

ST. JAMES PARK MASTER PLAN

July 1985

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July, 1985

City Council City of San Jose 801 N. First St. San Jose, CA 95110

Dear Council Members:

We are pleased to submit this master plan report on the proposed restoration of St. James Park as the major historic park of downtown San Jose.

It contains historical data, description of existing problems, and new design proposals which if implemented, would reestablish the park as a major amenity in the downtown area. The report is the result of the design process which included library research, conversations with local historians, design review meetings with city staff and transit consultants. Presentations were made to City Commissions for Parks and Recreation and Historic Landmarks and senior citizens at the St. James Center.

The excellent suggestions made by citizens and city commissioners and staff during this process have resulted in the continued improvement of the park design and its integration with the transit mall. The positive reception and the unanimous approvals which it has received to date are most gratifying. We wish to express our appreciation to all who have participated, and we look forward to working with you in subsequent phases of the project.

Sincerely,

MPA Design

Michael Painter President Jacque Keller-Wilkinson Senior Associate

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jkw/hm

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Environs

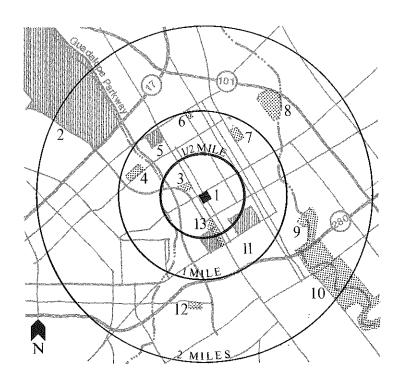
St. James Park is historically the most important public open space in downtown San Jose. The site consists of two square blocks (approximately 7.6 acres) and is surrounded by four one-way arterial streets. Second Street, a one-way street, bisects the park between St. James Street and St. John Street.

The park is located on the edge of the central business district. There are a variety of land uses within a ½ mile radius of the site, such as residential, public, private and commerical development. Within a two mile radius are all of San Jose's urban core facilities.

Access to the park from Highway 101, Interstate 280, and the Guadalupe Parkway is direct and convenient. The 14 different bus routes through the park emphasize the site's existing relationship within public transit network. As the city grows, St. James Park will become a more important public urban open space.

Legend

- 1 St. James Park
- 2 San Jose Municipal Airport
- 3 Ryland Park
- 4 Columbus Park
- 5 City Hall
- 6 Bernal Park
- 7 Backesto Park
- 8 Fred Watson Park
- 9 William Street Park
- 10 Kelley Park
- 11 California State University at San Jose
- 12 Biebrach Park
- 13 Center Plaza



Local Setting

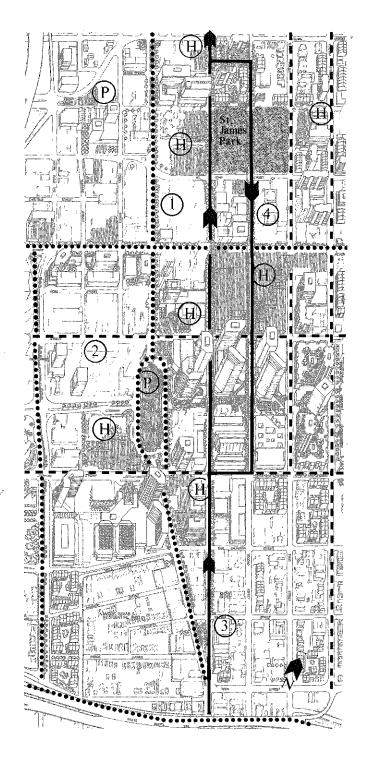
The park is immediately surrounded by office, public, quasi-public, and parking activities. There are nine historic buildings on the perimeter that have been or are currently being renovated. To the north and east lie residential areas and to the south and west lie commercial and office uses associated with the San Jose downtown area.

The west block of the park is developed with turf, paths, restrooms and two monuments. In the northern portion of the east block is St. James Community Center, a cluster of seven structures used for multiple recreation and human services primarily for senior citizens. The southern portion of the east block is developed with turf, paths and a commemorative marker.

