



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item

24-1023

Agenda Date: 2/13/2025

2025 COUNCIL STUDY ISSUE

NUMBER

DPW 24-02

TITLE Complete Streets Redesign of Fair Oaks Avenue

BACKGROUND

Lead Department: Public Works

Support Departments: Office of the City Manager
Office of the City Attorney
Finance Department

Sponsor(s): Councilmembers: Mehlinger, Klein, Cisneros, Srinivasan and Sell

History: 1 year ago: Ranked, Below the Line
2 years ago: N/A

Council Strategic Priority: Yes
(At time of sponsorship) Accelerating Climate Action, the Active Transportation Plan and Vision Zero Plan

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

What precipitated this Study?

This Study Issue would examine redesigning Fair Oaks Avenue between Fair Oaks Way and El Camino Real to improve safety and comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists by aligning with the principles of Vision Zero. There are intersections without signals or marked pedestrian crossings, and inconsistent bicycle facilities that alternate between Class II Bicycle Lanes and Class III Bicycle Routes with sharrows.

Fair Oaks Avenue is a north-south Class I Arterial between Fair Oaks Way and N. Wolfe Road, and a Class II Arterial between N. Wolfe Road and El Camino Real. The roadway becomes E. Java Drive north of Fair Oaks Way and E. Remington Drive south of El Camino Real. Fair Oaks Avenue in the study area is split into three different speed limit zones, which consists of a 40 mile per hour (mph) zone between Fair Oaks Way and Ahwanee Avenue, a 30 mph zone between Ahwanee Avenue and Old San Francisco Road, and a 35 mph zone between Old San Francisco Road and El Camino Real. Fair Oaks Avenue is a major bus corridor and has many residential housing and commercial businesses along the corridor.

There is an existing Class II Bicycle Lane on Fair Oaks Avenue from El Camino Real to Old San Francisco Road and from Weddell Drive to Fair Oaks Way. In June 2017 (RTC No. 17-0502), City Council took an action to maintain on-street parking and install bicycle sharrows to implement a Class III Bicycle Route on Fair Oaks Avenue from Old San Francisco Road to Evelyn Avenue, Kifer

Road to Arques Avenue, and Wolfe Road to Ahwanee Avenue. The bicycle facilities were constructed in phases. As part of the Fair Oaks Avenue Bike Lanes and Streetscape Project Phase 1, Class III Bicycle Route was installed on Fair Oaks Avenue from Old San Francisco Road to Evelyn Avenue, from Kifer Road to Arques Avenue, and from Wolfe Road to Ahwanee Avenue. Fair Oaks Avenue Bike Lanes and Streetscape Project Phase 2 provided enhancements like Class II Bicycle Lanes, Class III bicycle markings, and bike detection systems where possible between Arques Avenue and Wolfe Road and between Ahwanee Avenue and Fair Oaks Way. As part of the Fair Oaks Overhead Bridge Repair Project, Class II Bicycle Lanes and a sidewalk on the east side of Fair Oaks Avenue were installed from Evelyn Avenue to Kifer Road.

The Active Transportation Plan calls for Class II Bicycle Lanes on Fair Oaks Avenue from Ahwanee Avenue to Balsam Avenue as part of the full buildout of Sunnyvale's bicycle network. There is also a missing segment of Class II bicycle facility on Fair Oaks Avenue between Ahwanee Avenue and Weddell Drive (within Caltrans' right-of-way). There are missing sidewalks on the west side of Fair Oaks Avenue from Weddell Drive to Ahwanee Avenue (within Caltrans' right-of-way).

There was a fatal collision that occurred during the night on April 22, 2023, at the intersection of Fair Oaks Avenue and E. Taylor Avenue. A pedestrian was walking eastbound on E. Taylor Avenue and was struck by a vehicle traveling northbound on Fair Oaks Avenue. According to the collision report, the driver was at fault and violated California Vehicle Code Section 21950(c) for failure to yield to a pedestrian in an unmarked crosswalk.

What are the key elements of the Study?

