



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item

24-0708

Agenda Date: 6/18/2024

2024 COUNCIL STUDY ISSUE

NUMBER

DPW 24-09

TITLE Evaluate the Addition of Pedestrian Scrambles During School Peak Hours at Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road/Fremont Avenue and at Homestead Road/Kennewick Drive

BACKGROUND

Lead Department: Department of Public Works

Support Departments: Office of the City Manager

Office of the City Attorney

Sponsor(s): Councilmembers: Sell, Cisneros, Mehlinger, Klein, Srinivasan

History: 1 year ago: N/A
2 years ago: N/A

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

What precipitated this study?

Councilmember Sell sponsored this study issue citing ongoing concerns from community members regarding the safety of students walking or cycling to school. Fremont and Homestead High Schools both serve Sunnyvale residents and have a combined enrollment of approximately 4,500 students. Residents and students have requested the City to further improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety as students walk and bike on Fremont Avenue in front of Fremont High School and on Homestead Road in front of Homestead High School. The proposed study would evaluate the feasibility and impact of implementing pedestrian scrambles during the high school peak hours at two locations. A pedestrian scramble is a traffic signal timing that temporarily stops all vehicular traffic, thereby allowing pedestrians to cross an intersection in every direction at the same time.

Fremont High School is located in South Sunnyvale at the northwest corner of the Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road/Fremont Avenue intersection. Along the school frontage, Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road is a divided, north-south, six-lane, Class I Arterial with a speed limit of 40 mph; Fremont Avenue is a divided, east-west, four-lane, Class II Arterial that connects highway 85 to El Camino Real, with a speed limit of 40 mph.

Homestead High School is located in the City of Cupertino, south of Homestead Road between S. Mary Avenue and Kennewick Drive. A portion of Homestead Road along the school frontage and the traffic signals of Homestead Road at S. Mary Avenue and at Kennewick Drive are under the City of Sunnyvale's jurisdiction. Homestead Road is an east-west, four-lane, Class II Arterial with a speed limit of 35 mph.

What are the key elements of the study?

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At the February 15, 2024, Study Issues/Budget Proposals Workshop, Council took action to limit the scope of the study. The following reflects the revised scope.

The proposed study would evaluate the potential of implementing:

- Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road/Fremont Avenue: a pedestrian scramble only during school peak hours
- Homestead Road/Kennewick Drive: No Right Turn on Red for all approaches

The study would involve hiring a consultant to identify existing conditions near Fremont and Homestead High Schools, collect data, and conduct traffic analysis to determine the feasibility for each potential improvement. The consultant would also provide conceptual designs and cost estimates for the potential improvements.

At the May 23, 2024, Budget Workshop, Council took action to further revise the study issue scope to replace the studying of No Right Turn on Red of all approaches at the signalized intersection of Homestead Road/Kennewick Drive with studying a pedestrian scramble at the same location. The following reflects the revised scope.

The proposed study would evaluate the potential of implementing:

- Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road/Fremont Avenue: a pedestrian scramble only during school peak hours
- Homestead Road/Kennewick Drive: a pedestrian scramble only during school peak hours.

The study would involve hiring a consultant to identify existing conditions near Fremont and Homestead High Schools, collect data, and conduct traffic analysis to determine the feasibility of implementing a pedestrian scramble. The consultant would also provide conceptual designs and cost estimates for design and construction.

Estimated years to complete study: 2.5 years

FISCAL IMPACT

Cost to Conduct Study

Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost):	Major
Funding Required for Non-Budgeted Costs:	\$225,000
Funding Source:	General Fund

A consultant would be involved to collect data, perform transportation analysis/modeling, conduct field investigation, develop conceptual designs, and provide engineering and construction cost estimates.

Cost to Implement Study Results

Unknown. Study would include assessment of potential costs, including capital and operating, as well as revenue/savings.

EXPECTED CITY COUNCIL, BOARD OR COMMISSION PARTICIPATION

Council-Approved Work Plan: No
Council Study Session: Yes

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Reviewed by Boards/Commissions: Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Drop. The signalized intersection at Homestead Road/Mary Avenue is approximately 1,000 feet west of Homestead Road/Kennewick Drive. Homestead Road/Mary Avenue operates as a pedestrian scramble during school peak hours, which is Monday through Friday between 7 to 9:15 a.m. and 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. The proposed pedestrian scrambles at Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road/Fremont Avenue and Homestead Road/Kennewick Drive will likely have similar operating periods during school peak hours. Adding pedestrian scrambles will likely cause significant backups and delays along the Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road and Homestead Road corridors, which may cause a reduction in safety. Although the intersection of Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road/Fremont Avenue is under the City of Sunnyvale's jurisdiction, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), the Congestion Management Agency for Santa Clara County, has identified this intersection as a regionally significant Congestion Management Program intersection. The operation at this intersection is monitored by VTA and must follow regionally significant guidelines for managing congestion. The study results will provide insight on potential impacts and determine if pedestrian scrambles are feasible for implementation.

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Reviewed by: Sarah Johnson-Rios, Assistant City Manager
Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager