

**Council Meeting: April 9, 2013****SUBJECT: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Consideration of Southbound Mathilda Avenue Street Space Allocation Study****BACKGROUND**

Mathilda Avenue is included in the City's Bicycle Capital Improvement Program as a candidate for the installation of bike lanes. The City has received a grant from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District to construct bike lanes on the segment of Mathilda Avenue from California Avenue to Maude Avenue. This project will allow a connection between bike lanes on the Mathilda Caltrain bridge and Evelyn Avenue to bike lanes soon to be constructed on Maude Avenue west of Mathilda Avenue. This section of Mathilda Avenue currently features three through travel lanes and a parking lane in the northbound direction, three through travel lanes and a right turn "trap" lane in the southbound direction and sidewalks on both sides of the street. Adjacent land uses are higher density residential and commercial uses. Consistent with the City's street space allocation policies, staff has conducted a technical analysis of options to meet minimum design standards for motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians. Staff is presenting this information to Council for consideration on whether to change the existing accommodations on southbound Mathilda Avenue between Maude Avenue and California Avenue.

EXISTING POLICY

Land Use and Transportation LT 5.5d. Maximize the provision of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Land Use and Transportation LT 5.9. Appropriate accommodations for motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians shall be determined for City streets to increase the use of bicycles for transportation and to enhance the safety and efficiency of the overall street network for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motor vehicles.

Land Use and Transportation LT 5.10. All modes of transportation shall have safe access to City streets.

Land Use and Transportation LT 5.16. When decisions on the configuration of roadway space are made, staff shall present options, including at a minimum an option that meets minimum safety-related design standards for motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.

Land Use and Transportation LT 5.18. The City Council shall make the final decisions on roadway space reconfiguration when roadway reconfiguration will result in changes to existing accommodations.

DISCUSSION

In 2009, the City of Sunnyvale adopted a Policy on the Allocation of Street Space. The Policy for Allocation of Street Space was initiated by the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) and approved by the City Council on April 28, 2009 (RTC 09-085). The goal was to provide direction on how to consider all modes of transportation when allocating roadway space, particularly in situations that could require the removal of travel lanes, on-street parking, or other roadway reconfigurations, or because of right-of-way constraints. Consideration of bike lanes was a particular intent of the street space allocation policy.

Mathilda Avenue from California Avenue to Maude Avenue currently does not feature facilities for bicycles. A location map is provided as Attachment A. The street space allocation policy calls for the City Council to be the final decision maker on all changes to street space allocation when allocation requires changes to existing facilities. Bike lanes can be provided in the northbound direction of Mathilda in the project area with no changes to existing conditions; therefore, no Council alternative is presented for northbound Mathilda (staff plans to pursue bike lanes for this section of roadway operationally).

The southbound direction requires either roadway widening or changes to existing facilities. Staff has considered four options for providing bicycle facilities in the southbound direction.

- Providing bike lanes on southbound Mathilda Avenue within the existing curb-to-curb width would require elimination of the right turn auxiliary "trap" lane. Staff evaluated motor vehicle volume and roadway capacity for consideration of removal of the right turn auxiliary trap lane to provide a bike lane. Lane utilization is relatively low, averaging 250 vehicles in the AM peak hour and 400 vehicles in the PM peak hour, compared to a lane capacity of approximately 1,800 vehicles per hour. This traffic is almost exclusively right turning vehicles. Right turning vehicles would be accommodated after construction of a bike lane by provision of right turn lanes at the Indio Avenue and California Avenue intersections, which would effectively maintain the function of the existing auxiliary lane.
- Widening the road for bike lanes was considered as an alternative, but was dismissed as being cost prohibitive and highly disruptive to adjacent properties. Widening the road would involve right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, and significant capital cost. The cost would far exceed the currently available level of funding.

