



City of Sunnyvale

Meeting Minutes - Draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Thursday, January 16, 2025

6:30 PM

Online and Redwood Conference Room,
City Hall, 456 W. Olive Ave., Sunnyvale,
CA 94086

Public Participation

6:30 P.M. BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Beagle called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chair Beagle led the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

- Present** 6 - Chair Bryce Beagle
Vice Chair Arwen Davé
Commissioner Alex Bonne
Commissioner Dan Hafeman
Commissioner Leia Mehlman
Commissioner Jonathan Wilson
- Absent** 1 - Commissioner Geeta Gollakota

Commissioner Gollakota's absence is excused.

Council Liaison Chang (present)

STUDY SESSION

PRESENTATION

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Public Comment opened at 6:37 p.m.

No speakers.

Public Comment closed at 6:37 p.m.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Public Comment opened at 6:38 p.m.

No speakers.

Public Comment opened at 6:38 p.m.

1.A [25-0203](#) Approve the Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission Meeting
Minutes of November 21, 2024

Approve the Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission Meeting Minutes of November 21,
2024 as submitted.

Commissioner Hafeman moved and Commissioner Mehlman seconded the motion
to approve item 1.A. Commissioner Hafeman pointed out a spelling error on Page 8
which will be addressed, changing Tamsan to Tasman.

The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes 6 - Chair Beagle
Vice Chair Davé
Commissioner Bonne
Commissioner Hafeman
Commissioner Mehlman
Commissioner Wilson

No 0

Absent 1 - Commissioner Gollakota

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

2 [25-0204](#) Ranking of 2025 Study Issues

Angela Wong, Transportation Engineer, explained the Study Issue process to the
BPAC. Ms. Wong discussed each Study Issue and provided Staff's
recommendations. The Commissioners then discussed each Study Issue.

1. DPW 24-02 - Complete Streets Redesign of Fair Oaks Avenue

- Staff recommendation: Drop

2. DPW 24-01 - Fair Oaks Avenue Signalizations at Three Locations

- Staff recommendation: Defer

3. DPW 25-04 - Closing the Sunnyvale Avenue Caltrain Crossing to Vehicles

- Staff recommendation: Defer

4. DPW 25-05 - Sweeping Protected Bike Lanes

- Staff recommendation: Drop

5. DPW 25-08 - Evaluate Expanded Downtown Sunnyvale Pedestrian Mall

- Staff recommendation: Drop

Commissioner Hafeman asked about the following:

- DPW 25-04 - Why can't that be treated like a quick build? Angela Obeso, Interim Transportation & Traffic Manager stated that the majority of the reason why the City needs to go to a study as opposed to a quick build is because we're dealing with rail and have other entities involved such as Caltrain, California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) that have their own requirements and regulations.

Commissioner Bonne asked about the following:

- Could you give us insight of staff workload and how many projects can be handled at once? Ms. Obeso explained how there is no simple answer to this question. She outlined her current workload as well as staff's, the approval of two new staff members to assist with large CIPs, as well as the regular operations of the division.

Commissioner Wilson asked about the following:

- You mentioned the deferral process and how that's a single usage. If something is deferred, it cannot come back. Could you reiterate that? Ms. Wong explained that if BPAC chooses to defer a study issue today, it will come back next year. At that time, it cannot be deferred again - it would either have to be ranked or dropped.

Chair Beagle asked about the following:

- BPAC can defer, and Council can defer, right? Ms. Wong confirmed that is correct.
- BPAC can defer once, but Council can defer indefinitely, correct? Ms. Obeso responded that she believed so but cannot confirm.

Commissioner Mehlman commented on the following:

- Reminder to fellow commissioners that the study issue timeline is 2 years.

Chair Beagle asked about the following:

- There are three other study issues that I believe fall under BPAC's purview. Why aren't they included for ranking? Ms. Obeso stated that adding these issues to tonight's ranking would not affect staff time. However, the decision is based on policy, as these items are operational or maintenance-related, which typically fall outside BPAC's advisory capacity. Study issues brought to BPAC are typically those that will return for input and recommendations. Operational issues, like red curbs and sidewalk maintenance, are handled internally without alternatives requiring commission feedback.
- Council will make decisions on study issues, including ranking, deferral, or dropping. Could future policy changes allow relevant operational issues to be ranked by BPAC? Ms. Obeso stated that this feedback can be brought to Council through the City Manager's Office. However, it would require broader citywide discussions and policy adjustments.
- Why was a fifth study issue, DPW 25-01 - Fair Oaks Avenue Signalizations, added last minute? What changed? Ms. Obeso stated that initially, this study issue was excluded because it's an engineering study based on standards, with no alternatives to present to BPAC. After internal discussions and your inquiry, the City Manager decided to include it, as it connects to the Complete Streets study issue already on the agenda. If both issues are ranked above the line, they may be combined for analysis.
- Has the City already started communication with VTA regarding potential changes to routes due to the Sunnyvale Avenue Grade Separation project? How far do those conversations go before a study issue funds further discussions? What does the study issue accomplish that we cannot do without it? Ms. Obeso stated that the City has had detailed conversations with VTA during the feasibility study phase, involving the project team and consultants. While VTA is aware of the project and potential impacts, their current focus is on present ridership and travel patterns. Further planning and coordination would occur during the design phase once project funding is secured.
- Would it be feasible to make the crossing bicycle/pedestrian and bus only while

