



## Statement from Councilmember Russ Melton on Black Lives Matter, Sunnyvale Unity

By Russ Melton

On Friday June 5, my wife Sami and I attend the Sunnyvale Black Lives Matter protest march. Over 2000 people marched from Redwood Square, down Mathilda Avenue, to City Hall. It was a very powerful event and a testament to the anguish people feel about systemic racism in America. It was a statement of voices that deserve to be heard and responded to. I have never seen anything like it during my 20 years in Sunnyvale.

One woman carried a sign that really resonated with me. But it was especially meaningful to Sami. It said: "All mothers were called into action when George Floyd called for his Mama with his last breaths of life."

I commend the organizers of the march, who managed the logistics and made clear the event was to be a non-violent one. I commend the participants of the march who did so in an orderly and peaceful, yet passionate way. And I commend the Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety, who prepared for the event on a limited timeframe and whose presence added to the peacefulness of the event.

Please read the City Statement About Racial Injustice on Sunnyvale's homepage, [www.sunnyvale.ca.gov](http://www.sunnyvale.ca.gov). Sunnyvale Mayor Larry Klein and City Manager Kent Stefens make an important and timely statement and I agree with every word.

Then, please also visit the new City webpage which summarizes the Sunny-

vale Department of Public Safety's use-of-force policies. (This page is called "Trust through Transparency – Sunnyvale DPS Policies" and will soon be available directly from the City's home page.)

Finally, please sign up for the City of Sunnyvale's Unity mailing list. Deputy City Manager Jaqui Guzman is arranging a series of community meetings which will be a safe space for dialogue to better understand racial inequities. Sunnyvale is not insulated from racism.

In the days after George Floyd's murder, I received over 250 emails demanding change. Mayor Klein said he received nearly 1000. Many of the folks contacting me were engaging with City Hall for the first time. I telephoned as many people as I could, and am grateful for the passion and candor of our conversations. Here is what I heard:

- Residents are proud of Sunnyvale and that fact that this is a safe city
- People hold the Department of Public Safety in high regard and appreciate the unique benefits of the integrated police / fire / EMT model
- Sunnyvale residents are fed up with racial injustice in America and say that it must stop.
- Many residents told me of their outrage of Minneapolis and Buffalo. Many had negative things to say about the San Jose Police Department. Others told

me about times that family members had been humiliated or had their lives put in danger by racial profiling

- Residents expect Sunnyvale, and especially the Department of Public Safety, to continue to reflect the community's values, to lead the way and to be part of the solution

Here's a brief story. Sami and I were in line at a Starbucks drive-through on the afternoon of May 31 when my phone buzzed with a notification of the San Jose curfew going into effect at 8:30 that evening. My first thought was the safety of my wife's 28-year-old son, who by the magic of blended family is my son as well. He was born in Algeria and has a Mediterranean skin tone, curly hair and a muscular build.

I am proud of his work ethic and he has a nice place in San Jose. Also, there is nothing whatsoever in his "racial" "profile" that would serve him well in a missed-curfew situation. So I called him and said, no messing around, to make sure he was home by 8:30 sharp, not 8:31, not 8:32.

Many residents asked me about police use-of-force policies in Sunnyvale. I expect the Department of Public Safety will continue in their commitment to complete transparency. Public Safety policies and procedures, as well as the DPS Internal Affairs Manual are on the City's website.

And, the City is listening. Importantly, on June 11, Sunnyvale DPS Chief Phan Ngo prohibited the use of the Carotid Control Hold by any member of the department, effective immediately.

As our community dialogue unfolds in the weeks and months ahead, we will be listening for what policing changes the community wants to see, and which can be made. We will avoid making "knee-jerk reactions" and work through the issues and solutions, together.

Another policy idea gaining momentum in the national dialogue is the concept of "Defund the Police."

The most common definition I have heard of "defund the police" is along the lines of "reallocate budget from police

to a different purpose." Typically, the alternate purposes are solutions for homelessness, improved mental health care, housing solutions and other important social services.

The 2020/21

budget (which starts on July 1) for police services within the Department of Public Safety is \$35 million. As our community dialogue unfolds in the weeks and months ahead, I am not opposed to making budgetary changes. Far from it.

In fact, Sunnyvale Council can change the budget any time it wants. But, I also believe that if we're going to make any budgetary changes, it can't just be as a "feel-good move." We have to understand what would be defunded and what program will receive the funding. We have to understand the trade-offs involved. A budgetary change has to serve a purpose and it has to be supported by the community.

