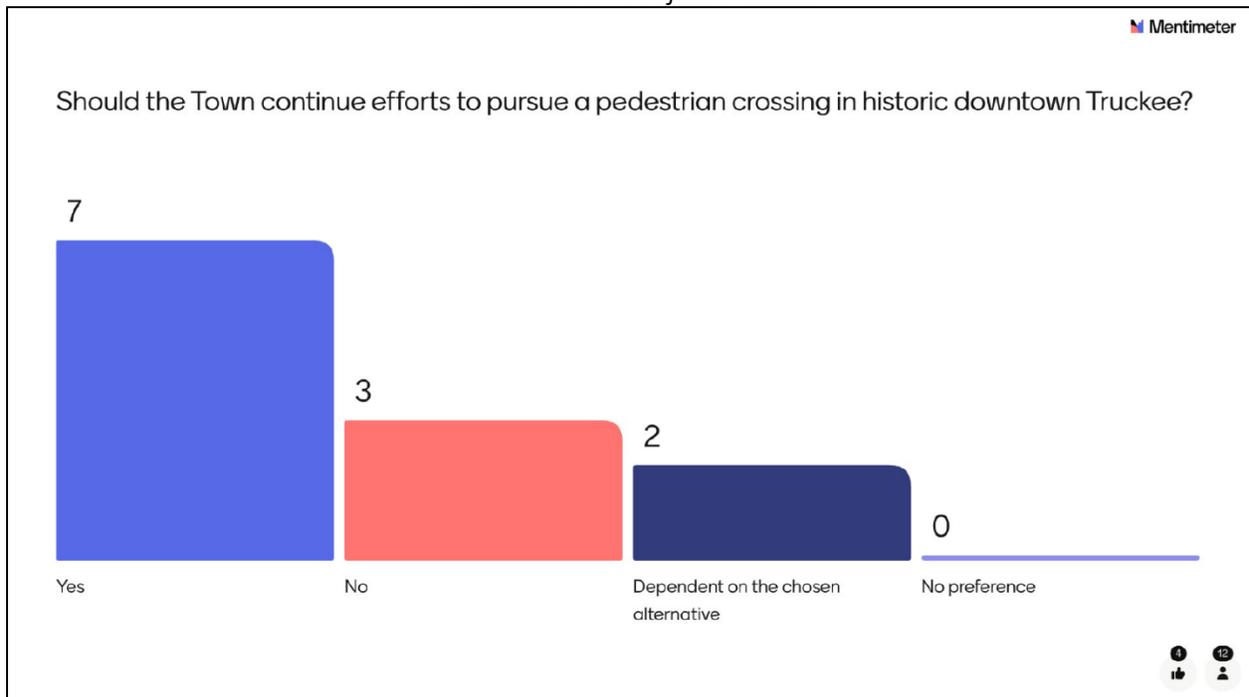
A preliminary summary of committee feedback will be compiled and circulated to CRC members, allowing them the opportunity to provide clarifications and/or concurrence on content before the input is finalized. Following the draft review, the CRC's collective input will be consolidated into a final document for presentation to the Town Council. The intent is to complete this step via email, though a fourth CRC meeting may be scheduled if further discussion is needed.