A significant number of senior, handicapped and low income individuals and families live within the vicinity of the park. The park is used primarily by senior citizens attending the center, and transients. This Master Plan is designed to encourage upgrading of the surrounding properties which will attract more users to the downtown area and St. James Park.

Legend

- 1 Primary Streets
- (2) Secondary Streets
- (3) Light Rail Transit
- (4) Pedestrian / Transit Mall
- (H) Historic Buildings or Sites
- Parks / Open Space



St. James Park Historical Time Line

The history of St. James Park is unique within the downtown area. It represents the typical American central city square in the mid-nineteenth century and as such is the major transitional element from the old irregular Spanish pueblo plan to the new American city's grid layout. Flanking the perimeter of the park are some of San Jose's major public and private civic buildings which span a time frame of over a hundred years. The architectural styles include the entire range of design from the mid-nineteenth century Carpenter Gothic to the mid-twentieth century modified Spanish.

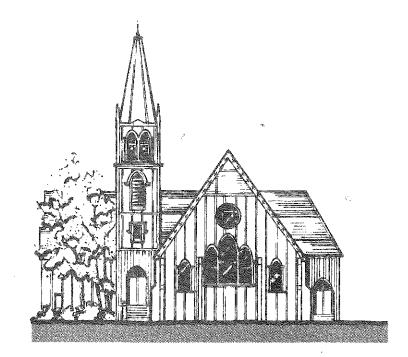
1848 During the Gold Rush, Charles Lyman surveyed the City of San Jose and reserved two plots of land for open space, St. James Square and Washington Square (the present site of San Jose State University).

The Trinity Episcopal Church is the oldest religious building in the city. It was designed by John Hammond in the Gothic Revival architectural style. A ship captain, the builder and benefactor, donated the time of his marine carpenters to build the church. The Gothic detailing is made entirely of redwood with impressive stained glass throughout. The chimes date from the 1860's and are among the oldest in the West.

The Santa Clara County Courthouse, designed by Levi Goodrich in the Renaissance Revival style with a neo-classical facade, was originally 2 stories topped by a dome. The dome was destroyed by fire in 1931 and a third floor was added in its place. The total structure was renovated and restored in 1973.

1868 The square was fenced, grass was planted and the walks were laid out in a strong perimeter walkway, in the style of Frederick Law Olmstead.

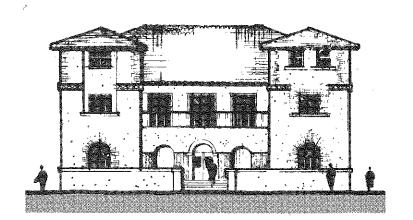
1869 The American elms were planted and the local militia used the square as a parade ground.



Trinity Episcopal Church

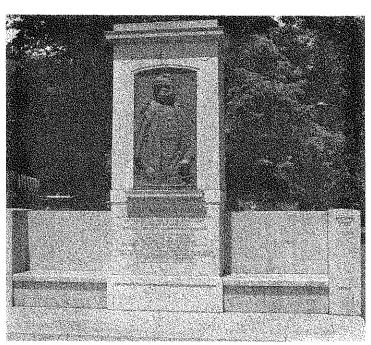
- 1870's During this decade, the City fulfilled its earlier ambitions by planting a wide variety of plant materials in informal groupings with open areas of lawn. This gave the park such an appearance of a natural setting that even in 1895 the publication Santa Clara County and its Resources remarked, "There has been a charming negligence, or a careful simulation of such, in the arrangement of trees and shrubs, and as a result the park presents the appearance of a natural grove. . .". The fan palms were planted on First Street during this time.
- 1880's The park became so dense with plantings that surplus shrubs and trees were moved to other city open space areas. According to the Daily Times (dated Sept. 22, 1887), the Council hired Mr. Ulrich of the Del Monte Grounds to refine the pathways and carefully remove some trees "to afford more sunlight to the flower beds..." In the late 1880's citrus trees were planted to replace some large species that had blown down during a storm.
- 1890's Segregated areas for women / children and men were designated in the park, and a central fountain was constructed. Clyde Arbuckle, a local historian, commented "that hat pins served as a dual purpose not only to keep the hats in place, but also the men." He clearly remembers as a young child that the fountain served as a favorite gathering place for his comrades to sail their toy boats and play in the water.
- 1891 The First Church of Christ Scientist, designed by G.W. Page, is an example of the Romanesque Revival architectural style. This building has had a variety of uses ranging from a church theatre to a movie house. The building is presently vacant.

