



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item

20-0338

Agenda Date: 7/27/2020

REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

SUBJECT

Forward a Recommendation to the City Council to Accept the Downtown Parking Study Recommendations as policies and direct staff to return with a fully developed implementation plan for near-term strategies within a year and Find that the Action is Exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 (Study Issue).

REPORT IN BRIEF

This Study Issue was ranked a high priority in 2017 with an overall goal to support development of uses that contribute to the downtown vision and to assure that there is a good balance between adequate parking and opportunities to redevelop. Many of the City's adopted policies in the Land Use and Transportation Element of the General Plan and in the adopted Downtown Specific Plan promote less parking and more support for pedestrians, bicycles and other alternatives to the automobile. The Study found that there are inconsistencies between documents and that current practice is not clearly stated in the policy documents. The Study found that there is currently, and will in the foreseeable future be, an overall surplus of parking. The Study recommended a series of near-term, mid-term and long-term actions to improve management of the parking district and support a successful and vibrant Downtown.

Companion actions related to the Downtown will be considered after this Study including an update to the Downtown Specific Plan, which incorporates policies consistent with the recommendations of this Parking Study.

Staff recommends accepting the Downtown Parking Study recommendations (Attachment 5) and direct staff to return with a fully developed plan to implement near-term strategies.

BACKGROUND

On September 1, 1964, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 6643, which authorized the City of Sunnyvale to levy an ad-valorem assessment on all taxable properties within the boundaries of the Sunnyvale Downtown Parking Maintenance District (which was established in the 1950s). This ad-valorem assessment was used to pay for the operation and maintenance of existing public parking facilities and the debt service payments associated with the acquisition and construction of various public-parking facilities within the boundaries of the District. Over the years new parking facilities have been provided and the basis for funding the District has changed from an ad-valorem tax to a property benefit fee that pays for maintenance of the parking lots. The District is now called the Sunnyvale Downtown Parking Maintenance Assessment District (PMAD).

Unlike all other commercial areas of the City, many Downtown merchants (and other users) rely on shared publicly accessible parking. City-owned public parking in the Downtown is managed by the City and funded by payments from property owners/businesses located within the boundaries of the

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PMAD. The fee is based on the benefit a property receives from the public parking (translated into parking deficit) and those fees get reflected in the rents and then on the costs of services and products. This cost to businesses in the Downtown is similar to a business location in a shopping center where, through the rent or other provisions, a merchant pays the cost of maintaining the property, including on-site parking. The business will in turn need to determine whether to adjust their prices to pay the property owner for the use of the parking. In some downtown areas, public parking is provided by requiring direct payment from a patron (meters, lot fees), often based on the amount of time in a parking space and on the location of the space. In any of these scenarios, the customer is paying for parking.

In addition to on-street parking, other publicly available parking in the Downtown includes the parking under Plaza del Sol (maintained by the owners of the adjacent office buildings) and other garages and surface spaces maintained by STC Venture/CityLine.

Shared parking will typically result in fewer parking spaces in a mixed-use environment, such as a downtown. If a site has only one use, then parking needs to be provided for the peak demand of that one use; however, as different uses may have different peak demand, the parking can be shared, which reduces the total parking needed. By way of example, if three businesses each need 100 parking spaces to satisfy their peak parking needs, but the peak parking demands are at different times, the total parking needed will be less than 300 spaces. How much parking should be provided is typically determined based on an hour by hour calculation of parking needs adding up the demand for all uses for each hour.

The Study Issue on Downtown Development Policies for Parking was sponsored in 2010 by the Planning Commission but was deferred several years by the City Council until activity on Block 18 of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) Area resumed. Parking requirements were identified as a potential impediment to Downtown development particularly for the redevelopment of smaller lots. The PMAD has limited capacity and there have been no plans for expansion under current policies.

The Study Issue was identified as a priority in 2017 with the change in ownership of the former Sunnyvale Town Center property (see Study Issue paper, Attachment 2). Work on this Parking Study has been done in parallel with the update to the Downtown Specific Plan. In 2018, the City engaged Walker Consultants (Walker) to conduct a comprehensive Downtown Parking Capacity and Management Study (Attachment 3).

The City Council is scheduled to consider this item on August 11, 2020 in conjunction with the Downtown Specific Plan Amendment (including the Environmental Impact Report prepared for the project and zoning code revisions) and related Development Agreements (STC Venture/CityLine and Kasik).

EXISTING POLICY

The following policies from the General Plan and the Downtown Specific Plan and are applicable to redevelopment and parking in the downtown.

Community Vision of the General Plan

GOAL IX: Dynamic Downtown: To create and support a strong and attractive traditional downtown which serves as the community's central marketplace, common gathering place and symbolic center.

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The vitality and attractiveness of Sunnyvale are not reflected in its Downtown today. Vacant storefronts and a shuttered mall suggest a distressed community, lacking in positive identity. It is clear that both the desire of the public and the demand of the market are to recreate a traditional downtown of shops, restaurants, offices and residences, as a common gathering place, central marketplace and symbolic center for the City of Sunnyvale.

GOAL X: Robust Economy: To retain, attract and support strong and innovative businesses, which provide quality jobs for the City's workforce, tax revenue to support public services, and a positive reputation for Sunnyvale as a center of creativity and productivity.

