

Sunnyvale City Council Summary - Tuesday, April 22, 2025

The meeting was a special council meeting study session held in person on April 20, 2025, at 5:30 PM. The meeting was also accessible online via Zoom.

The following council members were present at the meeting:

- * Vice Mayor Sal
- * Council Member Cisneros
- * Council Member Mallinger
- * Council Member Srinivasan
- * Council Member Chang
- * Councilmember (name not specified)
- * Councilmember Lai

I. Renovation of Median Island Landscaping to Low Maintenance:

- Project to renovate medians on Fremont and Fair Oaks Avenues (\$2.735 million budget).
- Two options considered: decomposed granite (Option A) and lush landscaping (Option B). Option A recommended for cost-effectiveness.
- Concerns raised about Option A's heat island effect and aesthetics, and Option B's high maintenance costs (8x Option A). Public preferred Option B.
- Council discussed tree selection, phased implementation, native species, water conservation, and public perception.
- Drainage concerns for both options require further investigation, particularly for Option B.

II. Street Lighting on Medians:

- Council Member Cisneros inquired about median street light condition and replacement schedule.
- Staff reported that fixtures are replaced as needed and periodically assessed for spacing.
- Existing lighting deemed acceptable; replacement may be bundled with future median renovation

projects. No immediate replacement needed.

III. Ground Cover and Vegetation:

- Discussion focused on ground cover for Option B, prioritizing climate-adapted, drought-tolerant plants.
- Concerns raised regarding high maintenance costs of Option B's ground cover (8x decomposed granite).
- Need for clarification on specific plant species and addressing potential overgrowth into roadways.

IV. Median Maintenance Staffing and Budgetary Constraints:

- Median maintenance staffing reduced due to economic downturns (dot-com bubble and Great Recession).
- Parks maintenance prioritized over median maintenance, leading to combined work groups and attrition.
- Increased maintenance for Option B would impact park maintenance or require additional funding.
- Council members discussed balancing aesthetics with long-term maintenance costs and impact on other city services.

V. Public Outreach and Community Engagement:

- Council members stressed the importance of community outreach and gathering public input.
- Challenges identified contacting communities along Fair Oaks Avenue due to lacking neighborhood associations.
- A phased approach and exploration of alternative treatments were suggested.

VI. Special Presentations and Recognitions:

- Meeting began with a presentation honoring winners of the 2025 Food Cycle art contest.
- Sunnyvale's 55th Annual Earth Day was recognized, honoring local green businesses.
- Public Service Recognition Week (May 4th-10th) was proclaimed, honoring city employees.
- Chief Fawn No of the Department of Public Safety was honored upon his retirement after 36 years

of service.

VII. Oral Communications and Public Comment:

- Former Mayor Glenn Hendricks thanked Chief Fawn No for his service.
- Carl Guardino invited council members to the 5th annual Stars and Strides community run.
- Council members offered individual thank you's to Chief No for his years of service.

VIII. Nova Workforce Service Department Informational Update:

- Nova serves businesses and adults in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, providing career services and training. Last year: 1,642 individuals served, over \$863,000 in training scholarships, generating \$38 million in new income.
- Nova's "Launch Lab" pilots partnerships embedding career advisors. Focus is on partnerships and self-sufficiency.
- Youth program (ages 17-24) offers 400+ hours of internships. Collaborates with Sunnyvale school districts.
- Addresses workforce preparedness concerns, noting soft skills gaps and AI challenges.
- Addresses workforce development for the unhoused, emphasizing a "whole person" approach and collaboration with organizations like Project We Hope. Recent federal restrictions on work authorization assistance are being addressed.

IX. Animal Shelter Services and Municipal Code Suspension:

- Humane Society of Silicon Valley (HSSV) terminated services due to a facility fire.
- Santa Clara County Animal Shelter selected as an emergency provider (33 miles away), creating issues for TNR services.
- County shelter cannot impound healthy stray cats, necessitating suspension of relevant Sunnyvale Municipal Code section.
- County offers free spay/neuter services for Sunnyvale residents' stray cats (residents responsible for transport).

- City plans to issue an RFP for a long-term animal services provider. Public comment highlighted the need for a local solution and the success of Bay Area Cats. Council approved a motion to suspend the ordinance and conduct a study session on animal control services by the end of the year.

X. Council Strategic Framework and Priorities (2025-2027):

- Council reviewed and approved a strategic framework outlining Sunnyvale's mission, values, and vision.
- Five key priority areas: governance, community, sustainability, housing, and infrastructure.
- A work plan with 145 items was presented, aligning with strategic priorities and including study issues, projects, and state-mandated actions.
- Quarterly reporting on work plan status is planned, with a new reporting system replacing the current NAC system. Council requested email updates for changes and data visualization improvements. Integration of Vision Zero plan and clear tracking of study issues from the strategic priorities workshop were also requested. The plan is considered a "living document".
- Council members discussed the need for resident volunteer opportunities to increase community involvement and support city efforts. Suggestions included city-run programs and online listings of volunteer opportunities.

XI. CRM System Implementation:

- Initial plan: Streamlined process, RFP issued to Barry Dunn, July 2024 report, followed by RFP, 2025 contract negotiations, and 12-16 month implementation.
- Eleven proposals received; evaluation underway. Possible 1-2 month delay for a "sandbox" environment.
- Contract negotiation will follow vendor selection, aiming for a 10-year contract.
- Implementation will begin after council approval of the contract; timeline now pushed back to December of the following year.

XII. Data Transparency and Council Policy:

- Councilmember requested CSV files alongside large data tables presented to council.
- PDFs are difficult to analyze; a CSV offers easier data manipulation.
- Suggestion to add this to the Council policy handbook or establish an internal policy.
- Staff will investigate feasibility of providing CSV files.

XIII. Vision Zero and Active Transportation Plan:

- Vision Zero plan prioritizes locations with high collision rates; funding sought through grants and integration into existing projects.
- Active Transportation Plan uses a tiered prioritization system for grant opportunities.
- Grant acquisition is a significant workload, impacting project timelines. Staffing changes also affect project progress.
- Council seeks better visibility into workload and grant-seeking efforts to balance project priorities.

XIV. Council Member Reports and Intergovernmental Committee Assignments:

- Councilmember Srinivasan reported on the Valley Water Commission, including rate changes and emergency preparedness discussions. A tour of Anderson Dam was also mentioned.
- Vice Mayor Sal reported on VTA grant programs for transit-oriented artwork and a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new battery energy storage system at the Hanford Hybrid Energy Center, a Silicon Valley Clean Energy project.
- Councilmember Chang shared news of Fremont Union High School students' success in a competition in Houston.
- Councilmember Lai promoted upcoming events: a leadership development forum and the Sunnyvale Education Foundation's annual showcase. The Mayor also announced a town hall coffee meeting.

XV. Non-Agenda Items and Comments:

- The City Manager brought attention to information-only study issues in the council packet.

- The meeting adjourned at 11:07 PM.

XVI. Other Discussions:

- Discussion included various projects' timelines (poplar sidewalk, Plaza del Sol completion, Mary Avenue grade separation), and the feasibility of a drone first-responder program.
- Council also discussed the Homestead Avenue bike lanes, the Active Transportation Plan update, the Welcoming Engaged Community Plan, and activating volunteer programs ("Adopt-a-Storm Drain," "Adopt-a-Park").
- Funding sources and grant acquisition challenges were recurring themes.