- Narrowing the median was also considered. Removing 1.5-3.5 feet on the west side of the center median would negatively affect the health of the Italian Stone Pine trees to the extent they would become unstable. All of the trees would need to be removed at an approximate cost of \$2,000 per tree for a total of \$50,000 and the irrigation mainline and half of the irrigation system would have to be replaced at a rough estimate of \$25,000-\$50,000. Staff believes that the level of disruption would dictate complete renovation of the entire median landscape. Traffic signal and lighting utilities in the median would also need to be replaced. The total capital cost is estimated at over \$1 million. The cost would far exceed the currently available level of funding.
- Installation of shared lane arrows was also considered as an alternative. Traffic control standards recommend against the use of shared lane arrows on roads with a speed limit over 35 miles per hour. The speed limit on this section of Mathilda Avenue is 45 miles per hour. Shared lane arrows are not recommended for installation as a bike facility in this area. Shared lane arrow (sharrow) installation also is not eligible for the currently available grant funding.

The Sunnyvale Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission considered this item at its February 21, 2013 meeting and supported the staff recommendation on a vote of 7-0.

FISCAL IMPACT

There are sufficient funds from a Bay Area Air Quality Management District grant to install striping, signs and legends to re-stripe the road for bike lanes within the existing right of way. Widening the roadway or narrowing the median to provide bike lanes in the southbound direction would constitute a major capital improvement project requiring utility relocation, acquisition of right-of-way, and construction of roadway pavement or median facilities curb, gutter, sidewalk, and drainage facilities. Widening or narrowing is roughly estimated to cost approximately \$1-4 million. No funds are currently available to widen the roadway.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's Web site.

In addition, a survey was mailed to properties and property owners adjacent to the area proposed for lane modification. Eight responses out of 14 surveys mailed to tenants and property owners were received. Of those responses, half (four) supported bike lane construction and half (four) supported making no changes at this time.

A survey was administered to the general community via Survey Monkey. This was advertised on the City web site, Facebook, and notification to community interest groups. Of 147 responses received, the survey found that 118 responders support bike lane construction and 29 support making no changes at this time.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission held a public hearing on a draft Report to Council at its February 21, 2013 meeting.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Direct staff to re-allocate existing street space on southbound Mathilda Avenue in order to provide three travel lanes, a bike lane, and right turn lanes at the Indio Avenue and California Avenue intersections.
2. Direct staff to re-allocate existing street space on southbound Mathilda Avenue in an alternative configuration as determined by Council.
3. Direct staff to make no changes from the existing configuration.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission recommend Alternative No. 1: Direct staff to allocate street space on Mathilda Avenue in order to provide three travel lanes, bike lanes and right turn lanes at the Indio Avenue and California Avenue intersections.

Alternative 1 provides bike lanes and sufficient roadway capacity to meet motor vehicle travel demand. Exercising this alternative will result in a roadway cross section that accommodates all modes of travel.

Reviewed by:

Kent Steffens, Director, Public Works

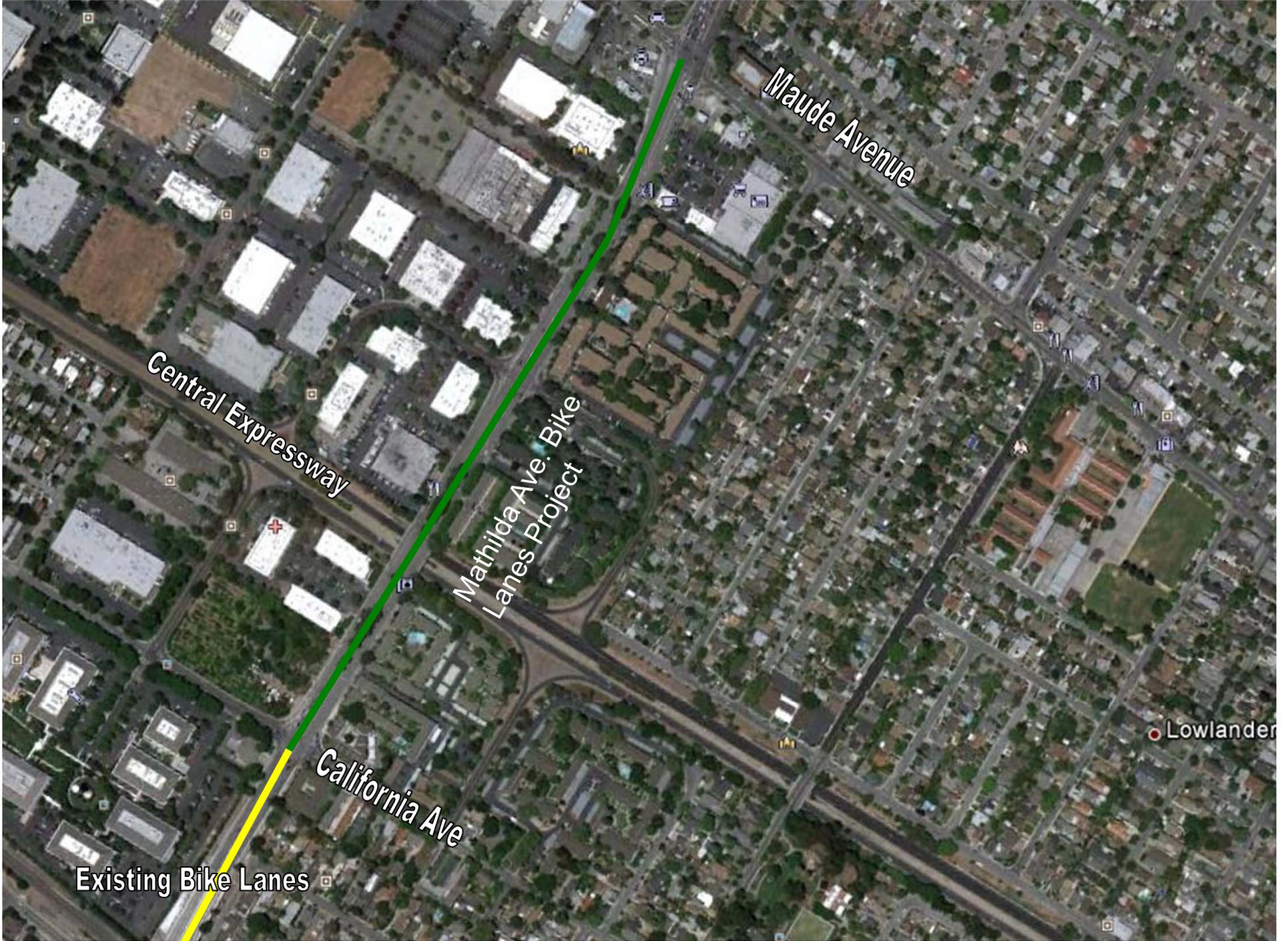
Prepared by: Jack Witthaus, Transportation and Traffic Manager

Approved by:

Gary M. Luebbers
City Manager

Attachments

- A. Project Location Map
- B. Draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes of February 21, 2013



DRAFT

**SUNNYVALE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes – February 21, 2013**

The Sunnyvale Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission met at 6:30 p.m. on February 21, 2013 with Commission Chair James Manidakos presiding. The meeting was held in the West Conference Room, City Hall, 456 West Olive Avenue, Sunnyvale.

ROLL CALL/CONSIDERATION OF ABSENCES

Members Present: James Manidakos
Angela Rausch
Kevin Jackson
Richard Kolber
David Jones
Cathy Switzer
Kyle Welch

Members Absent: None

**Council Liaison
Present:** None.

Staff Present: Jack Witthaus, Transportation and Traffic Division Manager, Department of Public Works

Visitors: David Simons
Jenn Huston
Justin Ward

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

None.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Speakers are limited to 3 minutes for announcements of related board/commission events, programs, resignations, recognitions, acknowledgments)

Chair Manidakos announced a Silicon Valley Bicycle Summit would take place on February 26, 2013 at Stanford University.