- The Sainte Claire Club is the most prestigious men's club in the South Bay. The club is a gathering place for local businessmen organized under the aegis of Senator James Phelan. The architectural style of the club is an example of Mission Revival. The building was designed by San Francisco architect A. Page Brown, the designer of the Ferry Building in San Francisco.
- . 1900 The Eagles Temple was constructed during this period as a Masonic Temple. The large Doric columns along the street facade are impressive in the Classical style.
- 1901 President William McKinley visited San Jose and spoke to a crowd in the park. Shortly after his assassination, a statue in his honor was placed on the west side facing the county court house.



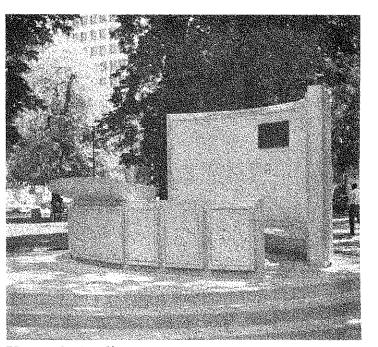
Sainte Claire Club

- 1906 The National Guard camped in the park following the Great Earthquake, and it was used as a relief center for several months.
- 1915 A marble bench was placed on the south side of the park in memory of General Henry Morris Naglee for his service in the Mexican and Civil Wars.
- The Scottish Rite Temple was built in a Neo-Classical style with Egyptian detailing by Carl Werner. He practiced throughout the Bay Area and specialized in Masonic Temples. In 1980 the San Jose Athletic Club bought the temple, restored the lobby, and converted it to a Health Club / Restaurant which has a membership of approximately 2,000.
- 1930 The restrooms were constructed under the WPA program.



Naglee Monument

- 1933 The Post Office was constructed on the site of the old St. James Hotel by Ralph Wychoff. It is a good example of Spanish Colonial revival architecture. The building is noted for the ornamentation surrounding its twin entrances and the highly decorative interior lobby.
- 1955 Second Street was constructed through the park, and for the first time, the park is divided into two segments.
- 1968 Shortly after his visit to St. James Park, Robert Kennedy was assassinated. A podium was constructed on the west side of the park in his honor.
- 1968 The Senior Center was constructed.
- 1979 St. James Park was given a historic designation under the National Register on November 20th.

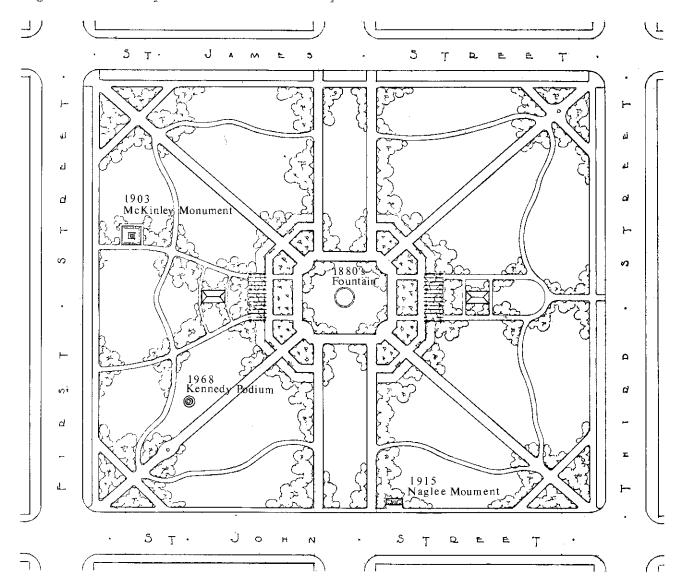


Kennedy Podium

St. James Park 1920

This park plan was drawn by a city staff architect in 1920. The Kennedy Podium has been added to the plan to show its location in the park. The park composition is balanced with diagonal paths leading from the corner edges to the central plaza. In the center of the plaza is

the original fountain. The plaza is bordered by a formal bed of roses with informal plantings beyond. The secondary path is a continuous meandering walkway through a group of informal trees and shrubs. Without the interruptions of Second Street and the Senior Center, the park had a very strong identity.