Land Use and Transportation Element of the General Plan

GOAL LT-3 AN EFFECTIVE MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM - Offer the community a variety of transportation modes for local travel that are also integrated with the regional transportation system and land use pattern. Favor accommodation of alternative modes to the automobile as a means to enhance efficient transit use, bicycling, and walking and corresponding benefits to the environment, person throughput, and qualitative improvements to the transportation system environment.

Effective Integration of Transportation and Land Use Planning

- **Policy LT-3.1** Use Land Use Planning, including Mixed and Higher Intensity Uses, to Support Alternatives to the Single-Occupant Automobile such as Walking and Bicycling and to Attract and Support High Investment Transit such as Light Rail, Buses, and Commuter Rail.
 - **LT-3.1b** Establish reduced parking requirements for transit, corridor, and village mixed-use developments and for developments with comprehensive TDM programs that are consistent with the City's established goals.

A Well-Designed and Well-operated Transportation Network

- **Policy LT- 3.9** As parking is the temporary storage of transportation vehicles, do not consider parking a transport use of public streets.
- **Policy LT-3.10** Prioritize street space allocated for transportation uses over parking when determining the future use of street space.
- **Policy LT-3.13** Move progressively toward eliminating direct and hidden subsidies of motor vehicle parking and driving, making the true costs of parking and driving visible to motorists.
 - **LT-3.13a** Pursue opportunities for user fees such as paid parking, paid parking permits at workplaces, and paid parking places for on-street parking in transit-rich residential neighborhoods and promote corporate parking cash-out programs.
 - **LT-3.13b** Manage City-provided public parking through pricing and location strategies in order to match supply and demand, shift the market costs to users of vehicle parking, maintain mobility and access to Sunnyvale businesses, and reduce vehicle trips.
 - **LT-3.13c** Advocate at the regional, state, and federal levels for actions that increase the visibility of the true costs of parking and driving to motorists and improve the cost return attributable to driving.
- **Policy LT-3.16** Support neighborhood traffic calming and parking policies that protect internal residential areas from citywide and regional traffic, consistent with engineering criteria, operating parameters and residential preferences.

Downtown Specific Plan (2013)

DSP Goal C Promote a balanced street system that serves all users well regardless of their mode of

travel

- **DSP Policy C.4.** Encourage shared parking in the downtown to minimize the amount of land devoted for parking areas and manage parking so it does not dominate mode choice decisions or the built environment.
- **DSP Policy C.6.** Provide adequate access to parking in the downtown.

DSP Goal D Protect and Enhance existing neighborhoods

- **DSP Policy D.2.** Provide gateway markers at the entrances to lower-density residential neighborhoods in order to protect neighborhoods from cut-through traffic and commercial parking. Gateways should convey “resident-only” access.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered is statutorily exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is a feasibility or planning study for possible future actions that have not yet been adopted or approved (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262). An Environmental Impact Report has been prepared for the adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan and six proposed development projects, which the Parking Study is intended to support (SCH #2018052020). Other future development in the Downtown will be required to complete appropriate environmental review.

DISCUSSION

Overview

This Study examined the current parking usage in the Downtown and estimated the demand for parking in the future based on the updated Downtown Specific Plan development potential. The parking surveys (how many vehicles were parked) was done at a time when there were unoccupied storefronts along Washington Avenue and McKinley Avenue (within the CityLine development) and there was construction for new retail/entertainment uses underway on McKinley Avenue at Sunnyvale Avenue (grocery/theater building). Parking utilization included contractors’ employees and therefore may have slightly overstated the utilization. Analysis of the future parking demands within the Parking District factored in new development proposals and future occupancy of the retail/entertainment uses in CityLine.

The Study focuses on properties within the PMAD, however it is recognized that supply of parking within the district will be influenced by or may have an effect on nearby residential areas and the Caltrain station. The Study scope does not include specific recommendations for managing parking in other neighborhoods. The City’s Neighborhood Traffic Calming program is the best avenue for addressing neighborhood spillover parking issues. The Caltrain parking garage and surface parking spaces further west on Evelyn, and spaces underneath Mathilda Avenue (north of the railroad) are the only pay for parking spaces in the downtown and are not part of this Study.

Study Goals

Sunnyvale’s walkable, transit accessible downtown supports many of the goals and policies of the existing DSP and of the Land Use and Transportation Element of the General Plan (LUTE), by requiring robust bike and pedestrian infrastructure and locating higher intensity uses near transit. However, a comprehensive analysis of the Zoning Code, DSP, and the downtown PMAD identified inconsistencies between land use and mobility goals and downtown parking requirements and policies.

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The Study was prioritized by the Council to ensure the City's parking policies allow the downtown area to develop to its full potential while ensuring that businesses have a supportive parking environment. A review of existing policies and regulations was a significant component of the study. Completion of the City of Sunnyvale Downtown Parking Capacity and Management Study (Walker Consultants, 2020) examines the potential conflict between the DSP and PMAD goals and policies and the parking requirements in the Zoning Code.

