



# City of Sunnyvale

## Excerpt Meeting Minutes - Draft

### Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

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Thursday, July 21, 2022

6:30 PM

Telepresence Meeting: City Web Stream

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#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Pursuant to Government Code Subdivision 54953(e), the meeting was conducted telephonically; pursuant to state law, the City Council made the necessary findings by adopting Resolution No. 1089-21, reaffirmed on July 12, 2022.

Chair Mehlinger called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. via teleconference.

#### **ROLL CALL**

**Present** 6 - Chair Richard Mehlinger  
Vice Chair Leia Mehlman  
Commissioner Bryce Beagle  
Commissioner Arwen Davé  
Commissioner Dan Hafeman  
Commissioner Timothy Oey  
**Absent** 1 - Commissioner Alex Bonne

#### **PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS**

**2** Recommend to City Council the 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

Alternative 1: Recommend to City Council the selection of the Mary Avenue Underpass with Jughandle option and the Sunnyvale Avenue Underpass Tunnel option to be defined as the Proposed Project for the grade separation of crossings of the Caltrain railroad tracks for the Environmental Review under the California Environmental Quality Act.

RTC 22-0628 was segmented into two separate items: Mary Avenue location and Sunnyvale Avenue location. BPAC did not hear the Mary Avenue location due to a lack of quorum with one absence (Commissioner Bonne) and three recusals (Chair

Mehlinger, Commissioner Davé and Commissioner Hafeman).

Commissioner Beagle stated he lives within 1000 feet of the Sunnyvale Avenue project, recused himself from discussion on the Sunnyvale Avenue location.

Angela Obeso, Principal Transportation Engineer, gave a presentation on the Sunnyvale Avenue location. Highlighting the following:

- Project Background
- Project Locations
- Project Purpose
- Why Grade Separation is needed
- Next steps
- Current Alternatives Sunnyvale Avenue
- Sunnyvale Avenue Underpass Tunnel
- Sunnyvale Avenue Underpass Tunnel Traffic Study Summary
- Sunnyvale Avenue Underpass Tunnel Bicycle Circulation
- Sunnyvale Avenue Underpass Tunnel Parking and Loading Opportunities
- Bicycle and Pedestrian only Undercrossing
- Local examples of Bicycle and Pedestrian Undercrossings
- Sunnyvale Avenue Alternative Comparison
- Staff Recommendation - Alternative 3: Recommend to City Council the selection of the Sunnyvale Avenue Underpass Tunnel option to be defined as the Proposed Project for the grade separation of the Sunnyvale Avenue crossing of the Caltrain railroad tracks for the Environmental Review

Vice Chair Mehlman asked about the following:

- Could the multi-use path be widened to have separation between bikes and pedestrians?
- Any plans when coming off of Hendy Avenue another undercrossing that would permit vehicles to access the parking garage for the Caltrain Station by going under the tracks directly into the parking garage.
- Why isn't the space that is over the tunnel used as a small open space?
- Alternative design if open space is available for additional bike parking/storage spaces/lockers and infrastructure to support bicycle parking?

Ms. Obeso addressed the questions.

Commissioner Davé asked about the following:

- Emergency Vehicle Access
- Is there only one side of the road that has access for a bicyclists/pedestrian or do you have to cross twice to get to the opposite direction?

Ms. Obeso addressed the questions.

Commissioner Oey asked about the following:

- How wide are the bike/ped ramps in the bike/ped underpass option?
- How much longer would the VTA bus 55 re-route be in the bike/ped section?
- What was the vision for the treatment on the S curve on the bike/ped option?
- Was it considered to have a straight through approach for the Bike/ped only underpass?
- Will the pedestrian crossings in the Sunnyvale Station stay the same so pedestrians can walk through the station?

Ms. Obeso addressed the questions.

Commissioner Hafeman asked what is the opinion of the Downtown Association?

Ms. Obeso addressed the question

Public Comment opened at 8:22 p.m.

Nick, member of the public, commented on the following:

- Bike & Ped Only Option is the best
- Best for businesses, bicyclists, pedestrians, costs, climate and City goals
- Concerns with Vehicle Underpass Option
- Sunnyvale Tunnel - Indirect/Dangerous for Cyclists

Lori, member of the public, commented on the following:

- Sunnyvale Tunnel - Negatively affecting pedestrians
- Sunnyvale Tunnel - Tunnels with cars are unpleasant
- Sunnyvale Tunnel - Impacts to nearby businesses
- Sunnyvale Tunnel - Car traffic would be worse

Ari Feinsmith, member of the public, commented on the following:

- Sunnyvale Tunnel - Increased costs/footprint
- Spending hundreds of millions of dollars to accommodate vehicle travel times is a waste of money

- Bike/Ped Only Option benefits downtown
- Sunnyvale Downtown Association supports the Bike/Ped Only Option
- Nearby residents will still have access to downtown
- Thanked City Staff for accepting feedback