Historic Structures / Adjacent Land Uses

The historic character of St. James Park is supported by many of the buildings surrounding the square. With the exception of the Senior Center, many of the buildings were built before the 19th century.

The Senior Center was constructed in 1968 in the northeast section of the park. Designed by the architectural firm Higgins & Root, the cluster of seven structures was to be movable in the event the city decided to put an underground garage in the park. The cluster of structures were sited to preserve the park's existing mature trees.

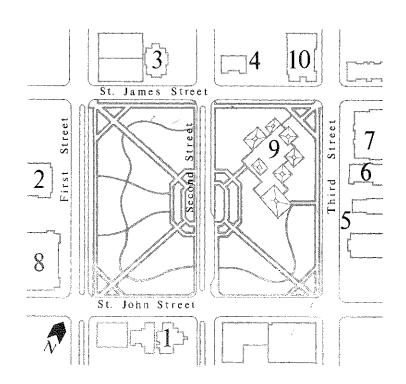
Legend

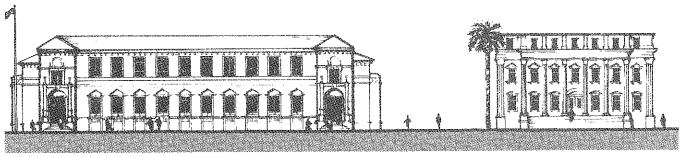
- 1 1963 Trinity Episcopal Church
- 2 1866 County Courthouse
- 3 1891 First Unitarian Church
- 4 1893 Sainte Claire Club
- 5 1900 Eagles Lodge
- 6 1904 First Church of Christ Scientist
- 7 1924 Scottish Rite Temple (current use: San Jose Athletic Club)
- 8 1933 U.S. Post Office
- 9 1968 St. James Senior Center
- 10 1985 Future Apartment Building

Elevations

The architecture of the buildings illustrated reflects the history, attitude, technology, and spirit of the era in which each was built. The structures dating from 1863 to 1933 stand side by side, creating a physical setting as varied as San Jose's social environment.

It is felt that the park's future development should preserve the historic significance of the area. The park should be rich in historic detailing to tie the area together.

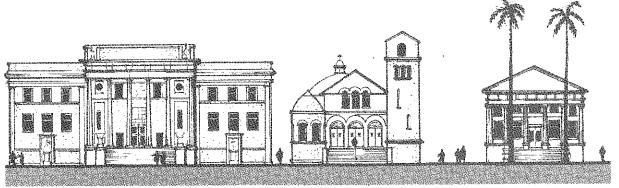




U.S. Post Office

County Court House

First Street

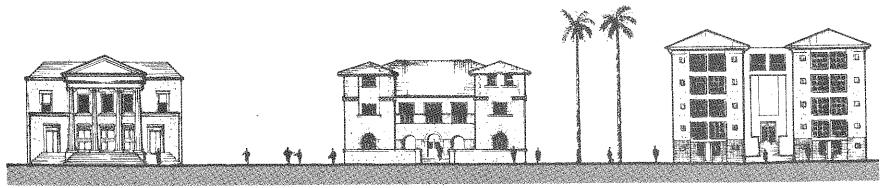


San Jose Athletic Club

First Unitarian Church

Eagles Lodge

Third Street



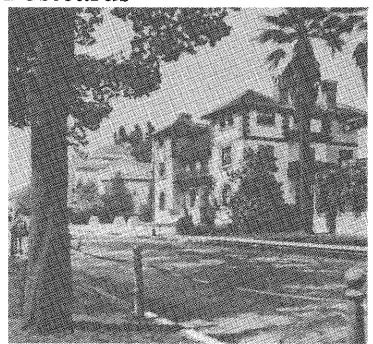
First Church of Christ Scientist

Sainte Claire Club

Future Apartment Building

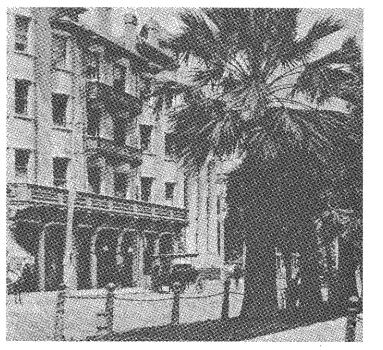
St. James Street

Postcards









Circulation / Streetscapes

The vehicular circulation around St. James Park is along St. James, St. John, First and Third Streets, with Second Street dividing the park. All streets have one-way circulation and provide parallel parking for the park users. the bus route provides public transportation to the park with stops on First and Second Streets.

