



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item

15-0907

Agenda Date: 1/29/2016

2016 COUNCIL STUDY ISSUE

NUMBER

DPW 16-05

TITLE Central Sunnyvale Shuttle

BACKGROUND

Lead Department: Public Works

Support Department(s): OCM/Economic Development, Environmental Services, Community Development

Sponsor(s):

Board/Commission: Sustainability Commission

History:

1 year ago: N/A

2 years ago: N/A

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

What are the key elements of the study?

The proposed study would explore whether a central city shuttle bus system could be a viable part of an integrated solution to the City's growing need for safe and convenient transportation within the City.

Sunnyvale offers few alternatives to travel by car for residents to reach the City's major employers, shops and restaurants. Mass transit options in Sunnyvale run primarily along two corridors running roughly East-West. VTA runs busses along El Camino Real, and Caltrain provides service to the Sunnyvale and Lawrence train stations. Additionally, VTA's Light Rail runs through North Sunnyvale and other public bus routes service Sunnyvale neighborhoods. These transit options could be further enhanced to provide better connections to Sunnyvale employers, City services, or local shops and restaurants. In addition, City residents have limited alternatives to reach downtown shops and restaurants. As the City continues to develop a vibrant and economically viable downtown, along with new employment centers such as Peery Park and eventually, Lawrence Station, City residents will be increasingly reliant on cars, while City streets are projected to become increasingly congested. Alternatives to automobile access as methods to reach major employers and downtown businesses and services will become increasingly important in the future.

One part of an integrated response to this complex issue would be to introduce shuttle service, connecting downtown Sunnyvale, major employment centers and the Caltrain and VTA Bus corridors.

The proposed study issue would examine and identify partnerships needed to create and maintain effective shuttle service to connect downtown Sunnyvale, major employment centers, and key mass transit centers. The study would examine the potential benefits, expected costs, and possible constraints.

What precipitated this study?

The renewed progress toward completion of downtown Sunnyvale, modernization of the Civic Center, and the growing congestion on City streets have highlighted the need for increasing reliance on alternatives to cars for residents' transportation needs within the city. While downtown Sunnyvale and the Civic Center are within walking distance to CalTrain and can be served by transit running along El Camino, there are less convenient transit opportunities connecting these central Sunnyvale destinations with other Sunnyvale neighborhoods and job centers in the northern and southern parts of the City.

Planned Completion Year: 2018**FISCAL IMPACT****Cost to Conduct Study**

Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost): Major

Amount of funding above current budget required: \$200,000

Funding Source: Will seek budget supplement.

Explanation of Cost:

The cost associated with the study would be for consultant services. The study would examine the possible destinations, routes, potential benefits, and possible constraints, expected costs including capital and operations, and funding options of the proposed shuttle system.

Staff will have to work closely with the consultant on all facets of the project.

Cost to Implement Study Results

Unknown. Study would include assessment of potential costs.

EXPECTED PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESS

Council-approved work plan: No

Council Study Session: Yes

Reviewed by Boards/Commissions: Sustainability Commission

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Position: Drop

Explanation: The City is partnering with VTA to acquire grant funds (\$1.2M) for implementation of a similar two year shuttle pilot program in the Peery Park Specific Plan area. The estimated cost for the two year program is \$1.9 to \$2.2M. Peery Park is an ideal candidate for the shuttle pilot program because of its large existing and planned employment base and its "last mile" proximity to nearby Caltrain and VTA transit stations. Staff expects that a determination on the grant application will be known by end of 2015 and, if the grant is approved, the pilot program would be implemented in late

2016 or early 2017. Staff recommends that the City wait for the results of this pilot program before considering its implementation on a larger scale. If the pilot is successful and funding is available, the option of expanding the program to serve a larger area could be considered.

If this study moves forward, Council might consider combining it with CDD 16-03 which is a similar study issue sponsored by the Planning Commission.

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