The Study includes:

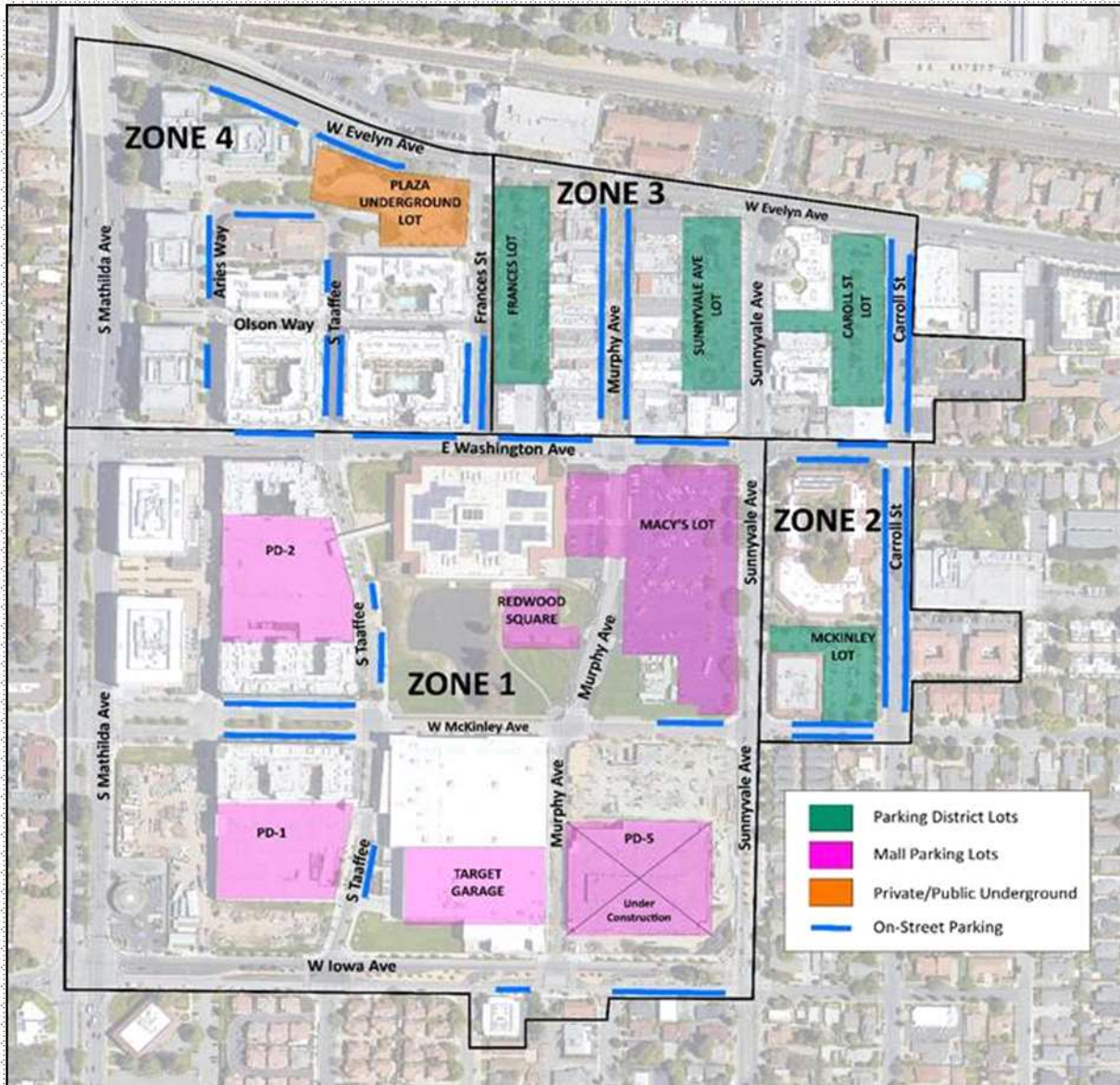
- A review of the capacity of the PMAD in relation to the existing uses and properties that are within the parking district;
- Examination of the City's downtown development policies to identify and explore alternative solutions for meeting future downtown parking needs, including alternative ways to achieve effective off-site parking downtown (e.g., shared and joint-use parking, use of smart technology to manage public parking, etc.);
- Assessment of the potential for providing additional parking supply in the PMAD, including a current needs assessment, exploration of financing options, and consideration of legal issues;
- Review of information and data on the effect of recent Downtown development on parking demand and parking patterns within the DSP;
- Comparison of Sunnyvale's downtown parking management and requirements with other Silicon Valley communities; and,
- A comprehensive list of recommendations.

The analysis provides an understanding of the effect of any misalignment between policies and parking regulations on Sunnyvale's growth, development, and the ability of the City to achieve the goals outlined in the DSP. This study also examines parking utilization within the PMAD to address any imbalance.

Study Area

The Study Area includes downtown Sunnyvale's PMAD. The PMAD is bounded by Evelyn Avenue to the north, Iowa Avenue to the south, Sunnyvale and Carroll Avenues to the east, and Mathilda Avenue to the west. There are approximately 3,200 on and off-street public parking spaces in the study area. See Figure 1 for the PMAD study area and parking zones.