restricting private vehicle access? Could this approach make the study issue cheaper? Ms. Obeso stated that she believes that the proposed idea is feasible but acknowledges the challenge of restricting access exclusively to VTA buses. She highlights the need to address how to prevent vehicles other than school buses from using the route. While she does not dismiss the possibility, she emphasizes that it would require further study and planning to develop an effective solution.

- What is the anticipated timeline for the Sunnyvale Avenue Grade Separation project? If the study issue is approved, how far in advance of construction would it be completed? Ms. Obeso estimates that construction on the Sunnyvale Avenue Grade Separation is estimated to begin in 8–10 years, depending on funding and prioritization.

Public Comment opened at 7:16 p.m.

Sharlene Liu, Chair of Sunnyvale Safe Streets, gave a presentation highlighting the following:

- Top Priorities: DPW 25-05 - Sweeping Protected Bike Lanes, DPW 24-02 - Complete Streets Redesign of Fair Oaks Avenue, DPW 25-01 - Fair Oaks Avenue Signalizations at Three Locations

Kevin Jackson Board Member of Sunnyvale Safe Streets, continued the presentation, highlighting the following:

- Top Priorities: DPW 25-05 - Sweeping Protected Bike Lanes, DPW 24-02 - Complete Streets Redesign of Fair Oaks Avenue, DPW 25-01 - Fair Oaks Avenue Signalizations at Three Locations

Public Comment closed at 7:25 p.m.

Commissioner Mehlman asked about the following:

- DPW 25-01 - Why were these 3 locations chosen? Ms. Obeso explained that study issues are presented to staff by Commissioners or Council members, and at the time, Councilmember Mehlinger proposed the study issue. He may have a better understanding of why locations were chosen or omitted.

Commissioner Hafeman moved to drop DPW 25-08, Evaluate Expanded Downtown Sunnyvale Pedestrian Mall citing concerns about its timing. He noted that recent downtown development is still in its early stages, with residential facilities just being populated and many commercial spaces remaining empty. He argued that pursuing the study without data on future resident and retail patterns would be premature.

Additionally, he expressed concern that publicizing potential street closures could discourage retail tenants from establishing businesses downtown, further delaying economic growth. While Olson Way could be closed with minimal impact, he stated that closing other streets could have significant consequences.

He moved to drop DPW 25-08, recommending revisiting it in a few years when downtown trends are clearer.

Commissioner Mehlman seconded the motion to drop DPW 25-08, Evaluate Expanded Downtown Sunnyvale Pedestrian Mall, emphasizing support for expanding pedestrian spaces but agreeing that the timing is not ideal. She highlighted that the downtown area's development, including Murphy Avenue's closure and new residential facilities, is still stabilizing. She suggested deferring the study for two years to better understand pedestrian patterns and risks, and to engage merchants in discussions when appropriate.

Commissioner Bonne opposed the motion, arguing that proactive planning is essential to avoid creating a car-centric downtown that cannot easily be adapted for pedestrians in the future. He asserted that early intervention would provide clarity to developers, enabling them to incorporate pedestrian-friendly elements into their plans. He emphasized that expanding pedestrian zones would attract businesses aligned with the vision of a walkable downtown.

Chair Beagle strongly opposed dropping the study issue, arguing that now is the ideal time to plan or announce pedestrianization changes while downtown development is still in progress. He emphasized that delaying changes until residents and developers are fully settled would feel disruptive and poorly received later. He also highlighted that pedestrianization could make retail spaces more appealing to tenants rather than deterring them. While open to deferring the issue due to prioritization concerns, he stressed the importance of keeping it active for future consideration.

Commissioner Hafeman clarified that his concerns were focused on the potential impact of filling existing downtown buildings rather than future developments. He noted that the streets included in the study serve as key access routes to large parking garages, which could create congestion issues if closed. While acknowledging the need to address pedestrianization, he suggested deferring the issue, citing limited staff capacity and the low likelihood of Council prioritizing it this

year. Commissioner Hafeman emphasized that deferral, rather than outright dropping, could provide flexibility for future consideration.

