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Groundbreaking Begins New Chapter for New Seven Trees Community Center and Branch Library

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Strains of mariachi music filled the air as a crowd of 100 or more gathered at Solari Community Center on Saturday (May 31) to celebrate groundbreaking for the new Seven Trees Community Center and Branch Library.

District 7 Councilmember Madison Nguyen recognized many in the audience for their involvement in the processes of neighborhood improvement including attendance at meetings designed to gather community input for design of the new library and community center.

“The groundbreaking of the future Seven Trees Community Center and Library marks a new chapter for the Seven Trees community,” said Nguyen. “I am excited that this future facility will continue to rejuvenate the community and serve as a gathering place for neighbors and families. “

Remarks were punctuated by demonstrations of the types of activities that will take place in the enlarged community center, including traditional Chinese fan dancing and fitness walking for seniors.

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As the fog lifted and the sun came out, more and more community members arrived across the street to bid farewell to the 6,769 sq. ft. Seventrees Library, which has served the neighborhood since 1967. Visitors included 5th grader Linda Nguyen, who was commended at the groundbreaking by Councilmember Nguyen for gathering approximately 200 signatures on a petition to save the library. Music, multicultural performances and storytelling, along with face painting and balloonists combined to make the last day a memorable one.

Despite losing two facilities that have been a welcoming and familiar landmark in the neighborhood for decades, residents have much to look forward to when the new joint facility opens in 2010.

At 58,000 sq. ft, the new, two-story joint-use facility replacing both the Center and Seventrees Branch Library is the second large-scale co-managed project undertaken by San José Public Library and the City of San José Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services with funding from the parks and library improvement bond measures approved by San José voters in November 2000.

The design by Rob Wellington Quigley, FAIA will provide significant increases in seating, public access computers and space for children's and adult's materials. It will also feature spaces designed to accommodate a wide variety of activities. These include a family learning center, tech center, internet café, banquet room, gymnasium, fitness areas, various classrooms, senior and teen areas, craft room, ECR (early childhood recreation) classrooms, administration and support areas. Exterior elements include four tennis courts, one basketball court, picnic areas, various walking paths, a new park restroom, and 216 parking spaces. The project will include direct access from Capitol Expressway. Construction will be undertaken by Gonsalves and Stronck Construction Company.

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Total project cost is budgeted at \$35,202,567 million; a fact that Library Director Jane Light found particularly noteworthy in the face of rising costs. “That’s what we had set aside for this facility and we’re delighted to be able to provide such a wonderful facility within budget,” Light said. In keeping with the City of San José’s Green Vision, the design is expected to achieve LEEDS “Silver” certification as a green building.

Public art for the project will be completed by San Jose-based artists Sam Rodriguez and Matt Rodriguez who are creating artwork inside the Library, and San Diego-based artist Roman De Salvo, who is creating artwork for the exterior of the facility.

The new Seven Trees Community Center and Branch Library will be located at 3590 Cas Drive across the street from the old library site. During the construction period, Seven Trees area residents are welcome at all San José Public Library branches, but will probably find the following to be most convenient: [Tully Community Branch Library](#), [Edenvale Branch Library](#), [Evergreen Branch Library](#).

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