



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item

25-0637

Agenda Date: 11/20/2025

REPORT TO BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMISSION

SUBJECT

Recommend to City Council to Approve the Concept Plans from the Sunnyvale Caltrain Station Pedestrian-Bicycle Access Study (DPW 20-02); and Recommend that the City Council Direct Staff to include the Concept Plans as an Unfunded Project(s) in the FY 2026/27 Budget Pending Future Identification of Funding; and Recommend to the City Council to Recommend to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors to Approve the Proposed Improvements for Corridor 1A in County's Right-of-Way

REPORT IN BRIEF

The study to Improve Bicycle and Pedestrian Access at Sunnyvale Caltrain Station was initiated through DPW 20-02 and grant-funded in 2022. It evaluated existing access needs and conducted extensive public outreach efforts to identify challenges and refine the proposed concept recommendations. The study proposes pedestrian and bicyclist improvements on six (6) corridors, and recommends wayfinding signage and locations for artwork. There are segments that are within County of Santa Clara's right-of-way, and areas that need future parking studies to identify the feasibility in removing on-street parking to install new pedestrian-bicyclist facilities. Proposed improvements would enhance access for Sunnyvale residents and regional transit users commuting to and from Sunnyvale.

BACKGROUND

At the Study Issues and Budget Proposals Workshop on February 27, 2020, City Council ranked the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) sponsored Study Issue DPW 20-02 (RTC No. 20-0120) Improve Bicycle and Pedestrian Access at Sunnyvale Caltrain Station as number 1. At the May 21, 2020 Budget Workshop, City Council directed staff to look for external grant funding opportunities to fund the study. In October 2021, staff applied for the Fiscal Year 2022/23 Sustainable Transportation Grant Program. In April 2022, Caltrans notified staff that the project was awarded the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant funds. The purpose of the Study was to evaluate existing pedestrian and bicycle access to the Sunnyvale Caltrain Station (Station) from north and south of the Station and to recommend improvements to signage, access paths, roadways, traffic control, bicyclist and pedestrian amenities, and locations for public art displays. The Station is one of two major transportation hubs for the City, providing access to and from the Downtown Specific Plan Area to the south, Peery Park Specific Plan (PPSP) area to the northwest, and residential areas to the north and southwest. The study limits are bounded by Pastoria Avenue, California Avenue, Sunnyvale Avenue, and Washington Avenue (Attachment 2, Figure ES-1). The goal is to evaluate the bicycle- and pedestrian- access needs for users and to identify potential improvements to encourage more active transportation modes and increase ridership and transit use around the Station.

The City Council is scheduled to consider this item on January 27, 2026.

EXISTING POLICY

General Plan, Chapter 3, Land Use and Transportation Element Policies:

- LT-1.7 Emphasize efforts to reduce regional vehicle miles traveled by supporting active modes of transportation including walking, biking, and public transit.
- 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.
 - The order of consideration of transportation users shall be:
 - (1) Pedestrians
 - (2) Non-automotive (bikes, three-wheeled bikes, scooters, etc.)
 - (3) Mass transit vehicles
 - (4) Delivery vehicles
 - (5) Single-occupant automobiles

Resolution No. 793-16 Complete Street 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 development and adoption of the Sunnyvale Caltrain Station Pedestrian-Bicycle Access Study is a planning and feasibility study that will guide future actions by the City Council and is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines Section 15262.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 states:

A project involving only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions which the agency, board, or commission has not approved, adopted, or funded does not require the preparation of an EIR or negative declaration but does require consideration of environmental factors. This section does not apply to the adoption of a plan that will have a legally binding effect on later activities.

The Sunnyvale Caltrain Station Pedestrian-Bicycle Access Study is exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 because the study is a plan that will serve as a guide for Council to take future actions and to approve future grant applications. The final study will serve as a guiding document related to the evaluation of future walking and bicycling network improvements and it will not have a legally binding effect on current activities (e.g., development project application review) or future Council actions.