Commissioner Wilson highlighted that the success of existing pedestrian zones in downtown is partly due to zoning and the nature of establishments that benefit from pedestrian access. He contrasted this with the area under consideration, which includes a large retail location, like Target, that relies on significant vehicular access. Commissioner Wilson agreed with Commissioner Hafeman's perspective to wait and observe leasing patterns before implementing a pedestrian zone. They expressed support for deferring the issue.

MOTION: Commissioner Hafeman moved and Commissioner Mehlman seconded the motion to drop DPW 25-08, Evaluate Expanded Downtown Sunnyvale Pedestrian Mall. The motion failed with the following vote:

Yes 1 - Commissioner Hafeman

No 4 - Chair Beagle
Vice Chair Davé
Commissioner Bonne
Commissioner Wilson

Absent 1 - Commissioner Gollakota

Abstain 1 - Commissioner Mehlman

Commissioner Mehlman moved and Commissioner Davé seconded to defer DPW 25-04, Closing the Sunnyvale Avenue Caltrain Crossing to Vehicles

Commissioner Mehlman cited several reasons for deferring DPW 25-04 including: even with Council approval, the issue would involve a two-year study requiring input from Caltrain and VTA, whose service routes would be affected. Additionally, the potential grade undercrossing project at the same location could render the issue moot. She expressed hope that Caltrain's electrification and push for faster trains might accelerate related projects.

Chair Beagle expressed support for deferring DPW 25-04, noting that the project is far from shovel-ready and any immediate benefits from closing the crossing would not be realized by residents or Caltrain due to broader corridor issues. They also doubted the Council's willingness to prioritize the project, as it currently lacks tangible benefits for the average resident. While supportive of closing streets to cars in principle, they acknowledged that this proposal might not gain traction or public

support at this time.

MOTION: Commissioner Mehlman moved and Commissioner Davé seconded to defer DPW 25-04, Closing the Sunnyvale Avenue Caltrain Crossing to Vehicles.

The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes 6 - Chair Beagle
Vice Chair Davé
Commissioner Bonne
Commissioner Hafeman
Commissioner Mehlman
Commissioner Wilson

No 0

Absent 1 - Commissioner Gollakota

Commissioner Mehlman questioned city staff about progress on DPW 25-05. She noted that coordination with other cities on equipment and practices has been ongoing but criticized delays in decision making. She argued that acquiring specialized equipment, while a capital expenditure, is a necessary investment to maintain the City's limited Class IV bikeways and to expand bike lanes. Ms. Obeso responded, noting internal discussions on operational costs, such as labor and equipment logistics, are still in progress. She emphasized challenges like equipment capacity and labor requirements but confirmed a report will eventually be produced, though no timeline is set. Commissioner Mehlman dismissed concerns about operational costs as minimal given the current limited mileage of bikeways requiring such maintenance. She advocated ranking the study issue to signal its importance to the council, especially as a related budget proposal is forthcoming.

Commissioner Hafeman emphasized the importance of prioritizing DPW 25-05, citing public input from Sharlene Liu of Sunnyvale Safe Streets. Ms. Liu strongly recommended ranking the issue high, despite the existence of a budget proposal, as resolving it would enable the city to proceed with Class IV bikeway projects. Commissioner Hafeman recalled past instances where potential Class IV bikeway projects, including one involving Google, were halted due to the City's lack of maintenance capabilities. He stressed that without a solution for cleaning these lanes, the City is limited to implementing lower-tier bike lane options. He advocated ranking the issue first, acknowledging it would naturally be superseded by a budget allocation if approved.

MOTION: Commissioner Wilson moved to defer DPW 25-08 but failed due to lack of a second.

Chair Beagle called for a recess at 8:29 p.m. Chair Beagle reconvened the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Commissioner Mehlman ranked the Study Issues as follows:

1. DPW 25-05 - Sweeping Protected Bike Lanes
2. DPW 24-02 - Complete Streets Redesign of Fair Oaks Avenue
3. DPW 25-08 - Evaluate Expanded Downtown Sunnyvale Pedestrian Mall
4. DPW 25-01 - Fair Oaks Avenue Signalizations at Three Locations

Commissioner Wilson ranked the Study Issues as follows:

1. DPW 25-01 - Fair Oaks Avenue Signalizations at Three Locations
2. DPW 25-05 - Sweeping Protected Bike Lanes
3. DPW 24-02 - Complete Streets Redesign of Fair Oaks Avenue
4. DPW 25-08 - Evaluate Expanded Downtown Sunnyvale Pedestrian Mall

Commissioner Bonne ranked the Study Issues as follows:

1. DPW 25-01 - Fair Oaks Avenue Signalizations at Three Locations
2. DPW 25-08 - Evaluate Expanded Downtown Sunnyvale Pedestrian Mall
3. DPW 25-05 - Sweeping Protected Bike Lanes
4. DPW 24-02 - Complete Streets Redesign of Fair Oaks Avenue