Mike, member of the public, commented on the following:

- Flooding issues
- Supports the Bike/Ped Only Option
- Addressing the constant use of it as a public toilet and homeless habitat if Bike/Ped Only Option is picked

Gary Gold, Chair of the Sunnyvale Downtown Association, commented on the following:

- Sunnyvale Tunnel would impact service vehicles from accessing the Murphy parking lot from Sunnyvale Ave. which would affect getting supplies for local businesses
- Sunnyvale Downtown Association does not support the Sunnyvale UnderpassTunnel
- Supports Bike/Ped Only Option

Sharlene Liu, member of the public, commented on the following:

- Highlighted what City policy states about transportation projects relevant to the Sunnyvale Avenue Undercrossing
- Bike/Ped Only Option is safer for cyclists because of fewer bicycle vehicle conflict points compared to vehicle tunnel option
- Supports Bike/Ped Only Option
- Policy LT3.22 - guides you to prioritize bike and pedestrian safety over capacity of vehicles
- Policy LT3.6 - promote modes of travel and actions that provide safe access to City streets and reduce single occupant vehicle trips
- Tunnel Underpass Option not safe for bicyclists or convenient for pedestrians
- Bike/Ped Only Option very safe for cyclist and more inviting for pedestrians

Public Comment closed at 8:41 p.m.

Commissioner Oey asked about the following:

- Has City staff done analysis of VMT(vehicle miles traveled) impacts which would include decreasing/increasing VMT?
- Has there been any analysis on the climate impacts?

Ms. Obeso addressed the questions.

Chair Mehlinger asked about the following:

- Was a CEQA analysis done?
- Have you consulted with VTA?
- Are there ridership numbers for the effective bus routes that would be severed for doing the bike/ped underpass option?
- Are tech shuttle buses currently using Sunnyvale Avenue corridor? If so, how many and which companies?
- Is it possible in the car underpass option to physically protect the bike lanes going into the tunnel with concrete?
- Strongly recommends vertical concrete barriers with car underpass
- Which option is safer, more convenient and more pleasant for bicyclists and pedestrians?

Ms. Obeso addressed the questions.

Commissioner Oey asked did Sunnyvale staff do a comparison with this project to the Mountain View Castro Street Project?

Ms. Obeso addressed the question.

Chair Mehlinger asked about the following:

- Was there any outreach to residents along Sunnyvale Avenue up to Maude Avenue?
- What was the preference of the options from the residents who have been involved with the outreach?

Ms. Obeso addressed the questions.

MOTION: Vice Chair Mehlman moved and Commissioner Oey seconded to recommend Alternative 4: Bicycle and Pedestrian Only Option.

Vice Chair Mehlman stated there are fewer opportunities for vehicular conflict between cyclists and pedestrians. There is less impact to existing physical infrastructure with respect to the businesses on Sunnyvale Road on the other side of Evelyn Avenue. Re-routing most of the vehicular traffic is a good thing. Project costs are half of Sunnyvale Avenue Tunnel Option and better buy in from the

merchants. Finally, less of an environmental impact overall.

Commissioner Oey stated he is very much in favor of saving money, resources, reducing VMT, prioritizing bike/ped travel over car travel and improve safety. This option would provide support for north/south travel for bikes/peds. There is a lot of support from the community.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Chair Mehlinger stated should City Council choose the Sunnyvale Avenue Underpass Option, it is the BPAC's strong recommendation that any bicycle facilities on the underpass be physically separated and protected by concrete. Vice Chair Mehlerman and Commissioner Oey accept the friendly amendment.

Commissioner Hafeman commented on the following:

- Supports the Bike/Ped Only Option
- A lot of kids take bus 55 to school
- Not in favor of spending an extra \$100 million on a two lane underpass

Chair Mehlinger commented on the following:

- Concerns about the bus service
- Guided by City Policy LT3.6
- Safety first approach to roadways
- Cost difference \$100 million
- Reduction in VMT per capita over the next 10 years
- Underpass Option would cause substantial disruption to the street grid south of the tracks
- Downtown Sunnyvale Association concerns should be validated
- Underpass Option would increase VMT which would be bad for the environment
- Proposal to widen North Sunnyvale Avenue would be less safe for cyclists
- Underpass Option worse according to City policy and twice as expensive

MOTION: Support Alternative 4: Bicycle and Pedestrian Only Underpass Option. Recommend to City Council if they choose Alternative 3: Underpass Option that any bicycle facilities on the underpass should be physically separated and protected by concrete.

The motion carried with the following vote:

**Yes** 5 - Chair Mehlinger  
Vice Chair Mehلمان  
Commissioner Davé  
Commissioner Hafeman  
Commissioner Oey

**No** 0

**Absent** 1 - Commissioner Bonne

**Recused** 1 - Commissioner Beagle

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Mehlinger adjourned the meeting at 10:10 p.m.