Furthermore, implementation of the recommendations identified in the Sunnyvale Caltrain Station Pedestrian-Bicycle Access Study would be dependent on the availability of funding sources and would be subject to future environmental review on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, no environmental review is required in connection with the adoption of the Sunnyvale Caltrain Station Pedestrian-Bicycle Access Study.

DISCUSSION

25-0637

Agenda Date: 11/20/2025

This study evaluated existing conditions (e.g., sidewalk network, bike network, parking restrictions, collision data) and included extensive community engagement to solicit feedback to develop proposed improvements at various locations throughout the study area. These proposed improvements were brought to the community again and refined to become the current proposed improvements. See Attachment 2 for the detailed final report.

Existing Conditions:

Sunnyvale Caltrain Station

The Sunnyvale Caltrain Station is currently the 4th busiest station in the Caltrain system in Santa Clara County, behind Palo Alto, Mountain View, and San Jose Diridon. In August 2024, the ridership reached 1,200 daily weekday riders. The Station has four (4) access points leading to the platform; two (2) are on the north side of the platform on W. Hendy Avenue and under Mathilda Avenue overpass and two (2) are on the south side of the platform on W. Evelyn Avenue. The primary access point for vehicles is at the intersection of W. Evelyn Avenue & S. Frances Street, as it leads to the onsite surface parking lot and parking structure. A passenger loading zone exists within the surface parking lot on the south side of the platform. No passenger loading zone exists on the north side of the Station along W. Hendy Avenue, but passenger loading was observed during the site visit and walk audit.

Bus Stops and Transit Center

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) operates fixed bus services within the study area including lines 20, 53, 55, and Rapid 523 and connects the Station and Downtown Sunnyvale to regional destinations. There are a total of ten (10) bus stops within the study area. There are two (2) bus stops on Sunnyvale Avenue, two (2) bus stops on W. Evelyn Avenue, three (3) bus stops on Washington Avenue, and three (3) bus stops centralized in the Sunnyvale Transit Center on S. Frances Street. The bus stops at the Sunnyvale Transit Center have daily boardings that range from 26 to 200 people per day total.

Pedestrian-Related Improvement Needs

Most streets within the study area include sidewalks, but there are sidewalk gaps; one along the south side of W. Hendy Avenue between N. Taaffe Street and N. Sunnyvale Avenue and another along the north side of W. Evelyn Avenue between S. Frances Street and Mathilda Place. The sidewalk gap along the north side of Evelyn Avenue does not directly affect station access as there are access points at Frances Street and at Mathilda Place. It was noted that there is no designated pedestrian path from the Sunnyvale Business Park property through the City-owned parking lot under Mathilda Avenue to the Station. The public also noted that the sidewalks are in bad condition including protruding tree roots or other tripping hazards, uncontrolled crossings, narrow walkways for example areas with utility poles, lack of directional curb ramps, low visibility of pedestrians in the Sunnyvale Transit Center where bus activity is frequent, and lack of wayfinding signs to the Station.

Bicycle-Related Improvement Needs

During the public outreach and walk audits, the community noted corridors that had missing bicycle facilities, for example from the Sunnyvale Business Park property to the Station, lack of bicycle ramps, difficulties making left turns at intersections, lack of wayfinding signs, and requested for upgrades to existing bicycle facilities, such as preference for Class II buffered bicycle lanes or Class IV separated bikeways.

Collisions

In the most recent five-year period that data was available, from January 2019 to January 2024, a total of 131 collisions were reported within the entire study area, 110 of which were intersection collisions and 21 were mid-block collisions. Of the total collisions, eight (8) collisions involved pedestrians, and eight (8) collisions involved bicyclists in the study area. Most of these collisions occurred on major roadways in the study area, including Sunnyvale Avenue, Mathilda Avenue, California Avenue, and Evelyn Avenue. One (1) collision was a fatality involving a pedestrian at the intersection of Washington Avenue & Mathilda Avenue due to an unsafe vehicle turn at a red light. There were three (3) collisions that resulted in severe injuries, one of which involved a pedestrian crossing mid-block along Sunnyvale Avenue between Hendy Avenue and California Avenue, due to a pedestrian right-of-way violation.