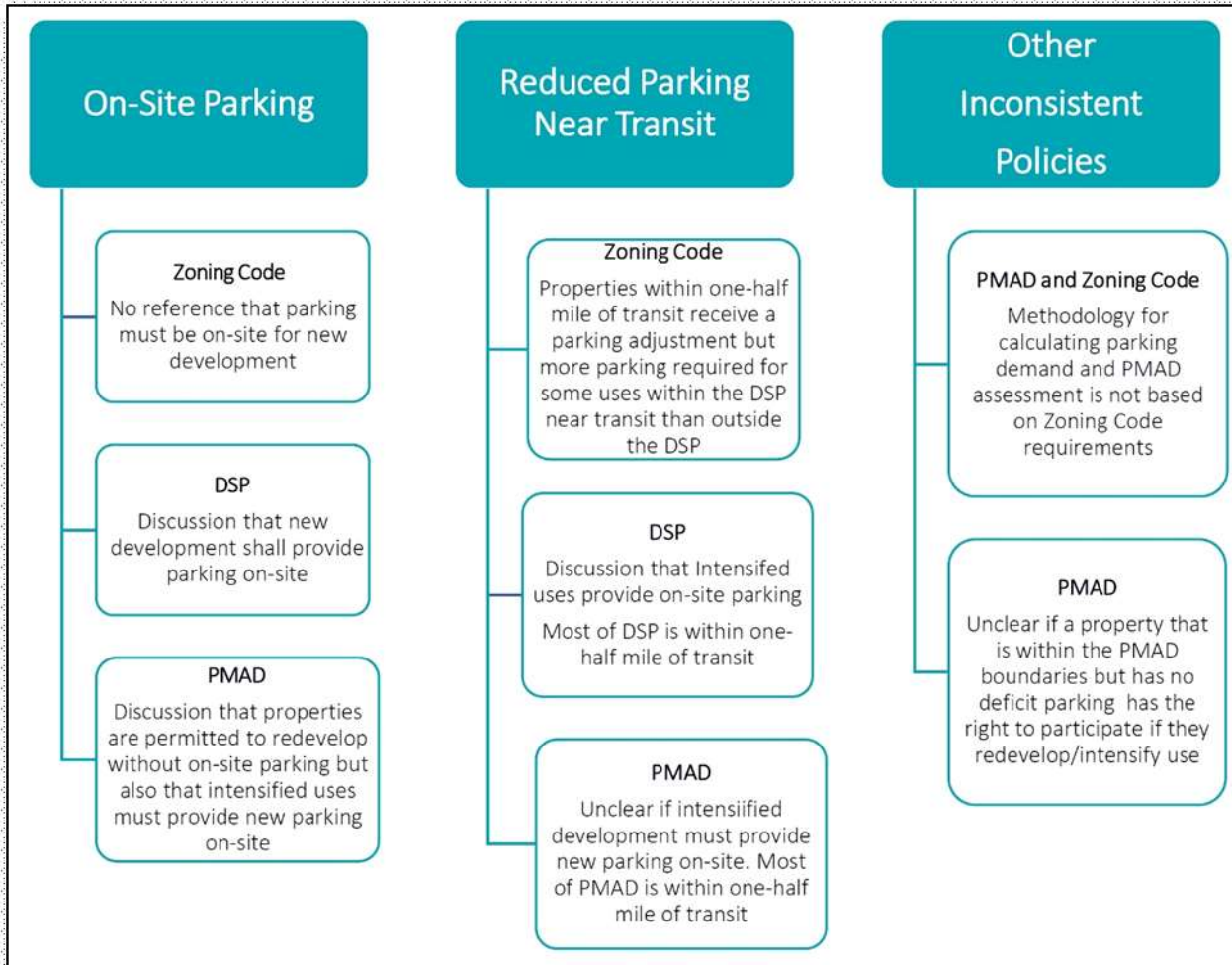
Figure 1 - PMAD Study Area and Parking Zones



Current Policies

The City's Zoning Code, DSP, and PMAD all influence parking supply and management in the downtown. Each of these regulatory documents reference the concept of reducing the amount of land devoted to parking to reduce reliance on automobiles in their statement or purpose. However, over time, some of these regulations have become out of sync and at cross purposes with each other. Figure 2 illustrates the misalignment between the three major downtown parking regulations.

Figure 2 - Parking Misalignment Diagram



• **Current Downtown Specific Plan and Zoning Code**

The DSP and its own goals and policies are in conflict. The DSP (2004) states that, “New development in the Specific Plan area shall provide parking on-site.” This conflicts with the goals of the DSP to enhance the pedestrian experience and use shared parking to reduce the amount of land dedicated to parking. Specifically, the DSP states the City should, “Encourage shared parking in the downtown to minimize the amount of land devoted for parking areas and manage parking so it does not dominate mode choice decisions or the built environment.” In addition, the Zoning Code and DSP are out of alliance as the Zoning Code requires a higher level of parking (for some uses) in the DSP area which is closest to transit. This imbalance occurred when citywide parking requirements were updated and no adjustments were made to the DSP zoning district.

There is also a provision in with other sections of the Zoning Code that allow for a parking reduction in areas within one-half mile of transit, which covers most of the DSP and PMAD areas; however, there is not a clear reference in the DSP provisions in Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 19.28.

Existing System
Parking Management Assessment District

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The PMAD is a major benefit to the downtown as it overall reduces the amount of parking that is needed. Requiring more parking spaces than people will use, especially in downtowns near transit, drives up construction costs, which are passed on to owners, renters, and consumers. An oversupply of parking also consumes valuable real estate, decreasing the amount of land dedicated to purposes that serves the community and could potentially generate revenue. Further, providing an abundance of parking has been found to incentivize people to drive instead of riding transit, walking, and biking, which increases traffic congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, and minimizes investments in pedestrian centered infrastructure.

