

**Stevens Creek Boulevard Corridor Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 23, 2024, 9:00 AM
Hybrid Meeting
City of San José - Council Chambers and Virtually**

The Stevens Creek Corridor Steering Committee was created to provide guidance and oversee the planning work involved in the Stevens Creek Corridor Study, a collaborative effort between the Cities of San José, Santa Clara, and Cupertino, the County of Santa Clara, and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA). The Committee will improve transportation options along the corridor and increase the collaboration between the cities and agencies represented to bring our residents a more traversable and interconnected future.

Attendees:

Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei, City of San José, Committee Chair
Councilmember Hung Wei, City of Cupertino
Vice Mayor Anthony Becker, City of Santa Clara
Board Member Margaret Abe-Koga, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

Absent:

Supervisor Cindy Chavez, Santa Clara County
Councilmember Dev Davis, City of San José (alternate)
Mayor Lisa Gillmor, City of Santa Clara (alternate)
Supervisor Susan Ellenberg, Santa Clara County (alternate)

1. Introductions

- a. Roll call of Steering Committee members.
- b. Committee Chair Vice Mayor Kamei of San José led the introduction of participating agencies.

2. Steering Committee administration - For discussion and action: Approve last meeting minutes

- a. Councilmember Hung Wei motions to approve the Steering Committee February 22, 2024 meeting minutes.



- b. Vice Mayor Anthony Becker seconds the motion.
 - c. Motion is carried unanimously.
3. **Draft Vision Statement review and adoption - For discussion and action: Stevens Creek Boulevard Corridor Vision Statement**
- a. Sean Daly of Iteris provides a presentation on the Vision Statement development process.
 - i. Vice Mayor Kamei thanks former Vice Mayor Chappie Jones for his work on the Vision Study.
 - ii. Vice Mayor Kamei moves to public comment.
 - b. **Public Comment on Draft Vision Statement**
 - i. **Carlin Black (in-person):** As a change agent in the automobile business, Carlin suggests that the Committee consider the changes that will be made on Stevens Creek, specifically with the automobile dealerships. As vehicle electrification continues to progress, Carlin thinks that gas vehicles may no longer be a viable option, which will result in empty dealership lots. This can provide an opportunity to consider development opportunities to replace auto dealerships.
 - ii. **Yvonne Thorstenson (in-person):** As a Cupertino housing advocacy group representative, they are very interested in the transit vision program because it aligns with housing. During the walk and transit audit, they noticed many dealerships, which is significant as the corridor's layout may change in the next 50 years. She appreciated the Draft Vision Statement but wants it to recognize the first and last-mile journey and emphasize safety. Adding environmental sustainability, particularly reducing greenhouse gasses and better land use around the corridor, would also benefit the Vision Statement. Lastly, she is concerned about private businesses seeking exclusive access to public spaces offering public resources.
 - iii. **Jennifer Griffin (online):** As a Cupertino resident, she expressed concern about having transit stations along Stevens Creek Boulevard. The latest version of the draft Vision Statement suggests developing a new transit system that supersedes the current system operating on the corridor, with existing issues that must be addressed. Road diets on the corridor are also concerning to her due to the increasing traffic that stagnates the CA-87 and I-280. It is important to keep in mind that there must also be enough room for emergency vehicles to have adequate roadways to reach their destinations.

- iv. **Brandon Black (online):** As a resident of the Strawberry Park neighborhood, he expressed his excitement about the Vision Study and the work that has been done on the draft Vision Statement.

c. Steering Committee Questions and Comments

- i. **Vice Mayor Anthony Becker** expressed his appreciation to Chappie Jones for his initial work on the corridor and how it allowed the Cities of Santa Clara, San José, and Cupertino to come together and create a relationship. He acknowledged that if you remove the borders from each city, the corridor has more of a neighborhood feel that connects all cities. He also expressed his appreciation to the consultant team for all the work put into developing the draft Vision Statement and how clear it is to see the different perspectives from all stakeholders collaborating. Vice Mayor Becker understands that auto dealerships are a big part of the conversation and tax revenue source, particularly for Santa Clara and San José.
- ii. **Councilmember Hung Wei** noted that the Purpose Statement differs from the Vision Statement in that it reads “from Foothill Boulevard to Diridon Station,” while the Vision Statement reads “from De Anza Boulevard to Diridon Station in San José.” She suggested refining the Vision Statement to “from De Anza Boulevard with a connection to Foothill Boulevard.” Cupertino is focused on this area due to ongoing developments like the post office, golf course, retirement center, and Alan Row. These developments could benefit from transit, making De Anza College a potential major transit center with a connection to Foothill.
- iii. **Councilmember Margaret Abe-Koga** appreciated the Vision Statement and its values and guiding principles but suggested revisions. She proposed changing the second line to “reliably connect” instead of “reliability.” She found “vulnerable road users” vague and difficult to understand. She also questioned the phrase “design for all ages,” seeking clarity on the design element. Additionally, she wanted more context on “increase the convenience of all travel,” asking which type of travel (pedestrians, bicyclists, cars, or transit) is being targeted. In the Vision Statement, she emphasized the need to include language on climate change and reducing carbon emissions.
- iv. **Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei** agrees with Councilmember Abe-Koga on how we cannot just look at this Vision Study as a commuter area because there are many other uses that this corridor provides. We also need to

