

Sunnyvale City Council Summary - Thursday, May 22, 2025

The Sunnyvale City Council meeting was held in person and possibly online via Zoom on Thursday, May 22, 2025, at 8:32 AM.

The following council members were present at the meeting:

- * Mayor Klein
- * Vice Mayor Sell
- * Council Member Cisneros
- * Council Member Mallinger
- * Council Member Srinivasan
- * Council Member Chang
- * Council Member Lay

I. Fiscal Year 2025/26 Budget Workshop:

- Overview highlighted economic resilience despite slowing property tax growth (76% of revenue), prioritizing service delivery, infrastructure, and reserves (\$1.7M SLSA reserve) with 976 FTE positions.
- Significant discussion on Budget Stabilization Fund variance and long-term projections.
- New positions approved for ERP system, GIS program, Public Works, Library (Lakewood expansion), and Recreation.
- Debate occurred on community event funding and future budget needs.
- Council members questioned increasing inspection hours despite declining construction permits, due to ongoing projects from previously issued permits.
- Discussion included unfunded work plan projects, to be addressed in one-on-one meetings with the Director of Finance and City Manager.

II. Project Labor Agreements (PLAs):

- UA Local 393 advocated for Study Issue 2407 to explore PLA benefits in city projects, emphasizing quality, safety, cost-effectiveness, and workforce development.
- Council approved funding for the PLA study as part of Budget Supplement 1. Council members expressed full support for the motion. Discussion highlighted the similarity of this process to Mountain View's, emphasizing timely action and the importance of maintaining high standards on city projects.

III. Public Comment Continued & SV Hopper Micro Transit:

- Public comment included advocacy for the SV Hopper micro-transit system and its \$4 million state grant.
- Jonathan Blum reiterated support for the Fair Oaks safety project, bike lane sweeper, and Homestead Road bike lanes. Councilmember Sell expressed excitement about the bike lane sweeper, a topic discussed since before their time on council.

IV. Clean Water Program and Wastewater Treatment Plant:

- Presentation covered the ~\$300 million secondary wastewater treatment plant (part of a ~\$981 million, 29-project, 20-year plan).
- Discussion included rehabilitation projects, maintaining operations during construction, and sea level rise protection.
- Council members questioned project timeline, budget, and potential resident impacts.

V. Murphy Avenue Improvements and Miscellaneous Items:

- Discussion included ADA-accessible trash cans, cigarette butt dispensers, and funding for Murphy Avenue improvements.
- Concerns were raised about area cleanliness and illegal short-term rentals.
- Council discussed multi-unit bulky item pickup and trash can door weight.

VI. Governance and Community Engagement Projects:

- Initiatives included translation of library and recreation policy documents.

- Approved increased biennial election funding for up to 7 ballot measures (\$1.6 million).
- Approved continued study of the study issues process (August study session, October implementation plan, \$95,000 budget).
- The Community Equity Assessment project received increased outreach funding (~\$180,000 budget).
- Annual funding for the Community Events and Neighborhoods Grants Program increased (\$150,000, twice yearly). The safe parking program expansion was highlighted as inspiring and valuable due to its community engagement.

VII. IT Initiatives and Ongoing Projects:

- Digital Accessibility Implementation Project (website ADA compliance by April 2026).
- CRM implementation to replace Access Sunnyvale (vendor demonstrations the following week).
- Ongoing projects included website updates, server upgrades, cybersecurity assessments, and aerial photography.
- ERP system implementation is complete, with ongoing maintenance and development.
- Cybersecurity improvements are ongoing, including a \$25,000 annual R&D fund.
- GIS program expansion with two new staff positions; contract expected in late summer/early fall.

VIII. Public Safety IT Initiatives:

- Major investment in new Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system implementation (on schedule).
- Replacement of end-of-life Police Records Management System (RMS) is unfunded.
- New work order management system (CMS) implementation for Public Works and ESD.
- New Recreation Management System replacing a legacy system (vendor demonstrations underway).

IX. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Initiatives:

- Pilot project for a city-specific Large Language Model (LLM) for staff reports.
- Pilot program testing co-pilot and chatGPT for staff email generation.