The PMAD provides this benefit as it supplies, operates, and maintains shared public parking for downtown properties that do not have sufficient on-site space to provide parking. Primarily, the District provides parking for Blocks 1a, 2, 3, 18 and several areas in Block 4 and Block 7 (see Attachment 6 for Map of DSP Blocks). All other downtown blocks are required to provide their own parking.

Within the PMAD, property owners pay an assessment based their parking deficit. This fee is based on a methodology that calculates a difference between the amount of parking they provide on-site compared to the parking that would be required (under the zoning parking requirements in place at the time the assessment district was established). Concerns with how the PMAD assessment is determined include:

- The methodology for calculating parking demand and PMAD assessment is not based on the current Zoning Code requirements but based on standard parking demand ratios at the time of the parking assessment district's inception. This is the methodology that was agreed on by the members of the district and as the parking benefit calculation is used merely as a methodology for determining benefit (and assessment) the impact to participating property owners is minimal. Some adjustment in benefits may result if the methodology were revised. The concern lies primarily that the total "demand" for all the uses may give an impression that there is insufficient parking.
- There are some inconsistencies in how PMAD addresses increased parking demand:
 - Previously it has been understood that any intensification of properties within the PMAD must provide the additional required parking on-site.
 - An analysis of past assessments shows that as properties intensified and did not provide additional parking, they were assessed for the increase in parking demand.
 - The Engineer's Report for the PMAD both reflects the DSP's requirement for new development to provide on-site parking and the PMAD resolution to annually assess a property's "parking deficit".

Analysis of the PMAD methodology for calculating parking demand compared to the actual current utilization of public parking observed in the PMAD finds the PMAD currently has about 50% excess off-street parking capacity.

Walker's Study examined the existing parking supply and demand within the downtown PMAD. Walker collected parking inventory data in the Study Area, including on-street spaces, public off-street spaces, and publicly accessible privately-owned off-street spaces within the PMAD. An inventory of the spaces was collected on January 29, 30, and 31, 2019.

Overall, the PMAD hosts a total supply of 3,199± publicly available spaces which includes 259± on-

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street spaces and 2,940± publicly available off-street spaces. A summary of the inventory is provided in the Parking Study (Attachment 3, page 25 of 166).

Enforcement

Most parking spaces within the PMAD are time-restricted with hourly limits. In general, the large surface lots and parking garages allow 3 or 4-hour time limits, while on-street spaces vary from one hour (Murphy Avenue) to three hours elsewhere in the downtown. Parking is unrestricted in most areas from 6 p.m. until 2:30 a.m., as well as on City designated holidays and Sundays. In general, while time-restrictions are somewhat consistent across the PMAD, the “no parking” times vary considerably. Time restrictions are currently enforced by signage and Public Safety Officers or part-time vehicle abatement officers, using hand-written tickets. At the time of the study, enforcement was inconsistent.

Demand

At the time of this study, Downtown Sunnyvale experienced higher parking demand on weekdays than on weekends. Overall on weekdays, both on-street and off-street spaces experienced lower utilization in the morning with the highest demand occurring during the lunch and dinner times. For all parking (on and off-street spaces) weekday peak utilization was 52% with 1,545 spaces available and the weekend peak utilization was at 49% with 1,636 spaces available. Some of the unfilled parking was due to vacant and unbuilt retail spaces in CityLine and low patronage at Macy’s (which closed shortly after the survey). Knowing about the unfilled tenant spaces, a primary motivation of the utilization survey was to have a basis to understand if there is a current parking supply issue.

Generally, parking systems strive for an 85% utilization goal so that land dedicated to parking is adequately used and there are a few open spaces per block to prevent drivers from circling to find a space.

The findings of the Study show that on-street parking is more utilized than off-street parking. On weekdays, on-street parking was between 63% and 78% utilized, depending on the time of day. In comparison, off-street parking had lower utilization with an occupancy rate ranging from 34% to 48% throughout the day. Utilization of off-street parking resources were also out of balance, with parking garages greatly underutilized and surface lots heavily utilized. For example, during the same time period, parking counts found that surface lots were 85% utilized while Parking Garage PD-1 (Pear Garage, located west of Target) was only 7% utilized and Parking Garage PD-2 (Orange Garage, located west of the former Macy’s building) was 33% utilized overall, with the first level 96% utilized and Level 2-4 relatively empty with 560 open spaces. This could indicate that off-street parking found in garages and in areas with poor visibility may not be utilized due to insufficient wayfinding.

Turnover

In order to understand how often parked cars leave a space or turnover, a license plate inventory (LPI) was collected as part of the Parking Study. An LPI assists in understanding how long a vehicle is parked in a space, if there are areas in which low turnover occurs, and/or if cars are parked longer than the hourly time limits posted.

Generally, findings show a high turnover rate within the Study Area. Most vehicles, 80%, were only parked for one count (2-hour increment). While the turnover is high in the Study Area, the Study also needed to determine which areas experienced the most vehicles staying for extended periods of times. A turnover analysis was conducted for each street within the Study Area.

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The Study found that in general, within the core of downtown, near Murphy and Washington Avenues, there was a frequent turnover of spaces. However, Washington Avenue between Mathilda Avenue and Sunnyvale Avenue, had the most vehicles parked for longer periods of time, likely exceeding the street's 3-hour time limit. This situation may reflect employees of downtown businesses parking on the street and remaining there for the entirety of their work shift.