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keep in mind that the current uses of the corridor may change, especially with automobiles, so we need to start thinking ahead of the opportunities that can be gained with these changes. She also added that the word “station” can be interpreted differently, so clarity on terms used throughout the Draft Vision Statement is important.

Steering Committee member Vice Mayor Anthony Becker motioned to adopt the Draft Vision Statement and incorporate the feedback that Councilmember Margaret Abe-Koga suggested. Councilmember Margaret Abe-Koga seconded the motion. Councilmember Hung Wei made an amendment to the motion to include Foothill Boulevard as a connection in the Vision Statement, and Vice Mayor Anthony Becker accepted the amendment. The motion was carried unanimously.

4. Phase 3 - Vision implementation alternatives - For discussion: Engagement review

- a. Christian Ollano (Winter Consulting), Stefania Diaz (Winter Consulting), and Sean T. Daly (Iteris) presented an overview of engagement activities during Phase 3 of the Vision Study engagement process. Engagement activities included:
 - 1. Community leader listening sessions
 - 2. 1 Student focus group
 - 3. 1 Bike tour
 - 4. 1 Walk and transit tour
 - 5. 1 Webinar
 - 6. 1 Community Advisory Group meeting

b. Steering Committee Questions and Comments

- i. **Vice Mayor Anthony Becker** mentioned that cyclists complained about storm drain grates, tire-sticking hazards, and pavement issues during the bike audit. He acknowledged the biking community's emphasis on various biking and safety concerns. He noted limited trees on the Santa Clara side and highlighted that the tree canopy will be a major issue on the Stevens Creek Corridor due to climate change.

5. Review of alternatives approach (for discussion)

- a. **Sean T. Daly** presented an overview of the options and implementation approach influencing the Draft Vision Statement. He focused on crossings, community connections, street layout, access to transit stations, transit speed and reliability, transit grade separation, and economic development.

b. Steering Committee Questions and Comments

- i. **Vice Mayor Anthony Becker** highlighted the interest in transit grade separation among Santa Clara residents, whether elevated or underground, and emphasized the need for alternative transportation systems. Regarding economic development, he noted the loss of iconic spots in the corridor and stressed incorporating branding and design standards into the Vision Study. He also appreciated each city's efforts to improve street configurations.
- ii. **Councilmember Margaret Abe-Koga**, who serves on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), appreciated the alternative approach presentation. She noted that many projects deemed feasible a decade ago are now unachievable due to financial challenges. Her focus has shifted to near-term, low-cost projects that can create significant improvements. She prioritized quickly implementable studies rather than waiting 10-30 years for project completion. She also requested information on discussions about bus rapid transit on the corridor.
 1. **Sean T. Daly** explained that the 523 bus line already provides rapid transit service. The team plans to enhance this service by prioritizing transit signals and identifying necessary station improvements. Initially, they will focus on improving the 523 and 23 bus lines. Once these near-term improvements are complete, they will move towards long-term enhancements, including considering transit-only lanes.
 2. **Councilmember Margaret Abe-Koga** agrees that high-speed rail is becoming more popular and notes that the airport connector should also be considered as this Vision Study moves forward. Regarding economic development, mixed-use housing and adding more consumers will support this corridor.
- iii. **Councilmember Hung Wei** expressed that this Vision Study and its potential improvements should include accessible, frequent, reliable transit. Without reliable, frequent transit, you will still compete with single drivers. This is why the near-term improvements must be pieced together to fit into the 15-25-year plan. The Vision Study should also consider federal funding sources for implementation.
 1. **Sean T. Daly** recognizes that funding will be a major aspect of this, especially for a multifaceted project of this size. He emphasizes that the implementation plan will help pull the smaller pieces together and make them functional for each city.

