



**City of
Santa Clara**
The Center of What's Possible

AGENDA ITEM #: 3N

AGENDA REPORT

Date: July 9, 2019

To: City Manager

From: Acting Executive Assistant to the Mayor & City Council

Subject: Correspondence received regarding Item #3.N on July 9, 2019 City Council Meeting Agenda

From Wednesday, June 26, 2019, at 12:00 p.m., through Tuesday evening, July 9, 2019, at 5:00 p.m., the Mayor and City Council Offices received the attached communications regarding Item #3.N – Action on a Resolution for the Sustainable Communities Grants Restricted Grant Agreement for Fiscal Year 2019/20 with the California Department of Transportation for the Pruneridge Avenue Complete Streets Plan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Genevieve Yip", written over a horizontal line.

Genevieve Yip
Acting Executive Assistant to the
Mayor & City Council

Documents Related to this Report:

- 1) *Communications received*

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POST MEETING MATERIAL

7/9/2019

3N

Genevieve Yip

From: Sue Hinton <seh1593@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, July 6, 2019 2:40 PM
To: Mayor and Council
Subject: 7/9/2019 Council Agenda #19-675 Caltrans Sustainable Restricted Grant for Pruneridge Complete Streets Plan
Attachments: 2019_CarsAndBikes-Pruneridge.PNG
Categories: POST MEETING MATERIAL

Dear Mayor Gillmor and City Council Members:

This letter addresses various issues regarding the July 9, 2019 City Council Agenda file #19-675, "Action on a Resolution for the Sustainable Communities Grants Restricted Grant Agreement for Fiscal Year 2019/20 with the California Department of Transportation for the Pruneridge Avenue Complete Streets Plan." To refresh memories, below is a portion of text from the City's website on the Pruneridge Avenue Complete Streets Plan:

"The scope includes an analysis of current and projected traffic needs for the Pruneridge Avenue corridor and how the inclusion of bicycle lanes along this portion of Pruneridge Avenue is projected to affect traffic operations. Additionally, the project will analyze whether additional pedestrian improvements such as wider sidewalks, curb bulb-outs, landscaping, lighting and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility improvements are necessary."
<http://santaclaraca.gov/Home/Components/News/News/39057/3171>

Our home is near Pruneridge, and I regularly walk down portions of the current bicycle "improvement" (known colloquially as a "road diet") between the light at Cronin and Lawrence Expressway. I also drive along that part of Pruneridge several times a week. Before learning of the above plan, to extend this "improvement" eastward along Pruneridge to Winchester, I had made a number of personal observations concerning the current configuration, completed in 2012: 1) I hardly see any bikes on the "improved" section of Pruneridge; 2) I see a **lot** of cars (and personally appreciate the crossing light added to Pruneridge at Cronin in 2018); 3) During morning and evening rush hour there are now often long lines of cars sitting still along the "improved" section of Pruneridge; 4) Prior to the "improvement" there were many fewer cars waiting in line at stoplights; 5) Most of these cars are neither hybrid nor electric and are therefore releasing non-sustainable emissions into the air while sitting still; 6) There are more cars cutting through our neighborhoods, from Forbes, than before -- probably in order to avoid some sitting still along Pruneridge.

Imagine these sorts of changes extended along Pruneridge eastward from Cronin to Winchester. I do not think citizens living along those sections will be made happier. However I realized that my observations were informal, so I wondered - are there any actual measurements made before and after the 2012 changes to Pruneridge? And the answer is "Yes!" In 2013 the City engaged Kimley-Horn & Associates to perform a before and after study, and here is a summary of the results: After the current road diet, from Pomeroy to Lawrence, bike riding (according to <http://santaclaraca.gov/home/showdocument?id=9075>) increased 100% which sounds awesome until you realize that **total riders increased from 32-per-day to 64-per-day**. Meanwhile auto traffic remained above 12,000-per-day. This is a ratio, 64 bikes to 12,000 cars, of 0.5%.