Community Outreach:

Extensive outreach was conducted over two (2) rounds of activities. The first round identified needs and assessments, and the second round aimed to refine the proposed improvements. The project team met with focus groups at key milestones of the study to provide project updates and receive feedback as the study progressed. Focus groups include the Technical Advisory Committee with members from the Department of Public Safety and the Community Development Department, and the Stakeholder Advisory Committee with members from the Sunnyvale Downtown Association and bicycle advocacy groups, to name a few. Throughout the project, the team maintained a project webpage and email subscription list so that the community could receive progress updates and outreach notifications. Attachment 2 provides a summary of the community engagement activities.

Round 1 of outreach included a walk audit with the focus groups, two (2) pop-up events at the Station during the Caltrain's Electrification Service Launch and during the AM commute period, a hybrid community meeting, and an online community survey. The participants of the walk audit were given the opportunity to choose a user type such as a wheelchair user, walking with a baby stroller, pedestrian, or bicyclist. Participants were asked to document and classify their experiences to help identify challenges and needs as they walked through the study area. The online survey was open to the public for two weeks and consisted of a questionnaire and an interactive map where participants could pinpoint specific locations in the study area and comment about the access challenges they experience. A total of 199 responses were received to the online survey. The survey results showed that 52% of respondents desired grade-crossing safety improvements, 42% desired new or improved bicycle infrastructure, and 28% desired sidewalk connectivity improvements. The project was introduced to BPAC during a study session at the August 15, 2024 meeting (RTC No. 24-0883). Attachment 2, Appendix C summarizes the outreach efforts in Round 1.

Round 2 of the outreach process focused on receiving feedback on the proposed improvements, which included two (2) pop-up events at the Sunnyvale's Farmers' Market and during the PM commute period at the Station, a hybrid community meeting, and an online survey. The online survey was open to the public for over three weeks and received 94 responses. The survey was designed to collect comments about the proposed improvements. Comments showed a mix of support and concern for some proposed improvements, including support for Class IV separated bikeways and concern about on-street parking removal and traffic flow impacts at the proposed traffic circles. The survey results showed that 32% of respondents would walk or bike more if the improvements were implemented. This round also included presentations to the BPAC at the February 20, 2025 meeting

25-0637

Agenda Date: 11/20/2025

(RTC No. 25-0370) and City Council at the June 17, 2025 meeting (RTC No. 25-0018) for study sessions to receive feedback on the proposed concepts. The BPAC and City Council were generally supportive of the proposed improvements. Attachment 2, Appendix D summarizes the outreach efforts in Round 2.

Proposed Improvements:

Study Area Wide Improvements

Wayfinding signs are proposed throughout the study area to guide users towards destinations including the Station, bus connections, and major attractions like Downtown Sunnyvale. Signage should align with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Regional Mapping and Wayfinding Project for consistency across the Bay Area. VTA is also developing a Wayfinding Guideline that should also be considered with MTC's wayfinding guidelines for a consistent roadway user experience. See Attachment 2 for specific locations and descriptions of the proposed improvements.

Proposed Improvements within Sunnyvale Right-of-Way

The project team identified pedestrian and bicycle improvements on six (6) corridors in the study area. See Attachment 2 for specific locations and descriptions of the proposed improvements. See Attachment 3 for the conceptual design of each corridor.

Corridor 1: California Avenue

California Avenue is a key east-west residential collector north of the Station with a posted speed limit of 25mph. Class II bicycle lanes are recommended throughout the study area between N. Pastoria Avenue and N. Sunnyvale Avenue to provide a continuous bicycle facility along California Avenue. This is consistent with the recommendation in the City's 2020 *Active Transportation Plan* (ATP). There is existing on-street parking located along some segments of California Avenue. To provide continuous Class II bicycle lanes on California Avenue, on-street parking would need to be removed. A future parking study would be required to determine the feasibility of removing on-street parking along this corridor. Therefore, implementation of this corridor should be completed in two segments: Corridor 1A from Pastoria Avenue to Mathilda Avenue (parking study is not needed for the short segment of on-street parking along the non-residential frontage), and Corridor 1B from Mathilda Avenue to Sunnyvale Avenue (parking study is needed for the segments of on-street parking along residential frontages).

