

Updated: Anglu Xuereb proposes big Floriana car park



Parking has long been a problem in Valletta

An eight-level underground car park for 3,000 vehicles should be built under the Floriana football ground to ease Valletta's parking problems, entrepreneur Anglu Xuereb suggested this morning.

Addressing a news conference, Mr Xuereb said this car park could be connected to Sa Maison through a short tunnel, to facilitate access.

The car park proposal was one of a number of suggestions he made to improve the transportation system, parking and access to Valletta.

The aim behind his plans, he said, was to make Valletta a city which attracted more people.

Mr Xuereb pointed out that Architect Renzo Piano's proposal for the entrance to the City, together with works at St George's Square, would see hundreds of parking spaces being lost from St George's and Freedom squares, the Yellow Garage and St James Ditch. The CVA was also limiting parking and unless the problem was addressed the business community would suffer immensely.

He also suggested the excavation of the old St Magdeline Ravelin around the Tritons Fountain to be used as a transportation hub for public transport, park and ride services as well as a taxi and horse cab stage.

However, the initiative would only work with a more efficient public transport system, he insisted. It was also based on the assumption that more people would use public transport.

Mr Xuereb explained that the hub could be linked to the old railway tunnel that would lead directly to the proposed escalators to be located between the new Parliament and Opera House.

The transportation node will be located one level below street level on both sides of St. Magdalen Ravelin, while the taxis, cabs and karozzini would be located in a shaded area on the sides of the existing garden, where there is the RAF war memorial, Mr Xuereb said. The Tritons fountain could also be shifted to this area.

Mr Xuereb also suggested moving government departments and ministries in a new public administration development at Floriana (Belt Is-Sebh). The MCP car park could also increase its parking spaces and be roofed over with a landscaped public garden.

The projects can be funded by the private and public sector and possibly EU funds.

Comments

Bok Kelly (1 day, 10 hours ago)

J.Aquilina, as I said below, even a light railway system (like London's DLR) would be better than looking for a car based solution.

J.Aquilina (1 day, 10 hours ago)

Why don't the authorities consider seriously and do a complete study of building an underground network. This would be fast and most probably would help (if run efficiently) in eliminating a number of cars from our roads during the week, hence less frustrations in traffic jams and less pollution. I am sure that the government will find private partners to carry out such a project.

B Agius (1 day, 12 hours ago)

Why don't they finish the existing Floriana carpark properly? Or is it finished? It doesn't look like it - it looks like they've run out of money and stopped the development half way thru - or is that one of those things we do in Malta?i

H. Camilleri (1 day, 15 hours ago)

Mmmm, impressive project which it should really be considered....

.... personally i think that this 'parking problem solver' is a much better project then the 'Bieb il-Belt' Renzo Piano project.

Dear Government, go for it and trash Piano's plans!

Karl Farrugia (1 day, 16 hours ago)

Sounds expensive...

What about spending a fraction of that money in modernising the public transport system

with better buses, more frequent routes, better scheduling, and improved bus-stops to eliminate the cars instead of providing them space? Remember that this isn't only healthy, but will also contribute towards the CO2 emission cutting everyone is expected to comply to nowadays. Sounds like a win-win solution to me.

Alex Wright (2 days, 10 hours ago)

According to the plan the MCP was supposed to be roofed and its surface area returned to its original state "Public Garden". This was never done and the middle of the MCP is empty and was never built and without any permission a tunnel was done under the hospital building that lets out under Crucifix hill. We do not need any more MCP, what about our health? or is Mr. Xuereb only looking at the revenue it will make him but our residence will suffer. Would Mr. Xuereb be ready to exchange his house with mine and come and live near his proposed MCP? Who does he think he is kidding when he tries to sell it to us that he is doing this because shops will lose their sales. If Mr Xuereb is ready to exchange houses or build us all houses close to his house than I say OK go ahead. No More Cars PLEASE we have enough of health problems with all the concentrated car fumes in Floriana. Keep the MCP close to your home. Thanks

J. Muscat (2 days, 13 hours ago)

I agree with:

- 1 roofing the middle and building up of the current Floriana car park and having a garden on top of it.
- 2 rehabilitation of the ditch area by charging a small fee which goes directly towards this maintenance
- 3 the Floriana football ground should be dug up and a car park built for the government employees working in the vicinity (during the week) and on top a Floriana / Valletta Stadium with a seating capacity of 5000 people also utilising the car park in the weekend. Lets give these two major clubs a decent Stadium!