Of course that study was done 6 years ago which is a fairly long time, especially now that the new Apple ring campus, at the end of Pruneridge in Cupertino, is open. So I decided to run my own study, keeping an excel spreadsheet, which is attached with results for the past eight (8) days. Note that the percentage of bikes to cars has increased from 0.5% in 2013. In fact it's tripled. This sounds totally awesome until one realizes that the current percentage is 1.55%. **This means that in 2019 for every 200 cars there are 3.1 bikes**. Just for fun, let's imagine that changing all of Pruneridge, from Winchester to Lawrence, would --let's be daring-- quadruple the percent of bikes. So for every 12.4 bikes there would be

200 not-very-happy voters, perhaps sitting in their cars spewing fossil fuel emissions. Is this really a win for the planet or for the City?

But, of course, I am one person walking at somewhat random times down different lengths of Pruneridge Avenue for different periods of time. Wouldn't it be terrific if there was a more official, perhaps even a City study? Guess what? There is! The City of Santa Clara Bicycle Update Plan 2018 (<http://santaclaraca.gov/home/showdocument?id=64549>) is a long document with essentially two (2) major parts. The first part is entitled "Santa Clara Today," and it includes a careful study of today's conditions, including a percentage of bike-to-cars, and of types of bicyclists and under what type of conditions various bicyclists are likely to bike. The second part, encompassing chapters 2-4, turns toward adding bike lanes throughout the City. (The second part, interestingly, ignores several findings from Chapter 1.)

Let's look at Chapter 1 of this City document. Here are some direct quotes: "The percentage of people who bicycle to work has not increased over the past five years." (There is a hypothesis, unfortunately given as fact, concerning this situation, claiming that this is because there are not enough bike lanes and therefore there should be more -- not exactly a scientific highlight of this document.) By the way, the percentage of bikes to cars currently, across all of Santa Clara (so, including quiet as well as busy streets), according to this document, is 2% (see page 22). Note that 1.55% (my findings over 8 days) is not far from 2% and is for a busy street.

There are also interesting descriptions of types of bicyclists and where they prefer to ride on pages 23-24. Note that the great bulk of bike riders, 50-60% of all bicyclists prefer smaller, low trafficked streets and that 30% prefer isolated bike paths (no cars) or extremely low trafficked streets. This tells me that up to 90% of bicyclists will not be commuting longish distances along Pruneridge Avenue unless cars are completely kicked off (good luck with that). Again, we are talking about up to 90% of the 2% of current bicyclists. There are ever so many more drivers of cars than bicyclists.

It seems to me that there are so many better ways to make the City of Santa Clara "sustainable" than to rearrange traffic for a tiny minority of its citizens. Here are a few, in no particular order and with no particular knowledge about how doable they are: 1) Have the City's electric company encourage all 'dwelling units', through rental agreements or purchase, to have rooftop solar that connects to the city grid; 2) Make all City vehicles electric or hybrid; 3) Get rid of plastic everywhere since plastic cannot really be recycled well (or else China wouldn't be rejecting landfill trash from the U.S.), e.g., no plastic grass for large ball fields, no plastic playgrounds or playground equipment, etc.; 4) Provide incentives (cash back?) for citizens who trade in larger fossil fuel cars for smaller electric ones; 5) Ensure that newer zoning creates places for smaller local businesses that sell food (grocers or cafes or restaurants) or have entertainments (game boards? music? dance-dance-revolution? darts? ping-pong?) so that people will not need to travel in their cars for these things; 6) Wouldn't it be wonderful if delivery vehicles -think Amazon- had to be electric?

In short, I hope that this study for making Pruneridge "sustainable" focuses on more than bikes. Bicyclists are only 1.55% - 2% of travelers along Pruneridge. Some of those bicyclists may be quite vocal, but that doesn't make them right. Perhaps the City can come up with some better ideas for sustainability, not only for Pruneridge but for the entire city.