2. **Councilmember Hung Wei** added that initial investments might be something to consider for the smaller implementation pieces.
 3. **Sean T. Daly** explained that the implementation plan can also be viewed as a program of various projects that reach the vision.
 - iv. **Councilmember Margaret Abe-Koga** asked about the funding process for each city jurisdiction. She used the example of CalTrain and how each city jurisdiction has taken a different approach to receiving funding. She thinks it may be helpful for each city jurisdiction to work together. She inquired if a lead agency will take the funding on.
 1. **Sean T. Daly** explained that the smaller-scale improvements are done at the city level and that the larger-scale improvements will involve larger organizations and a more unified effort with each city.
 - v. **Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei** wants an integrated design everyone can agree on. If the Vision Study moves to implementation, agreements on connectivity improvements should be established and properly integrated. She advocates for a common design across cities and jurisdictions for long-term benefits.
 - vi. **Vice Mayor Anthony Becker** noted that cities hire lobbyists at certain times of the year to seek federal funds. He inquired whether the Vision Study could do the same to obtain funding. If not, he suggested presenting the issue to city councils for full support and exploring funding options.
 1. **Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei** recognizes that each city jurisdiction has its own lobbyists and priorities for funding. Given the large scale of the Vision Study, we can use its results to align our city councils on potential improvements and begin collective implementation.
 2. **Ramses Madou** division manager of planning, policy, and sustainability for San José's Department of Transportation, emphasized that the Vision Study's importance lies in shaping an overall vision to secure funding. Presenting this vision to the city council for approval is crucial for obtaining project funding. Our collaborative plans are essential in motivating funding bodies to support us.
6. **Next steps - For discussion and action: Future Steering Committee meeting dates/locations:**

a. **Proposed dates**



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- i. Meeting #5 (Implementation Plan): Thursday, September 5, 2024 - 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
 1. Vice Mayor Kamei mentioned that in the case the implementation plan is not fully adopted, that a sixth meeting should be tentatively set, which could be removed if not needed.

- ii. **Steering Committee Questions and Comments**
 1. **Councilmember Magaret Abe Koga** noted that she has a conflict on the September 5, 2024 date because she has a Caltrain board meeting on the first Thursday. She also stated that she is open to any future meetings that need to be accomplished before the end of the year.
 2. **Vice Mayor Anthony Becker** expressed that he is also open to any additional meetings.
 - a. **Christian Ollano** mentioned that he will send an email to the Steering Committee members with Doodle polls to finalize the upcoming meeting dates for Steering Committee meetings #5 and #6.
 - b. **Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei** explained that it would be easier to tentatively schedule a Steering Committee meeting by placing holds on their calendars.

- b. **Public Comment**
 - i. **Harry Neil (In-person)** emphasized that the Vision Study reflects a long-term vision for the next 20, 30, and 50 years. Therefore, the end goals must go beyond small steps from the status quo, urging a grander approach.
 - ii. **Yvonne Thorstenson (In-person)** is an avid cyclist who advocates for bicycles, noting their longer history compared to cars. With years of cycling experience, she has witnessed the dangers of riding near cars. She recommends avoiding right-hand turns for vehicles that cross bicycle lanes.
 - iii. **Jennifer Griffin (online)** expressed concern that the presence of cars on the corridor is being trivialized. She has heard many naive comments about cars, making her feel that those making these comments lack driving experience. She is also worried that the City of San José is neglecting San José State University and should focus on how to improve transportation for its students. Additionally, she emphasized that the

study should stop focusing on De Anza College, as it is only a junior college.

c. Steering Committee Questions and Comments

- i. **Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei** noted that as we begin implementation, we need to consider changing habits. She acknowledges that some community members may be unhappy, but it's important to include those who haven't participated in Vision Study events. Shifting their thinking is crucial, as changing habits is a significant part of this Vision Study.
- ii. **Councilmember Hung Wei** emphasized that an integrated design is crucial for the Vision Study. Such a design will eventually help the pieces fall into place. She also believes it's important to have a five, 10, or 15-year plan before considering the project's long-term aspects, aiding each city with their respective implementation.

7. General Public Comment

- a. **Jennifer Griffin (online)** mentioned that she belongs to three different groups in California focused on housing elements. She noted that Senator Weiner and others are promoting four anti-coastal commission bills that impact home construction in sensitive coastal areas. Additionally, she mentioned an upcoming audit of the housing element and each city's handling of the sixth cycle. She pointed out that SB9 is not legal in charter cities, which will affect transportation.

Adjournment at 10:56 AM

Note:

Please direct correspondence and questions to:



City of San José
Division Manager, Planning, Policy, and Sustainability
Department of Transportation
Ramses Madou
City of San José
ramses.madou@sanjoseca.gov
Tel: 408-975-3283