Louis Zammit (2 days, 14 hours ago)

I fully agree that the MCP car park in Floriana should be roofed creating more car spaces with every extra roof floor.... I think that should cost in all about 300 more car spaces and yes that ugly eye should be covered up by a landscaped public garden.....and then we do not need any other eye soar. another car park

Mark Borg (2 days, 14 hours ago)

Other propositions from this brilliant Maltese entrepreneur are:-

building a statue of La Vallette in the centre...now that's a great idea.. I hope you takes head...we need to reinvent our image as a country...La Vallette statue in Valletta is a brilliant idea. Another idea is to decrease the ministers..I also agree especially those who have been in the position for far too long . maybe corruption will also decrease then

Mark Borg (2 days, 14 hours ago)

Mux Ekkaw Malta ir real estates jixtru l propjeta kolla u joqodu jikruha u jbihhu u ahna l haddima irridu nahdmu 40 sena al dar ghalina. Kapitalizmu mistohbi wara demokrazija nsejjahlu jin. Dahlia Perry Sarah Grech Frank Salt etc..have taken all our country's properties

F Brincat (2 days, 15 hours ago)

Mela mela.... car park iehor jonqosna. Car parks, Hotels, djar antiki u sbieh jaqaw u blocks tal-flats bla sugu tielghajn qishom haxix hazin, karozzi fuq it-triq jizdiedu daqs ic-Cinizi, l-ahdar dejjem jonqos u l-griz tal-concrete dejjem jizdied. Proset tassew! Viva d-development. Imma heqq certu nies buthom qatt m'hu ohxon bizzejjed u xalabiebhom mill-ambjent etc etc etc. Kliemhom taz-zokkor biex taparsi kulhadd ha jgawdi bil-progetti genjali tagghom. Tajjeb hekk. Komplu hekk. We're on the right track! Serrah mohhok Guz!

Galea. L (2 days, 15 hours ago)

Is it going to be free?

C.ZARB (2 days, 16 hours ago)

@ Alex Borg

Its not as easy as one may think. There are a substantial number of people who need to constantly go in and out of Valletta for meetings so an efficient public transport won't do the trick for them. Not to forget that traffic congestion is witnessed nearly everywhere in Malta, from Valletta/Floriana Sliema, Msida, Marsa, Birkirkara and Fgura. We all know that buses can't fly above traffic so an efficient public transport will remain a dream UNLESS we solve such problem.

Read my points (in a previous blog) and tell me what you think.

Mark Borg (2 days, 17 hours ago)

@clare spiteri

Mr.Xuereb job is a contractor/ builder...so guess what the builder built a big house for himself...whats strange with that.

listen to this hidden media in youtube. qed najd hidden ax dal bnidem qas biss kont naf bih mil media pn./mlp kelli noqod nqalleb flinternet bix insir naf l opinjonijiet tieghu.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDKexSioZZY>

ismawa u decidu intom huwiex jitkellem bis sens.

clare spiteri (2 days, 18 hours ago)

Yet another good idea from Mr Anglu Xuereb.His Palace Hotel ("a 5 Star Hotel") in High Street Sliema,built in the heart of a residential area, after pulling down Alexandria Gardens, next to a 17th century chapel. Is this another example of Mr Anglu Xuereb's good ideas?

Alex Borg (3 days, 1 hour ago)

What we need is an efficient public transport system not yet another car park. Another car park will mean encouraging people to use their cars to go to Valletta, consequently contributing more traffic and carbon emissions.

David Zammit (3 days, 1 hour ago)

Seems like a logical idea.

I think this concept should be taken up seriously. Its the volume of people that make a city a city. As for increased traffic one could create a one way traffic sysem around Valletta, this should solve a lot of bottle necks.

Silvio Scicluna (3 days, 5 hours ago)

Why do we have think about underground parking to solve our parking problem. We will solve part of the problem and create another, dumping problem. At Valletta there are

derelict buildings that could be turned into a multistorey carpark. There are lifts for restricted areas. We do not have to excavate. Come on think of other ideas.

Frederick Attard (3 days, 6 hours ago)

Mr Xuereb is a big fan of our capital city Valletta as I personally had the opportunity to witness at first hand his ideas to turn Valletta to a truly admirable city.

For years he has suggested a refurbishment of Freedom Square and his plans have been published by this newspaper a couple of years ago. It is a shame that the authorities do not give Mr Xuereb some credit for his ideas, including the possibility of introducing a Monorail Transportation System in Malta, which, being the most densely populated country in the European Union, I am sure the government would be able to apply for EU funding to execute such project that will rid our island from so many cars and air pollution.

