



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

File #: 23-0001, Version: 1

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Update on the Temporary Eastbound Tasman Lane Closure and Consideration to Extend the Closure Duration

BACKGROUND

Tasman Drive between Fair Oaks Avenue and Lawrence Expressway is a four-lane commercial/industrial collector, with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) light rail line running in the center of the roadway between the eastbound and westbound directions of traffic. Sidewalks are present on the south side of the roadway; however, a gap in sidewalk approximately 1,600 feet in length exists between about 800 feet east of Tasman Court (opposite the west entrance to Casa De Amigos) and Vienna Drive. There is currently no existing bicycle facility on Tasman Drive. The VTA operates the Orange Light Rail Line along the Tasman Drive corridor that connects Mountain View, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, San Jose, and Milpitas.

When the Orange Light Rail Line was extended into Sunnyvale to its current terminus in Mountain View in the late 1990's, there was insufficient width along the Tasman corridor to install complete sidewalks and bicycle lanes without purchasing and demolishing existing mobile homes that back onto Tasman Drive, and removing all mature trees for long segments. Today's roadway configuration reflects the compromise, with gaps in the sidewalk along both sides of Tasman Drive and lack of bicycle facilities.

On June 30, 2020, City Council approved a temporary eastbound Tasman Drive lane closure during the COVID-19 pandemic (RTC No. 20-0633), but with a stipulation not to exceed ten (10) months, in order to create a temporary pathway for the public to perform outdoor activities and to walk to and from the nearby grocery store. Staff was directed to monitor traffic conditions to ensure that the temporary lane closure did not negatively impact traffic along the segment of Tasman Drive between Fair Oaks Avenue and Vienna Drive and at the signalized intersection of Fair Oaks Avenue and Tasman Drive.

On August 31, 2021, City Council approved a 12-month extension of the temporary eastbound Tasman Drive lane closure with a peak hour trigger of meeting 720 vehicles per hour (RTC No. 21-0072) needed to restore the eastbound vehicular lane. At the end of the initial 10-month period, staff noted that traffic volumes were still well below the pre-pandemic levels, there was no congestion, queues or delays associated with the temporary lane closure.

EXISTING POLICY

General Plan, Chapter 3, Land Use and Transportation Element

Policy LT-3.6 Promote Modes of travel and actions that provide safe access to city streets and reduce single-occupant vehicle trips and trip lengths locally and regionally.

Policy LT-3.24 Ensure effective and safe traffic flows for all modes of transport through physical and operational transportation improvements.

General Plan, Chapter 4, Community Character:

Policy CC-1.6 Maintain City neighborhoods as safe, healthy places to live.

Policy CC-1.7 Encourage Neighborhood Patterns that Encourage Social Interaction and Avoid Isolation.

Goal CC-12 Maximum access to recreation services, facilities and amenities.

Resolution No. 793-16 Complete Streets Policy and **Resolution No. 896-18** (amending Resolution No. 793-16): The City wishes to improve its commitment to Complete Streets and desires that its streets form a comprehensive and integrated transportation network promoting safe, equitable, and convenient travel for all users while preserving flexibility, recognizing community context, and using the latest and best design guidelines and standards.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The temporary removal of one eastbound travel lane and the creation of a temporary pathway is categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(c), for minor alterations of existing highways and streets that do not create additional automobile lanes and involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use.

DISCUSSION

Pursuant to the Mayor's request in January 2023, staff is bringing this item back to City Council for an update and further discussion on a possible extension of the temporary lane closure on Tasman Drive.

During this past 12+ months, staff has continued to monitor traffic conditions on Tasman Drive in the vicinity of the temporary eastbound lane closure. While traffic volumes continue to increase, as of December 2022, the average daily eastbound traffic volume was at 4,307 per day which is about 55% of the 2015 pre-pandemic threshold. Traffic volumes from 2015 was used as that was the latest pre-pandemic traffic count available. The peak hour volume during December 2022 was 452 vehicles per hour, about 63% of the 720 vehicles per hour threshold established by City Council at the August 31, 2021 meeting. Staff has continued to conduct regular observations at the Fair Oaks Avenue/Tasman Drive and Tasman Drive/Vienna Avenue traffic signals to see if there are any observable queuing, delays, congestion or safety issues related to the temporary lane closure and have observed no detrimental impacts.

Staff has received requests from residents of the mobile home park along Tasman Drive, requesting that the temporary lane closure be removed to facilitate vehicular traffic and emergency vehicle response. In consultation with the Director of Public Safety, the Department of Public Safety currently does not have any negative concerns with emergency response or access as a result of the

temporary lane closure, but conditions may change as traffic volumes increase.

Based on staff's experience during this period of overseeing the maintenance of the temporary closure, changes to the maintenance intervals were implemented which resulted in needing fewer funds to maintain the traffic control devices. As a result, the funds remaining in Project 835260 - Tasman Drive Temporary Lane Closure are sufficient to last until June 2023.

Study Issue DPW 21-03, Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Installation on Tasman Drive from Fair Oaks Avenue to Lawrence Expressway, is under way. This Study Issue will study if permanent pedestrian and bicycle facilities can be installed along Tasman Drive and conduct the necessary public outreach and analysis for the County and Valley Transportation Authority. Staff is in the process of reviewing proposals from consultants and working with Finance on the contract award process. This study issue is anticipated to be completed in December 2024.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is currently no fiscal impact with maintaining the temporary eastbound lane closure on Tasman up to June 2023 or to remove the temporary lane closure as there is \$18,073 of carryover funds available in Project 835260 - Tasman Drive Temporary Lane Closure that is sufficient for the FY 2022/23 fiscal year. If the City Council desires to extend the temporary lane closure to a date certain beyond June 2023, funding would need to be included in the FY 2023/24 Recommended Budget. Estimated costs are approximately \$1,300 per month.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Public Library, Senior Center, Community Center and in the Department of Public Safety Lobby. In addition, the agenda and report are available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, Office of the City Clerk, and on the City's website.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Extend the duration of the existing temporary eastbound Tasman Avenue lane closure until June 30, 2023 subject to previously identified traffic volume, congestion and safety triggers.
2. Extend the duration of the temporary eastbound Tasman Avenue lane closure until a City Council determined date certain and direct staff to include \$1,300 per month of that duration in the FY 2023/24 Recommended Budget while still subject to the previously identified traffic volume, congestion and safety triggers.
3. Remove the temporary eastbound Tasman Avenue lane closure.
4. Other action as directed by Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1: Extend the duration of the existing temporary eastbound Tasman Avenue lane closure until June 30, 2023 subject to previously identified traffic volume, congestion and safety triggers.

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Reviewed by: Chip Taylor, Director, Department of Public Works
Reviewed by: Teri Silva, Assistant City Manager
Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Map of Temporary Lane Closure During COVID-19
2. Temporary Eastbound Tasman Lane Closure Average Daily Traffic Volume Graph
3. Temporary Eastbound Tasman Lane Closure Peak Hour Traffic Volume Graph