The scope of work would include an aerial survey with supplemental topographic survey at intersections, crosswalk/signal warrant analysis, collision analysis, traffic capacity and queueing analysis, level of service analysis, public outreach, a parking study, a design of conceptual improvement plans, and potential cost estimates for design of bid documents and construction costs for specific elements and/or the entire project for the approximate 3.1 mile stretch of Fair Oaks Avenue. The Study would include the necessary elements to prepare the base map using aerial, field supplemental topographic survey, utility base mapping and right-of-way mapping. The base map would be used to prepare preliminary plan line concept design alternatives to improve bicycle (e.g., bike lanes, buffered bicycle lanes, protected bike lanes, two-stage turn boxes, protected intersections) and pedestrian (e.g., wider sidewalks, reduced intersection corner radius, bulb-outs, landscaping/park strips/street trees, new crosswalks, street lighting) infrastructure along Fair Oaks Avenue within the study area. Additionally, drainage, utility relocations, C.3 stormwater treatment pursuant to Provision C.3 of the Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit (MRP), and traffic signal design will need to be considered based on potential bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements.

The Study would include the review of the sidewalk accessibility at the two segments that are missing sidewalks on the west side of Fair Oaks Avenue. Since one of the missing sidewalk segments is within Caltrans' right-of-way, an encroachment permit would be required from Caltrans and additional coordination meetings will be needed for the sidewalk design. A crosswalk/signal warrant analysis will be conducted to determine whether to install new Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon, traffic circles or traffic signals at Balsam Avenue, Taylor Avenue and McKinley Avenue along the Fair Oaks Avenue corridor. The Study would consider concepts, improvements and tools from the City's Active Transportation Plan, Vision Zero Plan, Roadway Safety Plan, and the Valley Transit Authority's Tasman Complete Street Study. The removal of on-street parking along Fair Oaks Avenue would require a parking study

between Old San Francisco Road and Bryan Avenue (three blocks) and between Arques and Arbor avenues (three blocks). Public outreach would be conducted to determine the amount of public support for proposed modifications.

Estimated years to complete study: 3 years

FISCAL IMPACT

Cost to Conduct Study

Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost):	Major
Funding Required for Non-Budgeted Costs:	\$ 750,000
Funding Source:	Would seek budget supplement - General Fund

The cost associated with this Study would be for consultant services to perform the study as listed under the Key Elements of the Study. City staff would work with the consultant throughout the project process including the analysis and the development of recommendations.

Cost to Implement Study Results

Unknown. Study would include assessment of potential costs, including capital and operating.

EXPECTED CITY COUNCIL, BOARD OR COMMISSION PARTICIPATION

Council-Approved Work Plan: No
Council Study Session: Yes
Reviewed by Boards/Commissions: Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Drop. This policy issue does not merit discussion at the 2025 Study Issues Workshop.

The Study proposes contiguous bicycle lanes for the entire length of Fair Oaks Avenue and the removal of Class III Bicycle Route between Ahwanee and Evelyn avenues. Although the City's General Plan Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) Policies LT-3.8 and LT-3.9 prioritize the use of City streets for the movement of vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians over non-transport uses such as parking, these proposed study issue elements conflict with prior City Council action. In June 2017 (RTC No. 17-0502), City Council voted to preserve on-street parking and to install Class III Bicycle Route on Fair Oaks Avenue instead of installing Class II Bicycle Lanes from Old San Francisco Road to Evelyn Avenue, Kifer Road to Arques Avenue, and Wolfe Road to Ahwanee Avenue.

At the 2024 Study Issue/Budget Proposal Workshop, City Council voted to rank DPW 24-02, but it came in below the line due in large part to its size, costs, complexity, and workload for staff. At the May 28, 2024, City Council meeting, Council sponsored Study Issue DPW 25-01 Fair Oaks Avenue Signalizations at Three Locations, which includes a reduced scope of Study Issue DPW 24-02, focusing on evaluating intersection improvements at three intersections along the corridor: Fair Oak Avenue at Balsam Avenue, E. Taylor Avenue and McKinley Avenue. The intention of the new Study Issue is to move elements of the Complete Streets study forward with a smaller project scope and budget. If Council approves Study Issue DPW 25-01, the study would evaluate the potential of implementing a full traffic signal, traffic circle or a High-Intensity Activated crossWalk (HAWK) beacon

at each of the three intersections listed above.

Given the current workload of Study Issues assigned to the Department of Public Works, staff recommends that this Study Issue is dropped and the new Study Issue DPW 25-01 be deferred for reconsideration at a future Study Issues Workshop.

Prepared by: Thinh Le, Transportation Engineer

Reviewed by: Chip Taylor, Director, Department of Public Works

Reviewed by: Sarah Johnson-Rios, Assistant City Manager

Approved by: Tim Kirby, City Manager