Despite political differences, entrepreneurs such as Mr Xuereb should be given room for discussing their ideas and with so many Authorities nowadays in Malta, I am sure that just as fast as we gave a blue print to the Dubai investors for Smart City, we could equally give such opportunities to Maltese business man if they sign contractual obligations to met government requirements.

Astrid Vella (3 days, 8 hours ago)

@ Ernest Causon and A Fabri: The MCP Carpark permit stipulates that it had to be covered over and landscaped. Before anyone asks "What about ventilation?", ventilation is provided mechanically in multi-storey carparks all over the world, it's not rocket science, though of course it entails extra expense.

Mr Fabri says its an eyesore from a bird's eye view - it's any eyesore from any point of view! Which capital city of Europe can boast of an unsightly multi-storey crater right at its entrance? Why have our authorities done nothing to enforce the terms of the permit which they themselves drew up? This is another case like MIDI whose concession of Tigne Point and Manoel Island was subject to the building of a breakwater. Has anyone seen a breakwater at Marsamxett recently?

This is why people are so skeptical of MEPA and public authorities who are not prepared to enforce the conditions they pretend to impose on developers, for one can only call it pretence or 'bzar fl-ghajnejn' when it happens time and time again. You can fool the people part of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.

Raymond Sammut (3 days, 9 hours ago)

Up to 3,000 vehicles converging on Floriana will inevitably create bottlenecks. When in Malta, I needed to travel by bus through St Venera, Hamrun, Blata-il Bajda, and we always used to get stuck at the Hamrun shops. There will surely be other similar bottlenecks.

Mr Xuereb's proposition is the most logical thing to do. Many of us will have pictured a similar set-up. It cannot work by itself, however. One will also need to take a bird's eye view of traffic flows, frequency, and intensity. Otherwise, a car-park can potentially create more problems than it solves. Mr Xuereb is right to insist also on a more efficient public transport that would mitigate the need for car-parking.

Moving government departments and ministries in a new public administration development at Floriana (Belt Is-Sebh) should have been done years ago. Valletta cannot continue to suffer so greatly from so much human activity, considering especially that it is also located right above the two harbours. Valletta is besieged in a new and far more dangerous way, and needs to be relieved at the earliest.

malcolm seychell (3 days, 10 hours ago)

Mr Xuereb has excellent ideas. It is a pity that in Malta we always have to put politics in the middle.

I think every government should use the talent of the best people we have and Mr Xuereb is surely one of them.

I must say I learnt a lot from Mr Xuereb when we were in the same party. His organisational skills and vision is quite impressive.

Richard galea (3 days, 11 hours ago)

At last we have A practical man in our fold who calls a spade a spade.....unlike the sophisticated people in power.....dreaming of eternal glory in a roofless theatre!

ernest causon (3 days, 11 hours ago)

I fully agree with Mr Xuereb's suggestion that the MCP car park should be roofed over with a landscaped public garden. It is a horrible eyesore as it is. This is exactly what they did in Monte Carlo. The large square opposite the Casino is a wonderful garden with all sorts of beautiful flowers and one would hardly notice that underneath is a huge parking place

Mark Galea (3 days, 11 hours ago)

The parking problem is huge, but the solution is extremely easy ... move a few government departments out of Valletta. That's all it takes.

Historical building filled with employees, some of which could easily be turned into tourist attractions.

Mark Borg (3 days, 11 hours ago)

@bob kelly

an underground or ground level railway would solve many problems true..but i guess that's too much for malta's current budget...if you see the 'post world war 2 era' buses you will understand heh

Bob Kelly (3 days, 11 hours ago)

I have visited Malta for many years, and find the bus service reasonably reliable and good value for money. As a tourist I appreciate that I don't have to rely on using it for commuting to work when I understand that many of the problems occur. But as a tourist I fully appreciate the horrendous parking problem that exists just about everywhere on the Island.

What I have never understood is why Malta hasn't invested in a light railway system, like London's DLR. Surely with the problems associated with congestion, pollution, an antiquated bus system and severe lack of parking it would be the obvious solution

George Bugeja (3 days, 11 hours ago)

Excavating St Magdalene's Ravelin is a great idea. It would be fascinating to find it still there intact.

J. MELI (3 days, 12 hours ago)

In my opinion, I think that all car parks need to have a good ventilation as that in Floriana opposite the Hotel or RAF monument. If you make half of the area for ventilation, than the proposed car parks will become too small. Suggest to build more than one car park.