In addition, a segment of California Avenue (between Sobrante Way and San Anselmo Way) is within the County of Santa Clara's right-of-way. If the City Council approves any changes within this segment, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors requires a parking study and outreach process. For future consideration, the Sunnyvale Business Park property is working with the City on a planning application, and as part of that process, the City would like the developer to shift the curb along their California Avenue frontage to the south by 3 feet to widen the street. This will allow for a wider bicycle facility in the future.

Crossing improvements are also proposed between Mathilda Avenue and Sunnyvale Avenue, due to a lack of marked crosswalks and the perception of fast-moving vehicles. Therefore, a traffic circle with a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) is proposed at California Avenue & Frances Street. Attachment 3 illustrates the proposed improvements.

Corridor 2: W. Hendy Avenue and N. Frances Street

Hendy Avenue is a residential collector that runs east-west with a posted speed limit of 25mph and provides direct access to the north side of the Station. Since there are no sidewalks or bicycle facilities fronting the Station, a sidewalk-level Class I shared-use path is recommended on the south side of Hendy Avenue between N. Taaffe Street and N. Sunnyvale Avenue. This change will require removing all on-street parking spaces on the south side of Hendy Avenue due to right-of-way constraints. The installation of a shared-use path will likely trigger the need for stormwater infrastructure to meet the City's compliance requirements, which may include the addition of bioretention areas. The proposed improvements include a raised intersection with high-visibility crosswalks to slow vehicles and encourage them to yield to crossing pedestrians at the midblock Station access point, bulb-outs and high-visibility crosswalks to shorten the crossing distance and increase pedestrian visibility to vehicles, and two-stage turn bicycle boxes to facilitate bicyclists wanting to make a left turn to get onto the proposed shared-use path. Attachment 3 illustrates the proposed improvements.

N. Frances Street is a local street that runs north-south, which has a prima facie speed limit of 25 mph and time-limited on-street parking. A Class IIIB bicycle boulevard is proposed on N. Frances Street to connect the Station to planned bicycle facilities on California Avenue. Treatments on the bicycle boulevards could include bicycle shared right-of-way arrow (sharrows) legends, striped shoulder/parking lanes, bicycle signage, and improved lighting. Traffic circles with high-visibility crosswalks are also proposed to slow vehicles and make the intersection more comfortable for bicyclists and pedestrians. Attachment 3 illustrates the proposed improvements.

Corridor 3: S. Frances Street

S. Frances Street is a local street that runs north-south, which has a prima facie speed limit of 25mph and serves the Sunnyvale Transit Center. A Class IIIB bicycle boulevard is recommended on S. Frances Street between W. Evelyn Avenue and W. Washington Avenue to provide a north-south bicycle facility that connects Downtown Sunnyvale to the Station access point. Curb extensions and RRFB are proposed at the mid-block crossing to improve pedestrian visibility in the highly active transit area. Attachment 3 illustrates the proposed improvements.

Corridor 4: W. Evelyn Avenue

Evelyn Avenue is a major east-west corridor that runs parallel to the Caltrain tracks and serves as the main entry into the Station. Evelyn Avenue is a Class II Arterial with a posted speed limit of 30mph between Charles Street and Sunnyvale Avenue. There are currently Class II bicycle lanes on both sides of the street within the study limits, with buffered bicycle lanes only on the south side between Mathilda Place and S. Frances Street. The study proposes upgrading the Class II bicycle lanes between Mathilda Place and Sunnyvale Avenue to Class IV separated bikeways by reducing vehicle lane widths. This proposed improvement differs from the ATP, which calls for Class IIB buffered bicycle lanes for this segment, but the community outreach noted the need for more comfortable bicycle facilities. The project will also conform to the City's Evelyn Multi-use Trail project currently in final design that will provide a Class I shared-use path from Mathilda Place west to Bernardo Avenue. Other proposed improvements include a pedestrian scramble at W. Evelyn Avenue & S. Frances Street, directional curb ramps, bus stop amenities, raised crosswalk and median refuge island at Evelyn Avenue & S. Murphy Avenue while maintaining emergency vehicle access into the pedestrian mall, and improved lighting under the Mathilda Avenue overpass. Attachment 3 illustrates the

proposed improvements.