- **Draft Feasibility Report**

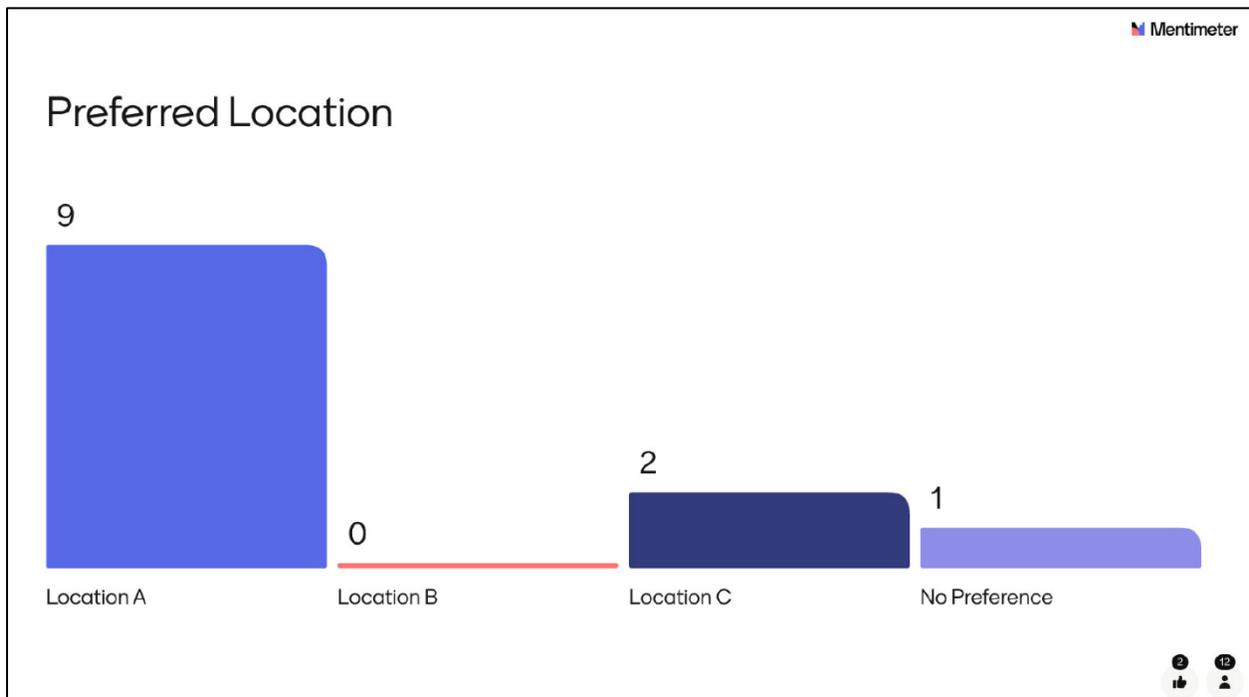
A draft version of the Feasibility Report will be prepared, outlining technical findings, alternatives considered, preliminary recommendations, and public input, and will serve as the basis for further refinement prior to finalization.