We are listening and know we must do better. We will not rest until we better understand racial inequities and find effective and lasting solutions. Black Lives Matter.



# Hendy Closure Kicks-Off Bridge Project

**T**HE CITY OF SUNNYVALE on June 10 kicked off a major public works project to rehabilitate the Fair Oaks Avenue Bridge by closing the section of Hendy Avenue immediately underneath the structure.

The Fair Oaks Avenue Bridge, which runs from East Evelyn Avenue to Kifer Road over the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board / CalTrain line and Hendy Avenue, was

constructed in 1967. The rehabilitation project will address numerous structural and transportation deficiencies and will include the removal of the separate adjacent pedestrian overcrossing and roadway improvements to Hendy Avenue. As part of the project, the bridge will be widened to increase the width of the current bike lanes and add a sidewalk on the eastern side of the structure.

The total project costs come in at \$30 million, with about \$26.5 million provided by a Federal grant and the balance from the City of Sunnyvale.

Hendy Avenue remains open from Sunnyvale Avenue along the length of the

Northrop Grumman property and now effectively dead-ends at the road curvature underneath the bridge. On the other side of Hendy, The Home Depot remains open for business, accessible from Kifer Road. CalTrain operations are not affected by the bridge project.

In addition to the Hendy closure, one traffic lane on the bridge will be closed in each direction for most of the duration

of the project, which is expected to take 18 months.

Said Sunnyvale Councilmember Russ Melton, "This project has been in the works for

a long time and it's great to see it get underway. These structural and transportation improvement will serve Sunnyvale residents for decades to come. I really appreciate the Federal Highway Grant funding, administrated by our friends at CalTrans. The separate pedestrian overcrossing has become something of a nuisance so it's a real benefit to have that replaced by a sidewalk on the bridge itself."

To learn more about the project, including construction timelines, visit: [www.fairoaksbridge.com](http://www.fairoaksbridge.com).



**It was an honor to attend the 129th Rescue Air Wing Change of Command Ceremony on March 6 at Moffett Field. Col. Jeffrey H. Waldman (C) took command from Col. Taft O. Aujero (R) in a socially-distanced ceremony presided over by Maj. Gen. Greg Jones (L). The City of Sunnyvale and the 129th Rescue Wing are great friends and partners in the community and I am sure Col. Waldman will do a tremendous job! I have the sincerest gratitude for Col. Aujero's leadership for the past three years.**



# NEWS YOU CAN USE

**Outdoor Street Dining on Historic Murphy Avenue.** The 100 Block of S. Murphy Avenue, between W. Evelyn Avenue and W. Washington Avenue has been closed to vehicular traffic to allow for expanded outdoor dining. The section of Murphy will be closed for the remainder of 2020, allowing the numerous restaurants there to set-up semi-permanent dining facilities on what is otherwise the roadway surface. Restaurant staff and customers are required to follow certain safety protocols established by the County Health Officer that allow for outdoor dining. Said Sunnyvale Councilmember Russ Melton, "I went to the legendary Dish Dash restaurant on June 11 to celebrate a friend's birthday and it was great. I encourage all Sunnyvale residents to check out the expanded outdoor restaurant dining on Historic Murphy Avenue!"

**Final Draft of Active Transportation Plan Released.** The City of Sunnyvale has release the final draft of its Active Transportation Plan (ATP), a policy document addressing bicycle, pedestrian and Safe Routes to Schools needs throughout the City. The Sunnyvale Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) will be discussing the ATP at its meeting of June 18 with the City Council deciding on adopting the Plan at its meeting of July 28. Prior to the BPAC meeting, comments regarding the draft ATP can be email to [BPAC@sunnyvale.ca.gov](mailto:BPAC@sunnyvale.ca.gov). The draft ATP can be downloaded at: [sunnyvale.ca.gov/news/topics/atp/default.htm](http://sunnyvale.ca.gov/news/topics/atp/default.htm)

**El Camino Speed Limit Decreasing.** Sunnyvale Mayor Larry Klein announced on May 18 that CalTrans has completed a speed survey along the length El Camino Real in Sunnyvale and decided to reduce the speed limit there from 40 MPH to 35 MPH. The change will make the speed limit of El Camino in Sunnyvale consistent with those in the cities of Mountain View and Santa Clara. El Camino Real, also known as State

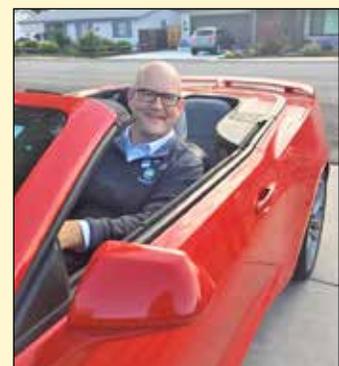
Route 82, is officially a State Highway under the jurisdiction of CalTrans.