In the non-core areas, low turnover was most common, especially on Carroll Street, McKinley Avenue, and Washington Avenue, areas with no hourly restrictions. This area borders residential areas and residential permit tags were observed in several cars parked on these streets (though their permits do not extend to these specific streets). It is probable that vehicles parked in these areas for long periods of time are neighborhood residents or possibly Caltrain riders looking for unrestricted (and no-fee) parking.

Other Factors

Currently, downtown employees and residents are permitted to park long-term in the portions of the Plaza del Sol Parking Garage and the McKinley and Carroll surface lots, with a valid parking permit issued by the City. There are 461 spaces available downtown for permit holders. The no-cost parking permits are issued to businesses in the PMAD based on the number of employees declared on their business license application. The Carroll Street Inn on Carroll and the Aloft Hotel on Sunnyvale Avenue also have parking passes for resident and guest use. The City issued 1,476 downtown parking permits in 2019. Permit parking is not time restricted.

Major findings regarding current situation:

- 1,773 private parking spaces are located within the PMAD (these are not available to the general public and are reserved for residential tenants or employees of businesses).
- The private parking "deficit" of the PMAD is 2,738 spaces, which is supplied through the publicly available spaces. However, in reality, this deficit is lower due to efficiencies of shared parking.
- Approximately one-half of the total publicly available spaces were available (unoccupied) during the peak parking demand in downtown, indicating there is currently excess parking capacity in the PMAD.
 - The PMAD currently provides 3,199± that are available to the public.
 - Results of the data collection show the area utilizes 1,654± of the publicly available spaces at the peak demand, a utilization rate of 52%.
 - Conversely, this equates to approximately 1,500 parking spaces that sit empty in the downtown during the peak hour of a busy weekday. This availability will change as new tenants move into CityLine.
- If the existing uses had been required to build parking according to the strict DSP and Zoning Code requirements, there would need to be an additional 2,855 private parking spaces in downtown Sunnyvale.
- There is adequate public parking capacity for existing uses and building occupancies in the PMAD due to shared use of spaces (during different peak demands for different uses).

Parking Model and Future Development

In order to determine a recommended parking supply for the projected future development in downtown (which is a mix of office, retail, residential, and entertainment land uses), Walker used shared parking methodologies. Walker's model analyzed the future parking demand for the

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Downtown, including CityLine (STC Venture) and 100 Altair (Kasik/Minkoff). Note that the Giurland property (Murphy Square) is a participant in the Downtown Specific Plan update; however, this site is not in the PMAD and was therefore not included in the Parking Study.

It is anticipated that the future downtown public parking supply will accommodate peak parking demand between 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. This is based on the following methodology:

- **2,954** spaces - Combined future public parking **demand**:
 - 1,654 spaces - Existing downtown public parking demand.
 - 1,300 spaces - Needed public supply for future development (CityLine and 100 Altair).
- **3,738** spaces - Future public parking **supply** (anticipates the removal of surface spaces and the construction of new publicly accessible spaces in structures; does not include spaces that may be publicly available only evenings and weekends).
- This results in an additional surplus of 784 public parking spaces to accommodate potential future demand with a future downtown public parking utilization during peak at 79%, well under the optimal 85% usage rate.

Stakeholder Outreach

A community workshop was held on May 13, 2019. The goal was to introduce the Study to the community, initiate conversations around the topic of parking and best practices, learn about community parking priorities, and gather input to develop the strategic recommendations included in this plan. Attendees were mainly residents and business owners. The workshop included a parking best practices station with trivia, an educational station on current parking conditions in downtown Sunnyvale, and activities where attendees could provide feedback on their parking preferences, issues, and challenges.

- Generally, attendees prefer to park in areas near Murphy Avenue.
- Some attendees expressed preference for the PD-2 Garage (next to Macy's).
- Attendees said they generally avoid parking in the surface lots including the McKinley and Frances Lots as well as the PD-1 Garage (next to Target).
- Generally, attendees expressed a willingness to walk from the outer edge of downtown to Murphy Avenue, which is about a five-minute walk.

In addition, a parking management survey was distributed to attendees at the community workshop. The survey included questions regarding travel modes, choices, and parking preferences.

The survey results included the following key findings:

- Typically, people drive or walk to downtown Sunnyvale.
- The main reason people visit downtown Sunnyvale is to dine and shop.
- People typically stay for one to three hours.
- Most people prefer to park either on-street, one to two blocks from their destination or in a parking garage.

When asked what factors influence parking decisions in downtown Sunnyvale, respondents stated the ability to quickly and easily find parking was the most important factor in choosing where to park.

Other outreach efforts included four meetings with the Sunnyvale Downtown Association (SDA) to

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share the results of the Parking Study and to hear their concerns and experiences with downtown parking (and other aspects of the DSP update).

The primary concerns of the SDA were parking availability, parking management/enforcement and wayfinding. The proposed changes to the DSP provide more flexibility with how to provide parking downtown and include policies and implementation strategies to increase the efficiency of the current and future parking inventory. SDA also expressed significant concern that construction activities could be disruptive and negatively impact Downtown businesses. Per normal City practice and as stated in the draft DSP Chapter 9 Implementation, construction management plans will be required for all major development projects:

9.1.8 Construction Management Plans

Large-scale construction in key areas of the Downtown can significantly impact surrounding businesses and residents. For that reason, the City will require future developers to develop construction management plans to minimize these impacts and coordinate with other projects in the Downtown to minimize the extent and duration of construction. These plans should consider the construction-related mitigation that is required for all new projects in the Specific Plan area, as addressed in the mitigation monitoring program.

