



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

File #: 19-1110, Version: 1

2020 COUNCIL STUDY ISSUE

NUMBER

DPW 20-XX

Subsidized Public Transit

BACKGROUND

Lead Department: Public Works
Support Departments: Office of the City Manager
Office of the City Attorney
Environmental Services
Sponsor(s): Sustainability Commission
History: 1 year ago: N/A
2 years ago: N/A

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

What precipitated this study?

Given that one of the key areas of the Climate Action Plan 2.0 will be to reduce the vehicle miles traveled metric, the use of public transit will be a key element in the success of reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). This study issue should investigate the use of reduced fares for public transit to encourage more use. The proposal should encompass all forms of mass transit including VTA, Caltrain, ACE train, and any other forms of alternate transit available to the residents of Sunnyvale.

The study should investigate the barriers to the use of public transit, including cost, convenience, and determine if a reduced fare would increase ridership.

The study would include other cities that provide subsidies to transit riders including San Francisco, Portland, Baltimore, and other cities. The study of cities that currently offer reduced fare structures will be important in understanding what does work and what does not work in this area as well as give some insight into the cost for offering reduced fares.

What are the key elements of the study?

Study of subsidized public transit for Sunnyvale residents will need to include a survey of residents to determine commute patterns, barriers, public perception of transit, and willingness to use public transit based on accessibility, service areas, reliability, and travel times. Input from transit operators will be included to determine how increased ridership can be accommodated within their business model and its potential impacts. Study should also identify what makes jurisdictions that offer subsidized public transit successful, how they compare to Sunnyvale in resident demographics, land use, transit density/service, jurisdictional characteristics, and quantify the cost of commuting. Additionally, the appropriate level of public transit subsidy and how the subsidy will be funded, will need to be studied.

Estimated years to complete study: 2 years

FISCAL IMPACT

Cost to Conduct Study

Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost): Moderate

Funding Required for Non-Budgeted Costs: \$100,000

Funding Source: Will seek budget supplement

The cost associated with this study will be for consultant services to determine the feasibility and process in implementing a transit subsidy program. The analysis will include a review of policies, travel demand, socioeconomic factors, and City operating costs to implement the program. The analysis will also include community outreach events and surveys.

Cost to Implement Study Results

Unknown. Study would include assessment of potential costs, including capital and operating, as well as revenue/savings.

EXPECTED CITY COUNCIL, BOARD OR COMMISSION PARTICIPATION

Council-Approved Work Plan: No

Council Study Session: No

Reviewed by Boards/Commissions: Sustainability Commission

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

A staff recommendation will be completed at the time of submittal of this Study Issue Paper to the Office of the City Manager.