- New AI governance platform implementation, including staff training.
- Focus on streamlining workflows, with human review of all AI-generated content.

X. Infrastructure and Miscellaneous Projects:

- Replacement of light pole banners on El Camino, Matilda, and Downtown Sunnyvale.
- IT infrastructure upgrades (server replacement, network improvements, increased bandwidth).
- Project reporting and community engagement initiatives (dashboards and feedback mechanisms).
- Improved e-discovery system (SMARSH) for Public Records Act (PRA) requests.

XI. Traffic and Transportation:

- Approximately 71 ongoing projects totaling \$772 million (\$180 million unfunded).
- Long-range plans guided by TSP, ATP, Vision Zero Plan, and VTP.
- Caltrain grade separation at Mary Avenue (environmental clearance underway, significant funding gap).
- Sunnyvale Avenue grade separation (design alternative selected; bike/pedestrian undercrossing planned).
- Pavement, sidewalk, curb, and gutter maintenance (ongoing, multi-million dollar program).
- Downtown Specific Plan (Murphy Avenue pedestrian mall design underway, expected completion Spring 2026). Many projects in various phases, some earmarked or grant-funded.

XII. Website ADA Compliance and Updates:

- Council rejected supplemental budget item #6 for website improvements due to recent staffing additions.
- Newly added communications staff will handle website updates.
- Website receives regular updates and a full platform redesign every 10 years (next in 2030).
- ADA compliance includes web pages and PDFs from various departments.

XIII. Active Transportation Projects:

- Evelyn Multi-Use Trail: Design nearing completion this fall (2025); \$5.8 million budget; construction

anticipated to begin in 2026, with completion estimated for late 2026 or early 2027. Potential crosswalk additions.

- East Channel Trail Study: Ongoing study for pedestrian/bicycle access; funding from Google, County, and City.
- Mary Avenue Overcrossing (over 237/101): Draft EIR release this fall (2025); currently unfunded (>\$300 million estimated cost). Council expressed concern over escalating costs, mirroring Burlingame's experience. City managers are coordinating with Caltrain to address cost increases.
- Poplar Sidewalk: Design almost complete; grant funding received through Housing Incentive. Council emphasized the importance of expediting completion.
- Bernardo Pedestrian/Bike Undercrossing: Environmental clearance underway; funding gap exists; agreements with Caltrain pending.
- Stevens Creek Trail Extension (Remington to Fremont): Environmental clearance delayed; some construction funding secured.

XIV. Public Safety Department Budget and Projects:

- The Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety presented their budget and priorities, encompassing police, fire, and emergency services.
- Recruitment remains a top priority, with a 3-year budget plan covering training costs.
- Ongoing projects include consultant services for disaster response annexes and ARC supplies replacement.
- Several grant-funded projects were highlighted, including those focused on tobacco enforcement, law enforcement equipment, traffic safety, and community engagement.
- New projects for FY25/26 and 26/27 include sworn officer recruitment/training and an armored personnel vehicle replacement. A drone program for first responders is also planned, with an initial focus on community outreach and policy development. Officer wellness surveys are conducted to gauge the effectiveness of wellness grant programs. Concerns were raised regarding the use of carpet in fire stations, with hard flooring being considered for safety and maintenance reasons.

XV. Parks, Recreation, and Golf:

- 79 park projects totaling ~\$245 million, mostly funded by the Park Dedication Fund.
- Corn Palace Park (2-acre, \$5.75 million) nearing completion; playground equipment already ordered.
- Lakewood Park renovation in design phase, completion in 2026-2027. Includes an all-inclusive playground grant.
- Los Palmas Park renovation and enhancement project in outreach and concept planning phases (~\$9 million total); community input incorporated into budget.
- Community Center Grounds renovation and enhancement project underway, aiming for completion next summer. Includes addition of public Wi-Fi.
- Court restriping project includes \$200,000 for converting some basketball/tennis courts to accommodate pickleball; additional outreach planned to gauge community support for location choices. Council members expressed concerns regarding potential conflicts between pickleball and basketball/tennis players. Orchard Gardens and San Antonio Park renovations are upcoming.
- A master capital plan for golf course improvements is being developed to address deferred maintenance. The plan will likely be presented separately or incorporated into next year's budget. Current annual subsidy from the general fund is \$500,000, down from \$1.5 million last year due to fee increases and cost-cutting measures. Revenue generation ideas include partnerships with companies like DriveBox for golf simulators and robotic mowers.