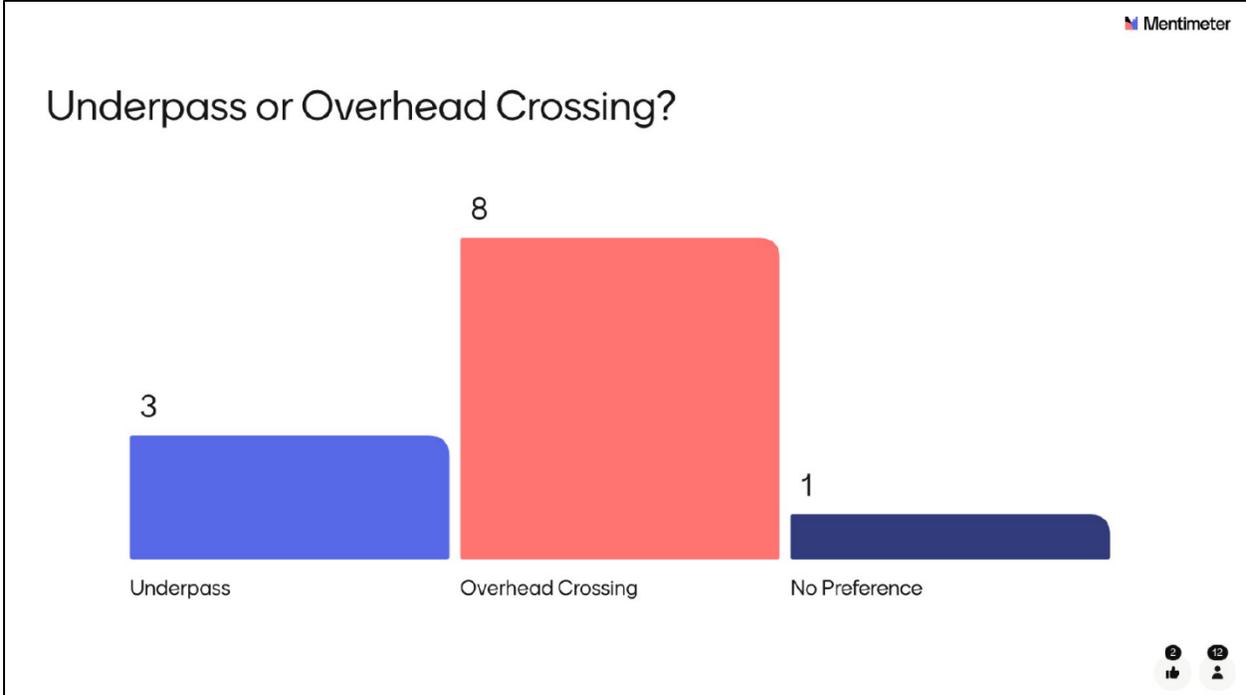
### Appendix A - Survey Results

#### Question 1 - Project Pursuit



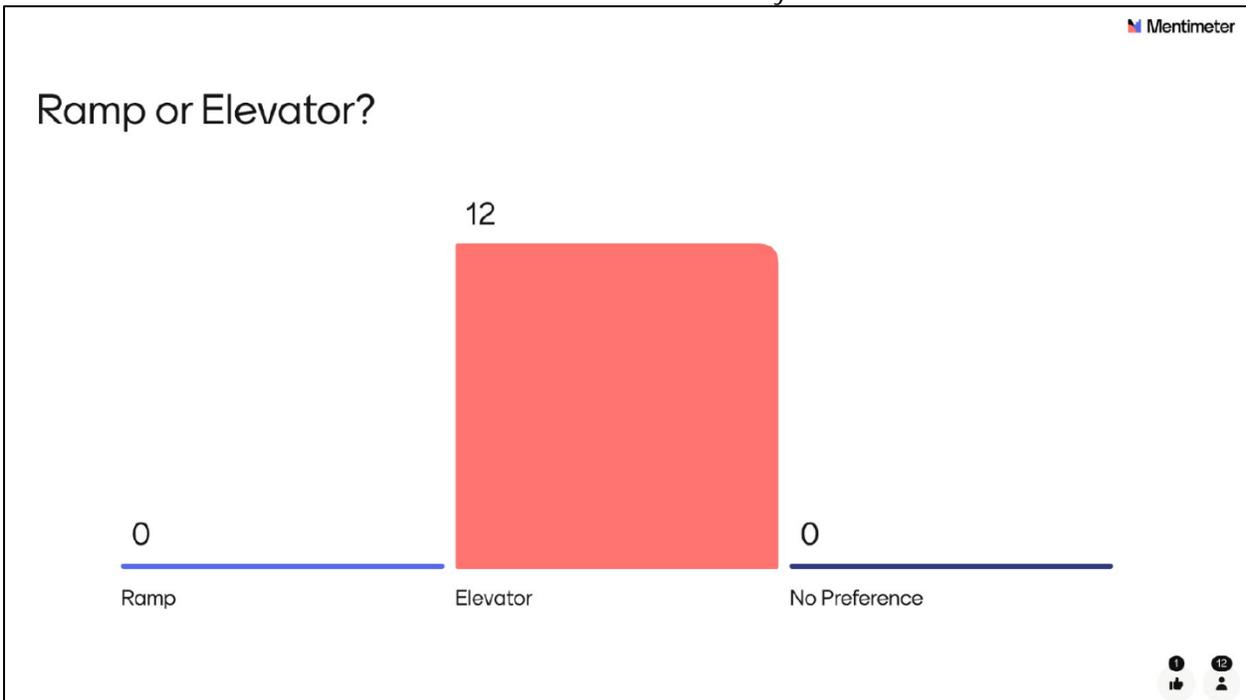
#### Question 2 - Preferred Location





Question 3 - Preferred Structure Type

Question 4 - Accessibility



What do you see as benefit offered by the project?



Questions 5 - Project Benefits

Question 6 - Project Concerns

List your questions or concerns regarding the project

