

## **Downtown Sunnyvale Specific Plan Update Community Workshop #2 Summary**

Washington Park Building  
February 11, 2020

### Specific Plan Vision /Overview

- Question about the timeline of the project – when it started, when the Plan will be approved/adopted, and whether some development projects have been approved yet
- Some local residents expressed excitement about the new development in construction and/or to come in the Downtown and the ability to walk to these destinations
  - Interest in the timeline for some of these projects, such as the new theater

### Land Use and Development Standards Station

- Several property owners in the Sunnyvale-Carroll district were interested in what the land use changes are to this district and if additional height will be allowed on their block with the Downtown Specific Plan Update (no land use or height changes proposed in this district with the DSP update)
- One person suggested as a community benefit a downtown area fund to electrify the Downtown, to and serve as a carbon free example for the nation and green infrastructure improvements
- One person expressed concern about some of the vacant retail in some of the new developments and wanted to know what else is coming and when those will be filled
- Question/comment about overcapacity of schools in the area and need for a school. Currently, some students are bused to other schools; how will project development contribute?
- Insist on heavy impact fees for schools, below market rate housing, and transportation improvements
- More trees, shade, and art within Plaza del Sol and generally, in the Downtown
- One person suggested she's like to see some of the one-story development adjacent to Historic Murphy Avenue go higher, to make more efficient use of the land
- Interest in seeing taller buildings and additional development along Mathilda Avenue
- Another person was concerned for existing businesses on Mathilda that are frequented by herself and other local residents and what can be done to maintain those businesses
- A comment that Mathilda Avenue feels like a barrier to cross and safer to get to by car
- One person was not interested in seeing any changes to the area and skeptical about who would live in Downtown with the traffic congestion

### Circulation Station

- Changing Class IIB bike lanes to Class IV separated bike lanes, where space allows on Mathilda Avenue and Evelyn Avenue
  - If you put cyclists on Mathilda, someone will get killed. The only way you can have Mathilda in the bike circulation network is if you have Class IV bike lanes protected with heavy barriers like planters. There's 6+ lanes doing 45 mph.

- Evelyn is a major bike transportation route to and from Mountain View and needs to be prioritized as at least a Class IIB or IV bikeway. People will not travel further south to El Camino Real and most bikeways should be buffered as a priority to coincide with the Climate Action Plan, Safe Routes to School, and Active Transportation Plan
  - Suggestion for a ped/bike path on one side of Evelyn Avenue, instead of Class IIB lanes on both sides
- Keep the section of bike route on Washington Avenue between Mathilda Avenue and Taaffe Street, to connect with planned bike paths along Taaffe Street
  - Washington, between Mathilda and Bayview to Evelyn should be a Class III bike route (recommended to be changed in the Active Transportation due to high volume bus traffic on Washington Avenue)
- One participant mentioned they felt unsafe crossing W Evelyn Ave to get to the train station after getting off the bus on Frances Street; he asked if buses could just drop people off at the Transit Plaza instead, to serve truly as an intermodal transit center
  - Also suggestion for a HAWK crosswalk from the bus center to Caltrain or build a pedestrian overpass
- Consider a jogging/exercise path around and through the Downtown
- Some questions/concerns raised about increased traffic
- Stop sign and crosswalk at Iowa/Murphy; cars drive at 40 mph+ and do not stop for pedestrians crossing the street
- 2 cobra lights at Murphy and Iowa are no longer needed as the traffic lights do not exist
- Iowa (westbound) and Mathilda lights are off center

#### Urban Design Station

##### **Plazas and Public Spaces:**

- Questions about what constitutes The Loop and the changes that will occur along the Loop
  - Ensure sidewalks along The Loop and adjacent to tall buildings
- Need more shade trees and softscape on streets and plazas; some of the character images showed too much paving and hardscape
- Plaza Del Sol needs some sun protection/shade. Today it gets limited use. Alternatively, allow outdoor food and drink.
- Maintain the current feel of the green/grassy area adjacent to Target. The plan for the Redwood Plaza lacks nature. Needs more trees/planting/grassy areas.
- One person commented on the concern about the large decrease in the green space in the heart of the city. Block 3A is currently on an approximately 10 acre green space used by dog walkers and residents in the nearby high density housing. Reducing it to 2 acres, concrete with green areas and plazas, will change the character in a very negative urban direction. If open green space goes, it will never will come back.
- Some people asked if any improvements would be made to the Caltrain Transit Plaza and if it would be turned into something more like a park or plaza (since shown in green on the boards)
- Noise – like to see attention to ensuring the ambient soundscape is quiet-ish and “natural”
- Some questions about where people would park to use the new plazas and interest in ground level retail

##### **Design Priorities:**

- A few questions about whether the garages for new residential developments on Block 18 would also provide public parking
- People found the *Design Compatibility with the Historic Resource Areas* diagram (elevation) helpful and thought the plan was going in the right direction with respect to this topic
- Some people stressed the need for more bicycle parking - lots. Every retail area needs to have adequate bike parking, including e-bike charging stations.
- Suggest the tallest buildings include public space on the roof (roof parks)

Input on Gateway and District Identity and Wayfinding:

- Old cannery industry reflected in the historic character
- Need bikeway and pedestrian wayfinding signage, which is visible from the street, like Mountain View does
- Fountains at gateways like the one by the train station parking
- Better or more obvious pedestrian connection between Caltrain Station and Murphy Street
- Create a feeling of cohesion in the gateway and wayfinding choices that don't clash with the Historic Murphy gateway
- Include wayfinding maps that are simple and easy to use and don't require too much time to understand
- Include wayfinding maps that show Downtown Sunnyvale is not spread out and distances from point of interests are walkable
- People mentioned the perception Sunnyvale is very spread out, which makes people think they need to drive to go from place to place or just choose not to even when it is a block away