



# City of Sunnyvale

## Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

---

File #: 20-0684, Version: 1

---

### REPORT TO BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMISSION

#### **SUBJECT**

**SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT:** Amend the Downtown Sunnyvale Specific Plan

**Location:** Downtown Sunnyvale

**File #:** 2017-8047

**Zoning:** DSP

**Applicant/Owner:** City of Sunnyvale

**Environmental Review** (SCH # 2018052020): Adopt a resolution to make findings required by CEQA, certify the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), and adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

**Project Planner:** Michelle King, (408) 730-7463, mking@sunnyvale.ca.gov

#### **REPORT IN BRIEF**

**General Plan:** Downtown Specific Plan (DSP)

**Existing Site Conditions:** The DSP area includes multiple parcels and property owners. The area is developed with a mix of local and regional uses, residential units in multi-family buildings and single-family detached, office buildings and open spaces including Plaza Del Sol and Redwood Square.

**DSP Boundary:** The Downtown Specific Plan is generally bounded by Charles Avenue to the west, Sunnyvale Avenue to the east, the Caltrain tracks to the north, and Olive Avenue to the south (and to El Camino Real along the east side of Mathilda Avenue).

**Issues:** Allowing additional development intensity and height within the Commercial Core district Block 18, Block 1a and Block 22, for the provision of community benefits, transitions from the Downtown Core to adjacent lower intensity development, ensuring future development supports a cohesive public realm and contributes to a pedestrian-friendly Downtown.

**Staff Recommendation:** Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission recommend that the City Council Approve the amended Downtown Specific Plan (see link to draft staff reports and related studies in Attachment 1).

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) is a long-term planning document to reinforce a vibrant and traditional downtown that serves the local community with a desirable mix of retailers, restaurants, corporate tenants, residents, and is a regional destination providing a unique and highly active environment. The DSP contains goals, policies, design strategies and guidelines, land use and development intensities and standards to guide development in the DSP area. The City has developed an update to the existing DSP to better address current market trends and future project design. See the draft Planning Commission staff report for detailed information regarding the proposed update (link in Attachment 1). The proposed updates result in an increase in the number of allowed residential units and commercial and office floor area.

Detailed information about the related actions in the Downtown are provided in four draft reports to the Planning Commission (see link in Attachment 1). The report that addresses the Downtown Specific Plan and EIR is the primary report that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) should review to make a recommendation on the DSP to the City Council; the entire set of reports may provide a greater context to understand proposed development in the Downtown and the projects that initiated the review and update of the Downtown Specific Plan. The BPAC is being asked to review and comment on the DSP as it relates to bicycle and pedestrian issues. Though the Commission may comment on the EIR, the Commission is only required to make a recommendation on the DSP.

The draft Planning Commission staff reports will be updated to include additional correspondence received prior to the public hearing. Time permitting, the recommendations of the other commissions will be added to the Planning Commission report; otherwise, an oral update will be provided at the hearing.

The **Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission** will review the DSP update on July 16, 2020 and make a recommendation to the City Council.

The **Sustainability Commission** will review the DSP update on July 20, 2020 and make a recommendation to the City Council.

The **Heritage Preservation Commission** will review the EIR and DSP Update on July 22, 2020 and make a recommendation to the City Council.

The **Planning Commission** will review on July 27, 2020 and make a recommendation to the City Council on the following: 1) Downtown Parking Study; 2) Final EIR, DSP Update, Zoning amendments; and, 3) Development Agreement with STC Venture; and, 4) Development Agreement with Kasik

The **City Council** is scheduled to consider this item on August 11, 2020.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Environmental Review (SCH # 2018052020): City Council to adopt a resolution to make findings required by CEQA, certify the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), and adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that all state and local government agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects for which they have discretionary authority. An initial study was prepared for the proposed changes to the DSP, which indicated the project had potential impacts that could not be fully mitigated. Therefore, a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) has been prepared and circulated for this project November 22, 2019 to January 6, 2020. The Final EIR (FEIR) was released for public review on July 10, 2020. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission is not required to take an action on the EIR, however information in the EIR may assist the Commission in making a recommendation on the DSP.

## **DISCUSSION**

The City Council initiated the amendments to the DSP (authorized the studies to consider amending the plan) and provided direction on a number of items to be studied and considered. Several of these directives relate to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission's purview:

- Study parking and transit for the Downtown Specific Plan;
- Study flexible parking design;
- Study improvements for the pedestrian realm with respect to the proposed changes in retail and office buildings;

The proposed updates would result in an increase in the number of allowed residential units and commercial and office floor area and provide options for increasing size or density of development through various programs. The update also places a stronger emphasis on the vision for a traditional walkable downtown through guiding themes and concepts, including:

- Multimodal Streets and Connections. Creating connections between these different districts and adjacent neighborhoods with a re-established street grid through Downtown and an inviting, bike and pedestrian friendly environment with complete bicycle and pedestrian circulation networks, visual connections, comfortable pedestrian pathways, and public amenities.
- Connections to Transit. Building on the established public transit network of bus stops and the Sunnyvale Caltrain station by improving the quality of these areas and linking them to pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connections to Downtown destinations.
- Incorporates an enhanced pedestrian circulation system concept called "The Loop". The Loop concept is intended to create a pedestrian priority path along Frances Street (including its extension through the Macy's site) and Murphy Avenue between the Caltrain Station and Redwood Square. Note that the Macy's building is proposed to be demolished and new buildings would be constructed on either side of an extension of Frances Street.

## **PUBLIC CONTACT**

Public contact was made by posting the agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall and on the City's website. Notice of the hearing was also published in the Sun newspaper and notices mailed to property owners and tenants within 2,000 feet of the Downtown Specific Plan. Detailed information about public contact is listed in the draft report to the Planning Commission on the Downtown Specific Plan, EIR and Zoning amendments.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Recommend to the City Council to Approve the amended Downtown Specific Plan as it relates to bicycles and pedestrians.
2. Recommend to the City Council to approve the amended Downtown Specific Plan, with modifications.
3. Recommend to the City Council not to approve the amended Downtown Specific Plan.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends Alternative 1, Recommend to the City Council to Approve the amended Downtown Specific Plan as it relates to bicycle and pedestrian items.

The updated DSP includes additional emphasis on creating a walkable downtown through updated

policies and design guidelines. The DSP introduces the Loop and other pedestrian priority areas of the plan. The plan also includes stronger support for the bicycle network and bicycles as an alternative to the automobile. Parking for bicycles is addressed by referencing VTAs Bicycle Technical Guidelines in the DSP and requiring bicycle parking (in the Zoning Code) based on the VTA Guidelines.

Prepared by: Trudi Ryan, Director, CDD

Reviewed by: Teri Silva, Assistant City Manager

Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Link to Downtown Specific Plan Project Page  
<https://sunnyvale.ca.gov/news/topics/dsp/default.htm>