The first phase of the new 21 mile Guadalupe corridor is currently under construction. The light rail corridor will be linked with St. James Park by a one mile transit mall. Limits of the mall extend from San Carlos up First Street looping at Devine then south on Second Street to San Carlos. Automobile traffic will be discontinued on Second Street through the park, and public transportation will be available in the form of bus, trolley, or light rail transit.

Circulation conflict between pedestrians and vehicles will be eliminated through signage and well defined pedestrian crossings. The improvements suggested in the Master Plan in conjunction with the transit system will enhance the quality of St. James Park.

Legend

— — High Traffic Volume

· · · · · Medium Traffic Volume

Direction of Traffic

* Pedestrian Vehicular Conflict

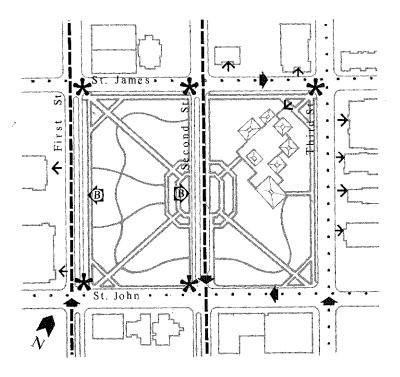
Bus Stop

↑ Building Entrance

Current Park Use

Currently St. James serves a number of different functions. They are as follows:

- A neighborhood park for area residents of all ages.
- A district wide park for senior citizen activities.
- A day time urban park for downtown employees for lunches and strolling.
- A park site with historical elements and significance.
- A main transfer station for buses.



Vegetation

Historical Significance

The park design was based on the English Romantic Period, with open grass meadows and naturalized groupings of trees. During the 1800's a variety of trees and shrubs were planted in an attempt to experiment with species that would grow west of the Great Divide.

The existing tree canopy is dominated by large mature American elm trees (Ulmus americana). Sporadically intermixed with the elms are mature, deciduous, and evergreen hardwoods such as oak (Quercus sp.), Blue gum (Eucalyptus sp.), and various palms. There are two magnificant specimen Burr oaks opposite each other on Second Street. They are in conflict with the proposed transit plaza and it is suggested they be moved within the park.

While the master plan was being designed, a forestry group was contracted to evaluate the existing trees. The majority of trees are an even age stand. They were evaluated on their growth rate and life expectancy and were examined for insect and decay problems. A long-term management program was prepared after these evaluations. The program consisted of a five year time table with the removal cycle taking place annually. Based on this timetable, the environmental and aesthetic impact would be minimal, and a maintenance program was established for the healthy trees to be retained.





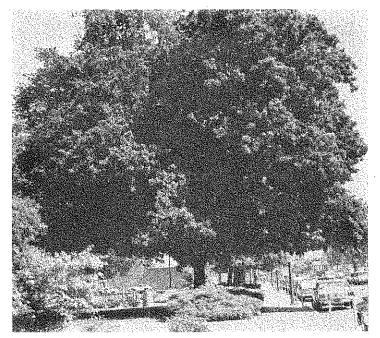
Entry Points



Existing Mature Trees

---- Existing Paths

Palms: Tall Verticle Edge



Burr Oak



St. James Park

Goals & Objectives

The objectives of the St. James Master Plan are:

- To reunite the park by linking the two halves.
- To provide a design which is compatible with the new transit improvements.
- To restore the park to its historic significance.
- To add plantings which will enhance the views to the historic buildings.
- To encourage improvements to properties adjacent to the park.
- To produce a design that can be implemented in a manner compatible with the Senior Center and which could be easily completed upon relocation of the Center.