**More Funding to Improve Fremont/Manet.** On June 9, the Sunnyvale City Council approved a Resolution to file for grant funding of \$158,000 from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. The funds will be used to design and construct safety improvements at the intersection of Fremont Avenue and Manet Drive / Bobwhite Avenue. The improvements include installing an ADA-compliant curb extension at the northwest corner of the intersection, replacing the 8-inch vehicle signal heads with 12-inch vehicle signal heads to improve visibility, and the installation of an Accessible Pedestrian System and high-visibility crosswalks. The approximate total cost of these improvements is \$300,000 and is funded by this grant, as well as \$173,000 grant funding received from the MTC in 2019. Sunnyvale Councilmember Russ Melton noted, "This intersection saw tragedy in the summer of 2017 and since then, I have made it a priority to get safety improvements here. These improvements will be designed and implemented soon and my long-term goal is to get dedicated left-turn signals implemented for cars turning on to Fremont from either Bobwhite or Manet."

**Public Library Introduces Sidewalk Services.** The Sunnyvale Public Library has commenced limited "Sidewalk Services" at the Library Plaza from 1 to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday. The main library building remains closed to the public due to the COVID-19 emergency. With Sidewalk Services, library patrons can use the online catalog to request items. A notification by email or phone will be sent when the item is available for pickup. While at the Plaza, patrons are required to wear a mask and maintain social distancing of at least six feet. To learn more, visit: [sunnyvale.ca.gov/community/library/news/displaynews.htm?NewsID=626&](http://sunnyvale.ca.gov/community/library/news/displaynews.htm?NewsID=626&)



**I had a blast at the June 1 raising of the Pride flag at Sunnyvale City Hall. Following the flag-raising and a speech from Mayor Larry Klein, a car parade drove a lap around the Civic Center plaza. What a great morning!**





# Sunnyvale Councilmember Russ Melton



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## B I O G R A P H Y

### GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES

- Sunnyvale City Councilmember, 2017-Present
- Sunnyvale Vice Mayor, 2019
- Sunnyvale Planning Commissioner, 2012-2017; Commission Chair, 2014-2016

### EDUCATION

- Masters of Business Administration (MBA), Santa Clara University
- Bachelor of Science (BS), Business Administration, California Polytechnic State University - San Luis Obispo

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Executive Vice President / Chief Operations Officer, National 1st Credit Union, 2009-2011
- Senior Finance Manager, National Semiconductor Corporation, 1995-2009
- Honorably Discharged from United States Navy

### PERSONAL

- Sunnyvale resident since 2000
- Native Bay Area resident
- Married; two children in Sunnyvale public schools

# Sunnyvale Contact Information

Non-Emergency  
Police & Fire ..... 408-730-7100

Abandoned Cars ..... 408-730-7706

Graffiti/  
Shopping Carts ..... 408-730-7680

Job Center (NOVA) .... 408-730-7232

Sewer/  
Water/Utilities ..... 408-730-7400

Street Lights/  
Sidewalks..... 408-730-7415

Street Trees/Parks .... 408-730-7506

## **sunnyvale.ca.gov**

Use Access Sunnyvale to make online services requests, report issues or to contact City staff. City staff members monitor requests during regular business hours, Monday through Friday.

**[sunnyvale.dynamics365portals.us](http://sunnyvale.dynamics365portals.us)**

### Your Federal Elected Representatives

United States Senator **Dianne Feinstein**  
San Francisco Office 415-393-0707

United States Senator **Kamala Harris**  
San Francisco Office 415-981-9369

United States Representative **Ro Khanna**  
Santa Clara Office 408-436-2720

### Your State Elected Representatives

California State Senator **Jerry Hill**  
San Mateo Office 650-212-3313

Calif. State Assemblymember **Marc Berman**  
Los Altos Office 650-691-2121

### Your County Elected Representatives

Santa Clara County Supervisor  
**Joe Simitian** 408-299-5050

Santa Clara County Supervisor  
**Dave Cortese** 408-299-5030