Another point if I'm not mistaken, under the Floriana Ground passes the former tram tunnel from Valletta and goes out of Port-de-bombs? But I am not sure?

G. Debono (3 days, 12 hours ago)

Vincent Gauci

Not sure if it will not attract more cars than what it attracts presently.

What happens now, is that people will try their luck to find a parking space around Valletta and if not, park elsewhere, Floriana, park and ride, etc...

What will happen with more parking spaces, is that the same people will try their luck again like in the previous case, only this time they do park there. Nothing changes, you have the same in flows and outflows, only the timing of the outflows might change, keep the increase in imported cars out of the equation.

We cannot ban all cars from Malta and never do any parking space in any place in this country, because it creates more traffic flows.

In my opinion, you cannot just eliminate 1000's of currently free parking spaces and not plan for other ones when the free ones are eliminated, because then you push the problem on the outskirts only. I.e. Floriana, Hamrun, Pieta, etc...

A Fabri (3 days, 12 hours ago)

A very good idea indeed.....but I question if developer is going to leave a another big large hole in the middle of a green area.....heq as in the case of other car park few metres away.

If I m not mistaken, proposal for that carpark included the re-instatement of all previous original landscape areas.

What an eyesore seeing it from a bird's view!!!!!!!!!!

C.ZARB (3 days, 12 hours ago)

I am one of those, who chooses to use public transport regularly. On the other hand one must bear in mind that Valletta is business and tourist hub. Many people working there has to continually leave/return to their office for meetings. Therefore, even an efficient public transport (unless its not at the same efficiency level of London's underground) won't prove good enough for these people. Let us not forget that not everyone have a driver at his disposal and can afford parking on yellow lines without getting a fine.

In my opinion we should

A) Incentive (both government's departments and private entities) organisations to leave Valletta.

B) Improve public transportation

C) Create some sort of (elegant) bridges between the 3 cities and Valletta. In that way you would reduce traffic congestion (making public transport more efficient while reducing pollution). Same thing can be made between Sliema and Valletta

If the government is not ready to do so then Mr Xuereb's idea is the second best option.

P Debono (3 days, 12 hours ago)

That's a good idea. Certainly better than the monstrous, expensive and totally out-of-place 80 million euro Parliament.

Vincent Gauci (3 days, 12 hours ago)

More parking places would simply encourage private transport. This would bring more cars on our roads. This has happened elsewhere and will happen in Malta. Do we really want this?

What we need is a different kind of mobility when the private car would be used only when absolutely essential.

So thumbs up for a more a better and efficient public transport system.

Tonio Bone (3 days, 13 hours ago)

Angelo Xuereb has always been a visionary and proposer of good ideas. The problem is that his ideas never quite met the agenda of contractors under the wings of the administrators that count!!! The parking idea at Floriana is excellent. May I humbly suggest another suitable location for such a project. Curiously, Evans Building (the ID Card place!) is being knocked down for yet ANOTHER hotel. It's a huge area, especially with the primary school just opposite. So why not use this area in the heart of the City for an 8/10 story underground parking....you can still build you hotel on top, no?

Joe Raimondo (3 days, 13 hours ago)

How about creating another multi storey car park in that huge wasted big space in the middle of the current underground car park just outside Valletta.

L Bonnici (3 days, 13 hours ago)

The addition of parking spaces won't solve the issue... this will only attract more cars to valletta and floriana i.e. increasing congestion towards Valletta in the mornings and peak hours + increasing pollution levels. St. Anne street in Floriana is the most polluted road in Malta (for a number of reasons not just cars, but dockyard, cruise liners, etc...) the addition of 3000 more cars in floriana would be another blow to the harbour region's lung...

What should be done is to improve public transport, increase its efficiency, encourage car pooling, and reduce the need for private car trips. I'm not sure Mr. Xuereb thought about this issues before the news conference...

Gerard Cassar (3 days, 13 hours ago)

The large hole in the ground that ought to have been an underground car park not an open air one will be taken into consideration if any plan for an underground car park is launched under the P.N. It quickly turns out to become an open air one.

It is even suggested that the present eye sore constituted by the open air car park be roofed to restore the surroundings to their pristine state.

D.Zammit (3 days, 13 hours ago)

let's go for it, between Government and other sectors.

Charles Micallef (3 days, 13 hours ago)

It sounds an excellent and a very attainable idea, the present underground car park has become far too small!

Mark Borg (3 days, 13 hours ago)

not a bad idea. considering the traffic and parking problem we have in malta.