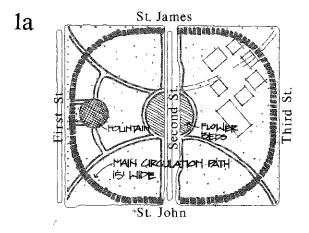
Reconstructing the Park

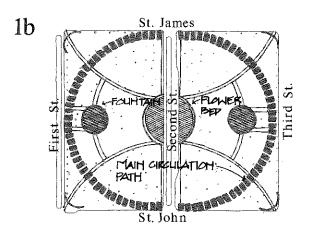
Concept Diagrams

A series of thumbnail diagrams produced alternative concepts for unifying the two halves of St. James Park. These diagrams helped establish the design direction the Master Plan would follow. The following concepts were explored:

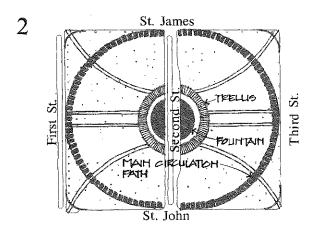
- A. Unifying the park by creating focal zones that would visually connect the divided halves. (Numbers correspond with illustrations).
 - la-lb Formal axial designs were considered unsuccessful because retention of the Senior Center resulted in an incomplete and weakened solution.
 - 2. A central focal point divided by the transit mall was considered weakened because of the width and intense activity of the transit corridor.
 - 3. Mirror imaged focal points on each side of the transit mall seemed to provide the strongest solution.
- Unify the Park by creating a visually strong and physically strong perimeter pedestrian esplanade.
 - 4. An internal elliptical path, while attractive, conflicted with the Senior Center and created a mid-block pedestrian crossing which was unsafe.
 - 5. A meandering promenade, although historic in form, conflicted with the Senior Center and also divided the park into smaller open segments.

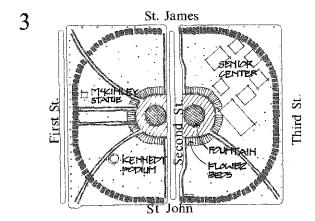
The preferred concept was to create a strong perimeter promenade around the edge of the park. The promenade, with supporting park furniture, lights and trees would provide a strong sense of continuity for people within the park and people viewing the park from adjacent streets. The perimeter prominade was also compatible with the Senior Center and resulted in broad lawn areas more suitable for community uses.

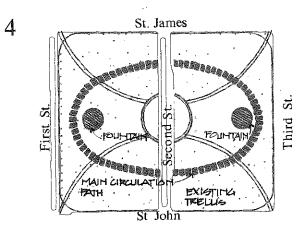




St. James







Circulation

Pedestrian circulation is an important element to the effective functioning of the park. A hierarchy of primary and secondary paths have been developed to differentiate between the circulation systems.

The 12' wide perimeter path provides a strong edge which links the corner entry points and acts as a promenade surrounding the square. The double corridor path provides an axis connecting the plaza area to First Street, an active pedestrian/transit area. Curving diagonal paths radiating from the central plaza to the corner entry points provide the secondary pathway system.

Corner entries are identical and clearly defined by a circle of grass and annuals. Seating will be provided at all the entries.

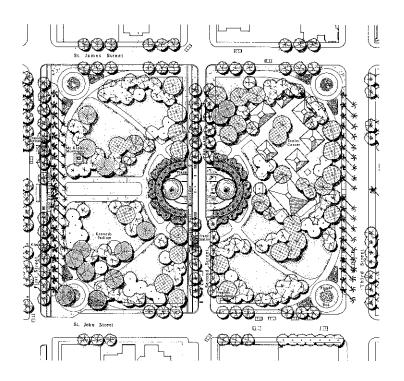
Planting

The planting concept preserves the existing location of trees within the new circulation layout, and proposes informal massings for additional trees. The proposed form of the new trees are large canopy to replace the existing elms, and small canopy to define pedestrian spaces and provide color.

The following is a list of the proposed trees:

Large Canopy

- Celtis reticulata (Western Hackberry) for large deciduous trees.
- Platanus racemosa (California Sycamore) for street trees.



