

RESPONSE TO COUNCIL QUESTIONS RE: 8/30/2022 CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

Agenda Item #: B

Title: Discussion Regarding Potential Gun Safety Measures in Sunnyvale

Council Question: Is there a presentation for the Study Session? Will it be led by Staff, a Council Member or someone from the public?

Staff Response: Yes, there is a PowerPoint presentation that will be made by the City Attorney and Senior Assistant City Attorney, Rebecca Moon.

Council Question: Is there any advance material?

Staff Response: There will only be the PowerPoint presentation that will be posted on Legistar sometime Monday afternoon.

Council Question: Will we be discussing a defined list of possible Gun Measures? Or will we be addressing random ideas?

Staff Response: The PowerPoint presentation will include the concepts that were outlined and made public earlier and councilmembers can raise other gun safety measures for discussion and direction.

Council Question: Will the Council be discussing each item one by one, or will we hear them all and need to give consolidated feedback?

Staff Response: Staff will be asking for feedback at the end of the presentation on specific topics and councilmembers can also provide feedback on other gun safety measures not included in the presentation.

Council Question: What are possible outcomes to this Study Session? 1) We're done, nothing worth moving forward, 2) Staff could be directed to do more research on limited list of potential measures, 3) Other?

Staff Response: Council can provide staff feedback on not taking further action on one or more gun safety measure(s), direct staff to undertake additional more in-depth research on one or more gun safety measure(s) or provide any other feedback councilmembers feel is appropriate.

Agenda Item #: 3

Title: Selection of the Mary Avenue Underpass with Jughandle Option and the Sunnyvale Avenue Underpass Tunnel Option to be Defined as the Proposed Projects for the Grade Separation of Crossings of the Caltrain Railroad Tracks for the Environmental Review

Council Question: What does the City have budgeted to do the environmental review under CEQA for the two crossings? What is the funding source?

Staff Response: The City currently has \$4 million in VTA Measure B Grade Separation funding secured for the environmental phase for Mary Avenue. This is in VTA's two-year budget. In VTA's 10-year budget, we have another \$4 million proposed for the environmental phase of Sunnyvale Avenue.

Council Question: Are the terms "Proposed Project" and "preferred alternative" as used by Staff in the RTC interchangeable? (For example, paragraph in the middle of page 3 of the RTC.)

Staff Response: Yes, "Proposed project" and "preferred alternative" both refer to the Council's selection of an option to move into environmental phase.

Council Question: Would it be possible for Council to choose both Alternatives 1 and 2 for Mary and both Alternatives 3 and 4 for Sunnyvale? For example, isn't this what Council did (multiple preferred alternatives) on the Mary Avenue Overcrossing project for environmental review?

Staff Response: Railroad grade separations with a defined project may have a CEQA exemption. If an EIR is required, it will define a single "Project" which is compared to the environmental impacts of a "No Build" Alternative as well as a selection of alternatives that would reduce the environmental impact of the Project. A full environmental analysis is not performed on each alternative, but rather a comparison of the significant impacts for purposes of informing the decision makers. The Mary Avenue Overcrossing EIR is unusual in that the City is performing a full environmental review (rather than simply a comparison) of the alternatives so that at the end of the process, the Council can select any of the alternatives without needing to revise and recirculate the EIR.

It is not recommended by staff to include multiple alternatives in the CEQA process, because it would delay securing additional funding and would create a more complex and lengthier environmental clearance phase. Environmental phase will be performed by Caltrain, not by City staff.

Council Question: For the above question, what would be the estimated cost for doing an EIR where there were two preferred alternatives for each crossing instead of just one?

Staff Response: The environmental clearance phase is not yet scoped, but we don't believe we will need a full EIR. There are CEQA exemptions for railroad grade separation projects that could apply to our crossings, which would allow us to environmentally clear the project faster and obtain funding for final design and construction sooner. This exemption would require the selection of one preferred project alternative. This is based on staff discussions with and experiences of other agencies along the Caltrain corridor with recent railroad grade separation projects. The environmental phase will be performed by Caltrain, not by City staff. We have not estimated the additional cost of evaluating multiple options through environmental clearance, however, this would take significantly more time and require more funding in order to perform a full EIR. With more than one preferred alternative,

we would likely need to complete a full EIR because the CEQA exemption would not apply in this case. An exemption can only clear one project alternative.

Council Question: On page 3, Staff notes that “the project ultimately selected for grade separation construction ... may be different than the preferred alternative selected now...”. What would happen from a CEQA standpoint if, at a later date, Council changes direction. For example, Council chooses the underpass tunnel on Tuesday and then later decides to go with the Bike Ped Only Tunnel option. Would we have to restart the CEQA process from step zero? There are four permutations of this question (two alternatives for each of the two crossings).

Staff Response: Yes, if Council changes the preferred option, the “new” project selection would have to be environmentally cleared again. The standard practice for environmental clearance is to select one “Project” and compare it to the no build and a selection of alternatives for informational purposes, not a full environmental review. It is unknown how much work would have to be redone and how much could be reused from the original effort. This would delay the schedule and increase costs due to inflation and could potentially put funding opportunities for design and construction at risk. The City would have to coordinate with funding agencies of any funding already secured to ensure the project is still eligible. Eligibility requirements could include needing to use funding by certain deadlines or funding programs dedicated to specific types of uses such as bicycle and pedestrian only programs that cannot be used for vehicle facilities.

Council Question: Attachment 1 - Page 3 of 20 states "Selecting a project to be the Proposed Project for the environmental review under CEQA for both crossing will move the project forward.....". Does this mean we are tying Mary Ave and Sunnyvale Ave projects together? Are we tying them together just for CEQA Review or does this also tie them together for funding allocation and beginning of construction?