Chair Beagle ranked the Study Issues as follows:

1. DPW 24-02 - Complete Streets Redesign of Fair Oaks Avenue
2. DPW 25-08 - Evaluate Expanded Downtown Sunnyvale Pedestrian Mall
3. DPW 25-05 - Sweeping Protected Bike Lanes
4. DPW 25-01 - Fair Oaks Avenue Signalizations at Three Locations

Commissioner Hafeman ranked the Study Issues as follows:

1. DPW 25-05 - Sweeping Protected Bike Lanes
2. DPW 25-01 - Fair Oaks Avenue Signalizations at Three Locations
3. DPW 24-02 - Complete Streets Redesign of Fair Oaks Avenue
4. DPW 25-08 - Evaluate Expanded Downtown Sunnyvale Pedestrian Mall

Vice Chair Davé ranked the Study Issues as follows:

1. DPW 25-05 - Sweeping Protected Bike Lanes

2. DPW 24-02 - Complete Streets Redesign of Fair Oaks Avenue
3. DPW 25-01 - Fair Oaks Avenue Signalizations at Three Locations
4. DPW 25-08 - Evaluate Expanded Downtown Sunnyvale Pedestrian Mall

Due to a tie between DPW 25-01 and DPW 24-02, a hand vote was conducted to decide the final ranking for #2 and #3. Simple majority hand vote resulted in DPW 25-01 to be ranked as #2 and DPW 24-02 to be ranked as #3.

MOTION: Chair Beagle moved and Commissioner Mehlman seconded the motion to accept the overall Study Issue Rankings with DPW 25-05 as #1, DPW 25-01 as #2, DPW 24-02 as #3 and DPW 25-08 as #4. To defer DPW 25-04. The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes 6 - Chair Beagle
Vice Chair Davé
Commissioner Bonne
Commissioner Hafeman
Commissioner Mehlman
Commissioner Wilson

No 0

Absent 1 - Commissioner Gollakota

- 3** [25-0205](#) Report and Discussion of Recent Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Meeting

Commissioner Mehlman, VTA BPAC Sunnyvale Representative, gave the meetings summary reports regarding the following topics:

January 15, 2025 meeting:

- The same chairperson and vice chairperson were reelected and commended for their excellent work.
- There is a need to review the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) draft plan report to verify if bicycle and pedestrian improvements are underfunded, delisted, or grouped under one heading, unlike highway improvements, which are listed individually. No URL was provided for reference.
- Vice Mayor Linda Sell is now the VTA Board representative for the Northeast District (Group 5). VTA adopted an equity and infrastructure project pledge to ensure opportunities for historically underutilized business entities in future projects,

requiring careful monitoring of its implementation.

- A press conference will be held on January 30 for the Branham Housing Project, which offers affordable homeownership on VTA ground lease land.
- Comments on the Active Transportation Plan draft will be presented as an informational item at a VTA meeting.
- The Bicycle Superhighway Implementation Plan, originally adopted in 2018, is being updated for 2025.
- A consultant team has been hired to develop a cohesive strategic plan and vision for the VTA as a workplace and employer.
- The Stevens Creek Boulevard Corridor Vision Study explores concepts like elevated busways, tram lines, and enhanced bus routes, along with preserving mid-century modern signage. Challenges along the corridor include variable lane widths, freeway crossings, high vehicular speeds, and the need to improve pedestrian and cyclist access to the significant retail and dining areas. The vision study focuses on concepts rather than specific improvement plans, and advocacy will be required to align cities for a project plan similar to the El Camino Real project, which benefits from Caltrans support.

Public Comment opened at 9:20 p.m.

No speakers.

Public Comment closed at 9:20 p.m.

STANDING ITEM: CONSIDERATION OF POTENTIAL STUDY ISSUES

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

-Commissioner Comments

-Staff Comments

Ms. Wong commented on the following:

- Volunteer opportunity for 2025 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count
- Board and Commission Recruitment for Board of Library Trustees
- A new traffic signal has been turned on and is operating at Kifer Road and Commercial Street.

INFORMATION ONLY REPORTS/ITEMS

[25-0206](#) BPAC 2025 Draft Annual Work Plan

[25-0207](#) Active Items List January 2025

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Beagle adjourned the meeting at 9:23 p.m.

Public Participation Options

In person public comment:

Online participation:

Online public comment:

Written public comment:

Public review of items:

Planning a presentation for a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission meeting?

Planning to provide materials to the Commission?

Language Access and Translation

Translation Link: <https://bit.ly/HCQX-0562>

Accessibility/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Notice

LEGAL NOTICES