XVI. Library Administration and Facilities:

- Lakewood Branch Library: Under construction; anticipated completion early 2026, ~\$30 million; includes ~20,000 sq ft of library and classroom space.
- Courtyard Modernization Plan: Phase 1 (new fleet building) in 2026-2027 budget; Phases 2 & 3 unfunded (~\$76 million).
- Fire Station Construction/Remodel: Fire Station #2 concept approved, in design phase (~\$40 million); other fire stations will undergo remodeling.

- Main Library Restroom Repair: Repairs underway; additional funding sought for more extensive remodel.
- Other Projects: Ongoing projects include generator replacement, senior center building rehab, Columbia Middle School infrastructure improvements, parks building rehab, and performing arts infrastructure upgrades.

XVII. Community Development Projects:

- 37 active projects and 3 new projects were reviewed. One active project (sanctioned encampment) was removed, freeing up \$40,000.
- New projects include: Santa Clara County Planning Collaborative (\$37,000 for consultant assistance); \$100,000 grant for safe parking programs at places of worship and nonprofits; and annual funding for the 2031-2039 Housing Element update.
- Active projects are categorized by topic: Homeless Services, Affordable Housing, Housing Element/Below Market Rate, Federal Funds, Planning Division Activities, and Building Projects. Many use CDBG and HOME funds.
- Design guideline updates are underway, including the citywide design guidelines (Chapter 3 update) and low-density design techniques.
- Building projects include climate action plan support, solar panel permitting, and a structural retrofit feasibility study.

XVIII. Budget Supplements:

- Six budget supplements were considered, five of which required council action (Study Issues 1,3,4,5 & 6).
- Supplement 1 included \$510,000 for various one-time study issues, all recommended by staff, including funding for a PLA study and bike lane sweeper.
- Supplement 4, a grant proposal for safe parking, was discussed for its funding source (General Fund vs. service level set-aside).
- Supplement 6, concerning website improvements, was ultimately withdrawn due to existing plans

and staffing changes.

- Supplement 2 (PLAs) was approved with an addition regarding project capacity. The additional \$120,000 for safe parking will come from the general fund budget stabilization fund.

XIX. Budget Adoption and Closing Remarks:

- The council voted to approve the budget supplements.
- The City Manager and Finance Director thanked staff for their work on the budget.
- Council members expressed appreciation for the city's fiscally thoughtful approach.
- The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:00 PM. The City Manager received a birthday cake from the finance team.

XX. Other Discussions:

- Concerns regarding lower-than-projected property tax increases and online sales tax revenue allocation were raised.
- Data requests included water costs, tennis court utilization, and ridership for the Peary Park Transportation Project.
- Budget updates included tree pruning, core network completion, traffic calming, event planning, and clarification on a 100% trash reduction goal for stormwater.
- Questions arose about cybersecurity for utility infrastructure and the recycled water filtration system, as well as an AMI project budget discrepancy.
- Discussions also covered power generation facility engine overhauls, cogeneration projects, pesticide-free fields studies, and horizontal saw cutting for sidewalk repairs.
- Council Member Lay inquired about the scope of the Lakewood Safe Routes to School project.
- Council Member Chang requested clarification on the Poplar Sidewalk timeline.
- Concerns were raised about the infrequent timeline for traffic analysis in the Bicycle Improvement Planning Study.
- Council noted significant progress in addressing tree trimming backlog.

- Discussion included slurry seal on Homestead Road and the pace of ADA curb ramp compliance.
- Councilmember Millinger raised concerns about the condition of the Community Center and Performing Arts Center buildings, suggesting a master plan for future renovations.
- The annual credit card fees paid by the city (\$1 million) and plans to pass these charges along to customers (except for utilities) were addressed.
- Discussions about the FIFA and Super Bowl events included potential economic development and public safety considerations, with staff outlining plans to address any needed budget modifications after learning more about the events and potential sponsorships.