Small Canopy

- Prunus species (Flowering Cherry) for the plaza and enclosure trees.
- Washingtonia robusta (Mexican Fan Palm) along Third Street.

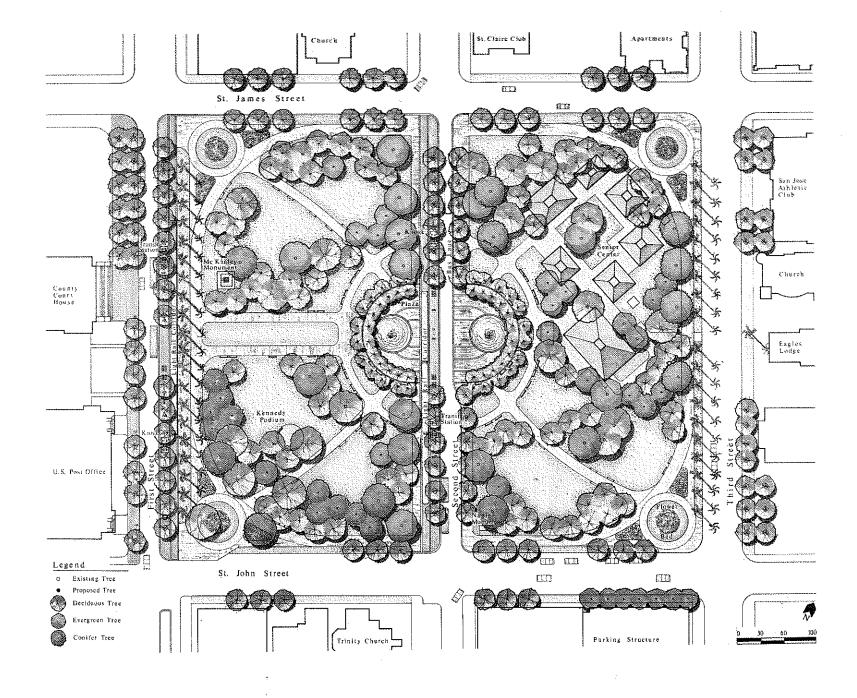
Legend



Preservation of existing trees / anchor trees.



Enclosure / Plaza Trees



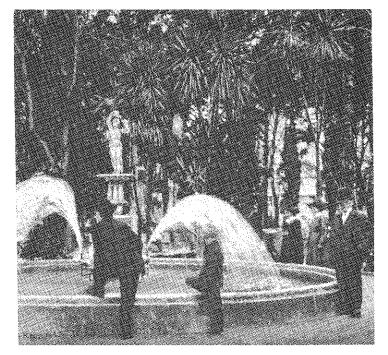
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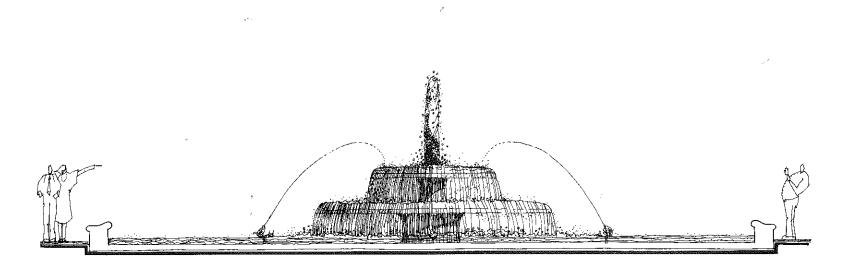
Plaza