Sincerely yours,
Susan Hinton
3066 Hazelwood Ave.
Santa Clara, CA 95051

7/9/2019

3N

Genevieve Yip

From: diane@dianesdreamdestinations.biz
Sent: Thursday, July 4, 2019 12:10 AM
To: Mayor and Council
Subject: July 9th, Consent agenda item 3N - Pruneridge Complete Streets

Categories: POST MEETING MATERIAL

Dear City Council,

If this item is pulled from the consent calendar for discussion, I wish to express my strong support for connecting the bike lane on Hedding (San Jose) to the bike lane on Pruneridge that currently only goes as far as Pomeroy.

I personally tend to avoid this section of Pruneridge, except the short section from Los Padres east to the city limit since there's really no other easy access to Hedding. (I use Hedding to access stores on Coleman, the San Jose Rose Garden, and (rarely) county offices.) It would be far better to have bike lanes all the way on Pruneridge, *at least* from Los Padres.

This section is evidently part of the Pruneridge-Hedding-Berryessa cross-county bicycle corridor in the county bicycle plan. And all the rest of this corridor has bike lanes. Our bit should too.

The bike plan which you will be approving in August recommends buffered bike lanes on Pruneridge among the top 5 priority projects. Whether the bike lanes in the above consent item are buffered or not, they will be a big improvement for cyclist comfort & safety.

Commuters who use that route will likely complain about traffic. But, in my experience, traffic jams result from merging more than anything else (other than an accident of course). So, if the bike lane is continuous, no merging will be necessary, and traffic may well end up being smoother, not rougher.

Residents, on the other hand, are going to experience an improved quality of life. With automotive traffic several feet farther from their home and only one lane instead of two, it will be quieter. Ingress and egress from their homes will also be less stressful since the added dual left turn lane and the bike lane buffer will make turns into and out of their driveways easier. And those with kids will appreciate that their kids can ride their bikes near home more safely.

Thanks!

Sincerely,

Diane Harrison
3283 Benton St.
Santa Clara, CA 95051

7/9/2019

3N

Genevieve Yip

From: Mark Oswald <angusbeef748@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 30, 2019 6:37 PM
To: Mayor and Council
Subject: Road diet

Categories: POST MEETING MATERIAL

I am so disgusted that you would even think of continuing the stupid road diet on Pruneridge Avenue. You people must be taking bribes or something like that if you vote yes on the road diet. Listen to the people who drive cars to work, there are very few bicycles on Pruneridge. You are screwing the people who drive to work. You should all be voted out of office if you pass this.
NO ON THE PRUNERIDGE ROAD DIET!

Mark Oswald

(63 years in Santa Clara)

Will most likely be leaving the state because of sold out politicians like you!

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7/9/2019

3N

Genevieve Yip

From: Jenn Rodriguez <jennrod12@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 30, 2019 9:58 AM
To: Mayor and Council
Subject: Supportive of Pruneridge road diet

Categories: POST MEETING MATERIAL

I just heard that its likely we're moving forward with a road diet for all of Pruneridge, hooray!

I live on Tracy Drive, off Pruneridge where it has a road diet now, and feel so much safer turning into and out of Tracy with the road diet.

I think this is a great step forward, thank you! And if we're wrong and it doesn't work out, it could be changed back in the future. However, I commute on Hedding and that road diet seems to be working fine from what I see. No reason why it wouldn't here as well.

Jenn Rodriguez
3500 Tracy Drive

Sent from my mobile device

7/9/2019

3N

Genevieve Yip

From: Richard Wentz <wentzinsurance@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Friday, June 28, 2019 5:00 PM
To: Mayor and Council
Subject: Prunridge road diet

Categories: POST MEETING MATERIAL

I am strongly in favor of this plan.
The existing road diets have worked extremely well.

Richard Wentz
Westwood Oaks neighborhood.

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android