Staff Response: Mary Avenue is currently proposed to move into environmental phase first and funding has been secured. Mary Avenue was selected to move forward first due to volume and delays on Mary Avenue. Sunnyvale Avenue will move forward at a later date as a separate project. They are only tied together for the Feasibility phase and are expected to be separate projects from this point forward due to available funding and staffing resources.

Council Question: Attachment 1 - Page 4 of 20. It states “... additional 130 High Speed Rail trains would travel this segment every weekday”. Is this correct, there would be 130 High Speed Rail trains a day?

Staff Response: Yes, per the Caltrain Business Plan 130 High Speed Rail trains per day in both directions are projected on the San Francisco-Diridon segment by 2040. These are in addition to the future volumes of Caltrain and freight trains.

Council Question: From an Evelyn Standpoint for Mary options, the two option diagrams are showing two bike lanes, but isn't the Evelyn Trail going to dramatically change that design? Has that change been considered for each option?

Staff Response: Yes, the Evelyn Multi-use Trail will change the bike and vehicle lane configurations. The Grade Separation project team evaluated this to ensure that the proposed grade separation options would not preclude the multi-use trail. The multi-use trail is not shown in these exhibits since it has not been designed yet. This will be incorporated during the final design phase.

Council Question: For the JugHandle at Mary, would the bike lanes be protected in the jughandle? If we are creating a new road here, we don't have the same width restrictions to create a safer experience, right?

Staff Response: This can be evaluated during the final design phase if City Council provides direction to evaluate a protected bike lane. The evaluation could look into potential issues with roadway radius, horizontal curvature, and maintenance needs.

Council Question: For the JugHandle Design, there is no required acquisition of 7/Eleven land for closure of entrance/ped flow? What is the PedFlow for residents south of 7/Eleven to go to 7/Eleven or north of the CalTriain Tracks? Is the west side sidewalk stop at the Jughandle completely?

Staff Response: Under the Jughandle option, the 7-Eleven parcel will still have access at existing elevation from Evelyn Avenue, so no full acquisition is required. During the final design phase, staff will ensure that sidewalk access from Mary Avenue to 7-Eleven will be maintained.

Council Question: With the upward slope going south on Mary under both options, has there been a consideration of adding crosswalks/hawk signals at Carson to make it safer (especially considering lack of view of possible students walking to school at Vargas).

Staff Response: Yes, staff considered a HAWK at Carson as part of the Active Transportation Plan (ATP). This was not included as part of the grade separation feasibility study. The roadway conform begins just north of Carson and the vertical roadway change is very slight, so it is not expected to be a visibility issue. The project limits of this feasibility study end where the roadway would conform to existing elevation and did not evaluate any crossings at Carson. This can be evaluated during the final design phase if City Council provides direction to include this as part of the grade separation project.

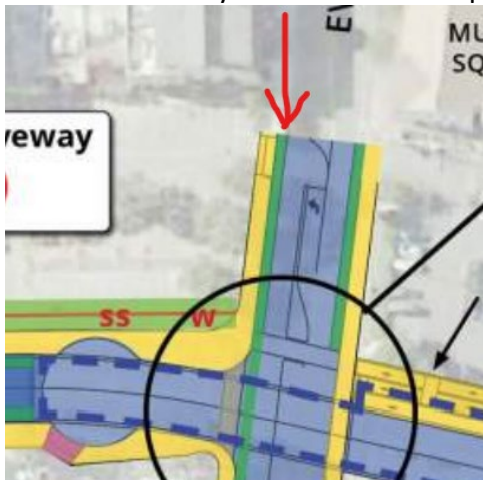
Council Question: Did staff evaluate the option (because of the Mary slope for both options) of closing Bidwell onto Mary for vehicular traffic? Aren't there larger safety issues exiting that street (or entering on to it from southbound Mary with reduced visibility)?

Staff Response: This study did not evaluate closing Bidwell Avenue to vehicles, nor any safety issues at this intersection. The current option proposes to modify the elevation of Bidwell to continue to

connect to Mary. For both options, the change in elevation at Bidwell is slight and is within the transition. The slope change is minimal, so visibility is not adversely affected. Bidwell is a low volume resident street, so traffic at this intersection will be minimal.

Council Question: For Sunnyvale Ave tunnel option, wouldn't there need to be a new entrance off of Evelyn Avenue into the Evelyn/Sunnyvale Parking Lot in order to deal with traffic flow? If not, wondering why removing the entrance to the Parking Lot from Sunnyvale Ave (near Evelyn Ave). What are the changes to the parking lot entrance next to Goodwill?

Staff Response: The current option includes adding a new parking lot entrance from Evelyn as shown below. The entrance closest to Goodwill will have minor modifications to the elevation to continue to connect to Sunnyvale Avenue. The parking lot will continue to have two vehicular access points.



Council Question: Have we talked with VTA about Route 21 and how route changes would cover the area north of the Caltrain tracks (especially for high school students) if we choose the Bike/Ped option?

Staff Response: Yes, staff has been having on-going conversations with the VTA Transit Planning team regarding this project and the three potentially impacted bus routes (20, 21, and 55). Route 21 is not impacted under either option. Route 55 connects the SNAIL and Lakewood neighborhoods to the Downtown transit center and Fremont High School. VTA are currently evaluating the options and looking at various route changes that may need to occur. Once an option is selected by City Council, VTA can evaluate in more detail.

Under both options, VTA can still facilitate access to the Caltrain Station, Downtown and Fremont High School with Route 55. With the Bike and Ped Only Tunnel option, Route 55 would require a reroute to Mathilda or Fair Oaks. Due to increase in projected volumes on these reroutes, this could increase bus travel times and delays.