Commissioner Jackson noted recent meetings on the Stevens Creek Trail, and an upcoming public meeting the on February 25. He also announced that Bike to Work Day would be held May 9, 2013. In response to a question from Commissioner Jones, it was noted that participation by BPAC members is voluntary.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1.A) Approval of the Draft Minutes of December 17, 2012 Meeting
- 1.A) Approval of the Draft Minutes of December 20, 2012 Meeting
- 1.B) 2013 BPAC Calendar

The consent calendar was approved by consensus.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

This category is limited to 15 minutes, with a maximum of three minutes per speaker. If you wish to address the board or commission, please complete a speaker card and give it to the Recording Secretary or you may orally make a request to speak. If your subject is not on the agenda, you will be recognized at this time; but the Brown Act (Open Meeting Law) does not allow action by board or commission members. If you wish to speak to a subject listed on the agenda, you will be recognized at the time the item is being considered by the board or commission.

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

1. ACTION: Wildwood Avenue Street Space Allocation Study

Chair Manidakos indicated his support for the staff recommendation, stating that bike lanes on Wildwood Avenue would provide an important new connection to Santa Clara and to a future connection with the Calabazas Creek Trail. He suggested directional signing at the intersection of Wildwood Avenue and Bridgewood Avenue.

Commissioner Jackson made editorial comments.

Commissioner Kolber noted that he had observed no vehicles being parked on Wildwood Avenue.

Motion by Manidakos, second Kolber to recommend that the City Council approved the staff recommendation and that staff consider directional signage at Wildwood Avenue and Bridgewood Avenue and make editorial corrections to the Report to Council. Motion approved, 7-0.

In response to a question from Commissioner Welch, staff and Commissioner Switzer indicated that the survey response level was typical for community surveys and direct mail surveys.

The Commission took a verbal report from the City's Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee representative David Simons out of order. Mr. Simons reported that the VTA BPAC would be reviewing candidate projects for the Valley Transportation Plan 2040 Bicycle Expenditure Program. He announced that the VTA BPAC had elected new officers. He encouraged Sunnyvale BPAC representatives to communicate to him about big new projects in the City.

2. ACTION: Mathilda Avenue Street Space Allocation Study

Commissioners clarified roadway widths and commented on a high speed right turn lane at Maude Avenue and Mathilda Avenue. Commissioners encouraged consideration of enhanced roadway striping and signing to improve awareness of bicycles on the roadway.

Motion by Jackson, second Kolber, to recommend that the City Council approve the staff recommendation. Questions were asked about conditions of approval related to bicycles and pedestrians for the LinkedIn project at Mathilda and Maude Avenues. Motion approved, 7-0.

3. DISCUSSION: Bike Boulevard Pilot Project Candidate Streets

Chair Manidakos suggested including criteria for ranking bike boulevard candidate streets of removal of barriers to cross city travel, and length of the bike boulevard. The Commission discussed the definition of a bike boulevard. Commissioner Jackson made editorial comments, and indicated his preference for east /west Route 7, a combination of Routes 8 and 9, and north /south Route 6. Commissioner Rausch suggested a criterion for service to high schools. The Commission discussed routes to schools.

The public hearing was opened. Jenn Huston suggested a bus shuttle service to high schools.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

- COMMISSIONERS ORAL COMMENTS

Chair Manidakos noted that one study issue suggested by the BPAC had been supported by the City Council.

Commissioner Jackson supported consideration of bicycle access as part of the Mathilda/237 project. He related an incident he had with the bicycle lockers at the Sunnyvale Library, and summarized correspondence from the Library Director indicating that she was considering removing the lockers due to safety concerns. The Commission discussed policy and procedures for the removal of bicycle or vehicle parking at City facilities.

Upon an inquiry from Commissioner Jackson, staff related that construction at the intersection of Wright Avenue and The Dalles was a lighted crosswalk system.

Chair Manidakos noted that there is no bicycle parking at the post office on Moffett Park.

- STAFF ORAL COMMENTS

None.

INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS

1. Annual Review of the Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials
2. Mary Avenue Street Space Study Community Meeting (Information Item)

3. Stevens Creek Trail Community Meeting (Information Item)
4. Council Ranking of Study Issues (Information item)
5. BPAC E-mail messages and/or letters since circulation of the agenda packet of the December 20, 2012 meeting.
6. BPAC Active Items List

The Commission discussed the Active Items List.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jack Witthaus
Transportation and Traffic Manager