These construction management plans should include at minimum:

- *Point of contact for construction;*
- *Community outreach plan to inform businesses and neighbors of construction impacts;*
- *Parking plan to ensure sufficient parking for active uses and construction personnel during construction;*
- *Wayfinding when streets or sidewalks are closed; ...*

Comparison to Other Cities

To provide information on how other communities in Silicon Valley manage parking in their downtowns, four neighboring cities were reviewed and evaluated. Cities were selected based on their proximity to Sunnyvale and having similar downtowns in terms of land uses and demographics. The cities of Mountain View, Palo Alto, Redwood City, and San Mateo were selected.

Information gathering for this analysis included a review of available parking materials online as well as a review of each City's municipal code in relation to parking. Each city was also interviewed by Walker staff and asked a series of questions. A table of summary of findings is included in the Executive Summary of the Walker study (Attachment 3).

The questions were focused on the following:

- Presence of a downtown parking assessment district
- Existing parking regulations (hourly limits, paid parking, etc.)
- Enforcement
- Parking codes and policies
 - Municipal Code
 - Downtown plans
 - Parking requirements

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- In-lieu fees
- Shared parking

There were some major themes in the difference between the City of Sunnyvale downtown parking policies and the sample cities. The sample cities implemented the following parking measures; reduced parking requirements near transit, parking in lieu fees, paid parking, enforcement and managed parking, and paid parking permits. Many of the strategies implemented by the sample cities are also included in the recommendations from Walker.

Conclusion

Parking costs include land, construction, operations and maintenance expenses that can vary depending upon the local market. For above-grade structured parking, Walker estimates construction costs to be minimally \$20,000 to \$50,000 and depending on market and underlying ground issues, sometimes double per structured space. The Parking Study also assumed an annual operating cost per space of \$500, which includes cleaning, lighting, facility maintenance, insurance, equipment, and administration. The maintenance costs in the PMAD for 2020-2021 is about \$371 per parking space.

Due to the high cost of building parking and the long-term cost with maintaining parking and given that the results of the parking model (indicates sufficient parking), Walker does not recommend constructing additional public parking beyond what is planned for current project proposals. There is significant existing capacity to park current and future uses. Instead, bringing management and regulatory measures into alignment is expected to make the existing system more efficient through active management and innovative policy solutions.

As noted, there is a surplus of parking in the PMAD and an internal inconsistency between City goals and policies. At the same time, the City has benefited from the implementation of the PMAD as the District has relieved some of the burden on developers and property owners to build unnecessary parking, freeing up valuable land for uses that generate greater economic returns.

Together, the following regulatory and policy recommendations are a holistic approach to right sizing parking in downtown Sunnyvale. Below is a list of more near-term parking recommendations. A table of the full recommendations are included in Attachment 5.

- Reduce zoning code parking requirements for the downtown area,
- Allow projects within the PMAD area to intensify without providing additional onsite parking,
- Allow shared parking agreements,
- Increase and improve parking management including timed parking limits,
- Increase parking visibility with improved wayfinding and signage,
- Formalize requirements for Traffic Demand Management programs for uses in the Downtown.

Parking Study and Downtown Specific Plan Amendment

The recommendations of the Parking Study were incorporated into the Downtown Specific Plan and included as implementation measures. The following DSP policies were amended, or added, as shown below, to reflect the findings of the study:

Downtown Specific Plan (2020)

Proposed Policy Changes

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- **Policy B-2.5D.2** Provide markers at the entrances to lower-density residential neighborhoods to protect neighborhoods from cut-through traffic and commercial parking. Gateways should convey “resident-only” access.
- **Policy C-1.3C.4** Encourage As development occurs, require shared use easements for parking in the Downtown to minimize the amount of land devoted for parking areas and manage parking so it does not dominate mode choice decisions or the built environment.
- **Policy C-1.4** Provide adequate access to parking in the Downtown while promoting trip reduction through parking management practices.

Proposed Policy Additions

- **Policy C-1.6** Encourage and promote flexibility in land use and streetscape standards to accommodate new and emerging transportation technologies, including options for ridesharing pick-up and drop-off.
- **Policy C-1.7** Require new non-residential developments and multifamily residential developments of 10 or more units to implement a transportation demand management (TDM) program to reduce the impact of single-occupancy automobile trips. Encourage existing employers to participate in TDM programs.
- **Policy C-1.8** Provide comprehensive wayfinding and directional signage for public and private parking facilities in the downtown.

Downtown Specific Plan Proposed Changes

Language was also added to the draft DSP to provide flexibility for providing parking in the downtown and specifically within the area of the PMAD (Chapter 7 pp. 7-21 to 7-22). These changes will be considered by the City Council as a separate action.

“In 2020, a significant portion of the public parking in the Downtown is operated and managed by the City’s Downtown Parking Maintenance Assessment District (PMAD). Since 1964, the City has annually levied an assessment to cover operation, maintenance, and construction of improvements to the PMAD parking facilities. The purpose of the district is to supply parking for businesses, which do not have sufficient on-site spaces. Non-residential projects within the PMAD are not required, but are encouraged, to provide parking onsite.

