

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS**

2.        [20-0338](#)        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).

Assistant Director Andrew Miner explained that each of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP)-related agenda items will be considered separately.

Principal Planner Michelle King and Chrissy Mancini Nichols, representing Walker Consultants, presented the staff report and a slide presentation.

Commissioner Olevson encouraged spill over parking to be studied as parking in

the nearby neighborhoods, particularly east of downtown, is not acceptable. Principal Planner Michelle King responded that the concern can be researched and incorporated into the fully developed plan for future consideration. She also mentioned that there are policies in the DSP that encourage traffic calming in neighborhoods that surround downtown.

Commissioner Howe asked how the plan will address developers who have built with higher parking ratios and the tenants who pay parking fees. Principal Planner Michelle King stated that new developments would be subject to the same Parking Management Assessment District (PMAD) fees that existing developers currently pay. Commissioner Howe stated that it is an equity issue that should be addressed when the fully developed plan returns to the Commission for consideration.

Vice Chair Simons asked if the study could be applied to different areas of Sunnyvale where high density development is next to low density development. Assistant Director Andrew Miner answered that the downtown is unique but that there may be parts of the study that could be useful when examining different areas of the city. Vice Chair Simons noted the study's potential for use as a toolbox.

Chair Howard opened the Public Hearing.

Richard Mehlinger, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) Chair speaking on his own behalf, highlighted some of BPAC's recommendations to the DSP Amendment.

Gail Rubino suggested validated parking as an option and stated her opinion that no one should be able to park for more than four hours.

Leia Mehlman, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission Vice Chair speaking on her own behalf, stated her opinion that the surface parking in the Murphy Avenue area should all be handicap accessible with most parking in the parking garages and permit parking and enforcement programs for residents of the nearby neighborhoods.

Alex Shoor, Executive Director of Catalyze SV, encouraged the Commission to consider that providing incentives and alternatives to parking reduces congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

Michael Johnson, Executive Director of the Sunnyvale Downtown Association

(SDA), spoke in opposition to BPAC's recommendations on parking.

Dr. Gary Gold, Optometrist located in downtown Sunnyvale, stated that there is not enough parking close enough to downtown to benefit the patrons and businesses.

Chair Howard closed the Public Hearing.

Vice Chair Simons asked if it is possible to recommend minimizing the amount of land used for parking and mentioned possible solutions such as car elevators and robotic parking. Principal Planner King stated that the current proposed changes would significantly reduce the amount of land used for parking by reducing parking ratios, providing developers the ability to enter into shared parking agreements, and allowing developers in the PMAD to use it for a portion of their required parking. She added that Walker Consultants' recommendations are a great first step towards managing and making parking more efficient and that his suggestions could be incorporated into the fully developed implementation plan that the Commission would consider at a later date. Vice Chair Simons stated that the creative parking design options are important to consider now to eliminate the need for applicants to request variances for them in the future. Principal Planner King answered that language can be added to the plan to allow flexibility for innovative parking design. Vice Chair Simons confirmed his interest in the addition of the language that he believes would make the recommendations more flexible and useful in the future.

MOTION: Commissioner Harrison moved and Vice Chair Simons seconded the motion to Recommend to City Council Alternative 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.

Chair Howard appreciated BPAC's recommendations to limit parking and the SDA's support of parking and based on his own experiences, recommended a complete streets approach as a priority because it would be flexible and support different types of uses.

Vice Chair Simons re-stated his hope for the language added to be flexible enough to include robotic parking options and the ability for staff and applicants to explore impacts on building heights.

Commissioner Harrison complimented staff for analyzing the inconsistencies

between the Sunnyvale Municipal Code and the various parking plans. She appreciated the statistical analysis that determined that downtown is overparked and the idea that short-term users could park closer to downtown if long-term users were encouraged to park farther away. She stated that she looks forward to the fully implemented plan with the most flexibility possible and noted the importance of the curb.

Vice Chair Simons stated that BPAC made good recommendations for flexible parking and made recommendations of his own not intended for the motion such as eliminating curbs and installing removable bollards that would open up the street for large pedestrian access, electrical vehicle charging stations, and permit parking in downtown and other neighborhoods in Sunnyvale. Assistant Director Miner confirmed with Vice Chair Simons that that his suggestions are not intended as part of the formal recommendation to City Council.

Commissioner Olevson stated that he will support the motion and commented on his appreciation for such a complete preliminary study and the associated data the consultant provided that address many of the major issues.

Commissioner Howe agreed with Vice Chair Simons that the plan should be flexible and requested that the motion be specifically stated as the wording is important.

Chair Howard agreed with Commissioner Howe.

Principal Planner King proposed possible language for the modified recommendation. Vice Chair Simons confirmed with Principal Planner King that an applicant would not have to complete a parking study if the parking requirements are met.

Commissioner Howe commented that he believes any innovative designs must be considered when an applicant applies for it and that the process should not be overly burdensome for applicants to ensure that the City benefits from such designs. Assistant Director Miner suggested that Commissioner Howe might want to include the language to the proposed SMC amendment in the next agenda item. Commissioner Howe stated his understanding but confirmed that he believes it is important to add to the motion for this agenda item.

Principal Planner King restated the possible modification to the recommendation.

The motion is as follows:

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The modification is as follows:

1.) The Director of Community Development or decision body must consider innovative parking design, based on Institute of Transportation Engineers or Urban Land Institute standards, that could include new technology and variations in building design.

Commissioner Howe stated that parking is an important issue for downtown and will be for more years. He commented that the study has a good approach and the process of reviewing the it before the full plan is implemented is a good strategy. He appreciated the hard work on the issue and noted the importance of considering the differences of opinion on the matter from community members.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Chair Howard proposed a friendly amendment to implement a policy for a complete streets methodology for downtown.

Commissioner Harrison confirmed with Principal Planner King that complete streets is an existing City policy and Principal Planner King added that the proposed changes to the DSP include improved accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists with pathways and plazas.

Chair Howard withdrew his friendly amendment and stated his support for the motion which is as follows:

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The motion carried by the following vote:

**Yes:** 5 - Chair Howard  
Vice Chair Simons  
Commissioner Harrison  
Commissioner Howe  
Commissioner Olevson

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Commissioner Weiss

**Recused:** 1 - Commissioner Rheaume

This recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration at the August 11, 2020 meeting.