Corridor 5: N Mathilda Avenue including City Parking Lot Underneath the Mathilda Avenue Overpass

Mathilda Avenue is a Class I Arterial that runs north-south with a posted speed limit of 45mph between Central Expressway and Washington Avenue. There is currently an unpaved path connecting the City-owned parking lot under N. Mathilda Avenue to the northwest access point to the Station. The study proposes paving the path with a non-slip, all-weather material to improve the comfort of pedestrians and bicyclists. The study also recommends adding a marked path across the parking lot to connect the Sunnyvale Business Park property to the existing sidewalks on Angel Avenue. The Sunnyvale Business Park property is within the PPSP area. The City is working on the PPSP Amendment, which may consider a shared-use path through the existing private parking lot to connect the City parking lot and station area to the existing sidewalk on Mathilda Avenue in front of Fire Station #1. The installation of a shared-use path would likely trigger the need for stormwater infrastructure to meet the City's compliance requirements, which may include adding bioretention areas. Other proposed improvements include bicycle and pedestrian curb ramps, high-visibility crosswalks, pedestrian-scale lighting, wayfinding signage, and murals or other public artwork to make the space more inviting and improve the perception of safety in the area. Attachment 3 illustrates the proposed improvements.

Corridor 6: Washington Avenue and S. Pastoria Avenue

Washington Avenue is a residential collector that runs east-west with a posted speed limit of 25mph. The study recommends extending the existing Class III bicycle route west from Mathilda Avenue to S. Pastoria Avenue. The study also recommends a Class III bicycle route along S. Pastoria from W. Evelyn Avenue to Washington Avenue, which is consistent with the ATP. Pastoria Avenue is a residential collector that runs north-south with a posted speed limit of 25mph. The concurrent City project, Evelyn Multi-use Trail has plans for a high-visibility crosswalk and RRFB crossing Evelyn Avenue at S. Pastoria Avenue. Attachment 3 illustrates the proposed improvements.

Proposed Improvements within Caltrain right-of-way

During the public outreach activities, the community shared their challenges and desire for amenities within the Caltrain right-of-way. Since circulation and access within the Station is outside of City's jurisdiction, the improvements and recommendations will be provided to Caltrain for consideration, but the City cannot implement them since they are on Caltrain property. Notable suggestions include closing the sidewalk gap between S. Frances Street and Mathilda Place, providing bulb-outs and median refuge islands at crossings within the parking lot on Evelyn Avenue, and improving visibility and warning devices for pedestrians at the parking structure entrance. Improvements under the Mathilda Avenue overpass focused on making the space more inviting for users, including improved lighting, wayfinding, and the installation of artworks. Platform amenities requested include more shading, seating, pedestrian-scale lighting, Clipper validators, and suicide-prevention signage. Station concourse amenities requested include additional bicycle parking, public restrooms, a coffee shop, and/or a retail re-use of the old ticket counter, and free Wi-Fi. Attachment 3 illustrates the proposed improvements.

Cost Estimates

The cost estimate for each corridor is presented below:

25-0637

Agenda Date: 11/20/2025

Corridor	Street Name	Total Cost*
1A	California Avenue (Pastoria Ave. to Mathilda Ave.)	\$ 1,000,000
1B	California Avenue (Mathilda Ave. to Sunnyvale Ave.)	\$ 2,500,000
2	W. Hendy Avenue and N. Frances Street	\$ 3,500,000
3	S. Frances Street	\$ 1,000,000
4	W. Evelyn Avenue	\$ 3,500,000
5	N. Mathilda Avenue including City Parking Lot Underneath the Mathilda Avenue Overpass	\$ 2,000,000
6	Washington Avenue and S. Pastoria Avenue	\$100,000
Grand Total		\$13,600,000

* Cost estimates are based on conceptual designs and include planning studies, environmental clearance, final design, and construction.