At this time, the PMAD consists of approximately 70 assessed parcels in Sunnyvale’s Downtown area and may be expanded in the future as warranted by additional new development and interests. Ninety percent of the land use in the PMAD consists of commercial and office uses, with most of the membership representing small businesses along Murphy Avenue. Property owners pay into the assessment based on their parking deficit, which is the amount of parking they provide compared to the parking demand generated by their site.

All new development or intensification of uses shall be required to provide parking either on- or off-site in accordance with the parking standards contained in the Downtown Specific Plan and parking chapter of in Title 19, Zoning, of the Municipal Code.

New development shall coordinate with the City for interest in participating in the PMAD. Concurrently with the Specific Plan Update, a parking capacity and utilization study was prepared. Based on the parking study recommendations, a comprehensive update to Downtown parking standards is incorporated in the Zoning Code, including the following:

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- *Reducing the parking requirements for non-residential uses.*
- *Allowing guest parking for residential projects to be provided off-site.*
- *Addressing shared parking as a means for new development to meet parking demand by either: (1) requiring a professional parking analysis be conducted to address how the project will meet its parking demand, and/or (2) requiring shared parking agreements.”*

Proposed Zoning Code Amendment

A draft amendment to Zoning Code (SMC Chapter 19.28, “Downtown Specific Plan District”) is proposed in conjunction with the amendment to the Downtown Specific Plan. The proposed Zoning Code amendment will reduce the parking requirements in the downtown area to reflect its transit rich location. The Zoning Code amendment also includes language that reflects the recommendations of the Parking Study such as; allowing shared parking agreements, off-site parking arrangements, and further utilization of the PMAD.

FISCAL IMPACT

Many of the Parking Study’s near-term recommendations will be implemented and funded by the proposed development in the downtown. Possible future costs to the City include installing new parking signs, installing new parking technology and implementing an on-going parking management plan.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact regarding this item was made through the following ways:

1. Posting the Agenda for Planning Commission on the City’s official notice bulletin board outside City Hall and on the City’s website;
2. Publication in the Sun newspaper, at least 10 days prior to the hearing;
3. E-mail notification of the hearing dates sent to all interested parties and neighborhood associations;
4. Notices mailed to all the property owners and tenants within a 2,000-foot radius of the Downtown Specific Plan;
5. Study Session with the Planning Commission on August 26, 2019.
6. Two community outreach meetings held to discuss the amendment to the Downtown Specific Plan and the Parking study issue on March 13, 2019 and February 11, 2020.
7. Four meetings with Sunnyvale Downtown Association and other downtown property owners.
8. On-line posting of Final EIR, updated Draft DSP, zoning code amendments, and draft staff reports for related Downtown actions (July 2020).

Planning Commission Study Session

A study session with the Planning Commission was held on August 26, 2019. Staff presented the parameters of the Study Issue, information on the purpose and goals of the Parking Study and its preliminary findings and recommendations. The Commission was generally supportive of updating the parking policies of the Downtown Specific Plan and asked questions about existing capacity, parking management and wayfinding. Staff noted that the recommendations of the Parking Study would be incorporated into the Downtown Specific Plan update.

Community Outreach Meetings

City staff and the consultant team hosted several public workshops to provide information and receive feedback on the proposed changes to the Downtown Specific Plan, the Parking Study findings and environmental documents on March 13, 2019, and February 11, 2020 at the Washington

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Park Community Building. The workshops were held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. and notices were mailed to all downtown property owners and tenants. The workshops were well attended with over 40 members of the public attending the March 2019 event and 50 members of the public attending the February 2020 event.

ALTERNATIVES

Recommend to City Council

1. Find that the action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 and accept the Downtown Parking Study parking recommendations (Attachment 5 to the report) and direct staff to return with a fully developed plan to implement near-term strategies.
2. Find that the action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 and accept Downtown Parking Study parking recommendations with modifications and direct staff to return with a fully developed plan to implement near-term strategies.
3. Take no action and provide direction on revisions and return to Council at a later date.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Commission recommend to City Council Alternative 1: Find that the action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 and accept the Downtown Parking Study parking recommendations (in Attachment 5 to the report) and direct staff to return with a fully developed plan to implement near-term strategies.

The public parking in the Downtown is a valuable resource and a key component in supporting downtown businesses and community activities. As sites in the Downtown have transitioned and redeveloped and as the community values have evolved to emphasize transportation alternatives to the single-occupant automobile, the techniques to manage the parking also need to evolve. The recommended strategies in Attachment 5 provide a collection of techniques that can be considered over time. The table has been annotated to note strategies that are included in the proposed Downtown Specific Plan (and related Zoning Code amendments). While the next phase of development occurs in the near term, the City and community can select specific techniques that fit the need at the moment. Staff recommends implementing strategies over time and supporting flexible parking design principles to not overbuild parking, but to use parking more efficiently and effectively. Several recommended policies and implementation measures are in the proposed Downtown Specific Plan update and will be considered separately; these items in the DSP will serve as formal policy support for many of the recommended parking management actions.

Prepared by: Michelle King, Principal Planner

Reviewed by: Andrew Miner, Assistant Director, Community Development

Reviewed by: Trudi Ryan, Director, Community Development

Reviewed by: Teri Silva, Assistant City Manager

Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. *Reserved for Report to Council*
2. Study Issue Summary Paper CDD 11-02
3. Link to Walker Consultants, Parking Capacity and Management Study for Downtown Sunnyvale, 2020
4. City Comparison Table
5. Downtown Parking Recommendations

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6. Map of Downtown Specific Plan Blocks