FISCAL IMPACT

The total project cost for Alternative 1 is approximately \$13,600,000. The total project cost for Alternative 2 will vary depending on the corridors selected by Council. There is currently no funding for further design or construction. After the selection of the alternative(s), staff will recommend an unfunded Capital Improvement Project(s) (CIP) for City Council consideration through the budget process. Staff will include this project (s) for consideration when seeking future grants to help provide funding for implementation including appropriate environmental review of projects. Also, staff will consider other project opportunities to implement the design and construction of the project(s), such as a slurry seal or paving project.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the meeting agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board at City Hall. In addition, the agenda and this report are available at the City Hall reception desk located on the first floor of City Hall at 456 W. Olive Avenue (during normal business hours), and on the City's website.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Recommend to City Council to approve the concept plans from the Sunnyvale Caltrain Station Pedestrian-Bicycle Access Study (DPW 20-02); and recommend that the City Council direct staff to include the concept plans as an unfunded project(s) in the FY 2026/27 Budget pending future identification of funding; and recommend to City Council to Recommend to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors to approve the proposed improvements for Corridor 1A in County's right-of-way.
2. Recommend to City Council to approve the concept plans from the Sunnyvale Caltrain Station Pedestrian-Bicycle Access Study (DPW 20-02) for select corridors; and recommend that the City Council direct staff to include the concept plans as an unfunded project(s) in the FY 2026/27 Budget pending future identification of funding; and recommend to City Council to Recommend to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors to approve the proposed improvements for Corridor 1A in County's right-of-way.
3. Recommend to City Council to maintain the existing conditions.

25-0637

Agenda Date: 11/20/2025

RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1: Recommend to City Council to approve the concept plans from the Sunnyvale Caltrain Station Pedestrian-Bicycle Access Study (DPW 20-02); and recommend that the City Council direct staff to include the concept plans as an unfunded project(s) in the FY 2026/27 Budget pending future identification of funding; and recommend to City Council to Recommend to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors to approve the proposed improvements for Corridor 1A in County’s right-of-way.

Staff recommends approving Alternative 1 to approve the concept plans for bicycle and pedestrian improvements within the study area. These improvements will enhance mobility options for Sunnyvale residents and regional transit users commuting to and from Sunnyvale. The enhancements will close pedestrian and bicycle network gaps and will improve crossing experience for all ages and abilities.

LEVINE ACT

The Levine Act (Gov. Code Section 84308) prohibits city officials from participating in certain decisions regarding licenses, permits, and other entitlements for use if the official has received a campaign contribution of more than \$500 from a party, participant, or agent of a party or participant in the previous 12 months. The Levine Act is intended to prevent financial influence on decisions that affect specific, identifiable persons or participants. For more information see the Fair Political Practices Commission website: www.fppc.ca.gov/learn/pay-to-play-limits-and-prohibitions.html

An “X” in the checklist below indicates that the action being considered falls under a Levine Act category or exemption:

SUBJECT TO THE LEVINE ACT

- Land development entitlements
- Other permit, license, or entitlement for use
- Contract or franchise

EXEMPT FROM THE LEVINE ACT

- Competitively bid contract*
- Labor or personal employment contract
- Contract under \$50,000 or non-fiscal
- Contract between public agencies
- General policy and legislative actions

* "Competitively bid" means a contract that must be awarded to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

Prepared by: Angela Wong, Transportation Engineer
Reviewed by: Angela Obeso, Transportation and Traffic Manager
Reviewed by: Chip Taylor, Director, Public Works
Reviewed by: Sarah Johnson-Rios, Assistant City Manager
Approved by: Tim Kirby, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Reserved for Report to Council
2. Draft Final Report with Appendices

25-0637

Agenda Date: 11/20/2025

3. Draft Conceptual Figures of the Corridors