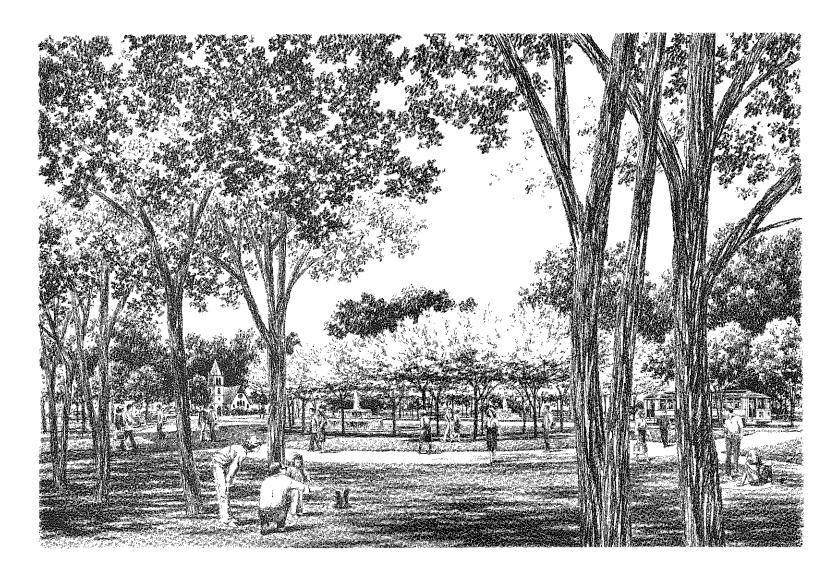
Fountains

The park's gem will be the fountains in the plaza. The refreshing sounds of the water will help buffer traffic noise and provide a psychological cooling effect for park users. Granite, the same material used in the transit mall, will be used for the fountain's edge, providing a seating area. There is an opportunity to incorporate sculpture into the fountain and further enrich the plaza and make it a delightful space.



Postcard of the original fountian





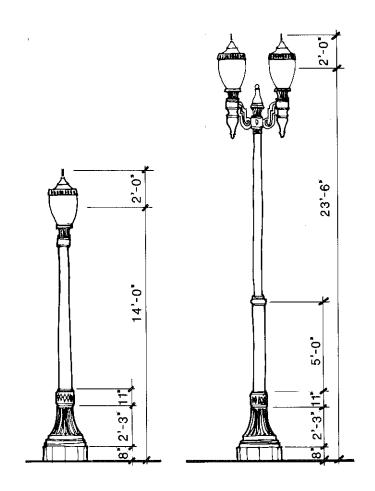
St. James Park
View of restored park featuring new plaza with
Trinity Episcopal Church beyond

Landscape Amenities

The theme of the proposed landscape amenities has been chosen to achieve a family of compatible street furniture. These amenities are historic reproductions of American turn-of-the-century furniture. The detailing is decorative in nature and the materials are durable so that maintenance is minimized.

Lighting

The lights will be identical to those used on the transit mall. The light level is designed to enhance personal safety and maintain a light quality compatible with parks. The 16' light used with a single globe will be located on the pedestrian diagonal axial paths. The main perimeter path will utilize the 25'6" lamp with 2 globes spaced at 50 on center to achieve a one foot candle light level. Valley Iron & Steel Company of Eugene, Oregon are the manufacturers.

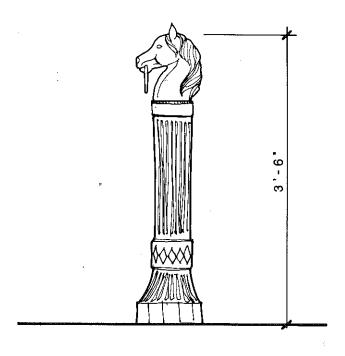


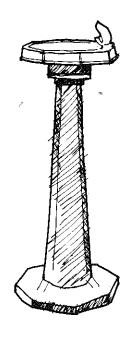
Bollards

The bollards once found in St. James Park on First Street were originally used as hitching posts for horses. The Master Plan proposes new bollards to be located along First, Second, and Third Streets as barriers to direct pedestrian movement and as a playful amenity to the park. The base of the bollard is similar to the light standard base and the horse's head a reproduction of the original pre-Civil War pattern. The bollard is made of cast iron and finished with two coats of semi-gloss black paint. They are manufactured by Robinson Iron from Alexander City, Alabama.

Drinking Fountain

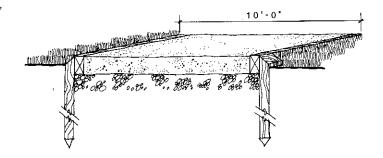
Drinking fountains are an important amenity for every public park. As there are no drinking fountains at St. James Park, users must go to nearby public buildings. The base of the proposed drinking fountain will be cast iron, painted black, and the bowl will be brass. The design by the Murdock Company (as seen in the illustration) has proven to be the most durable for an outdoor application.





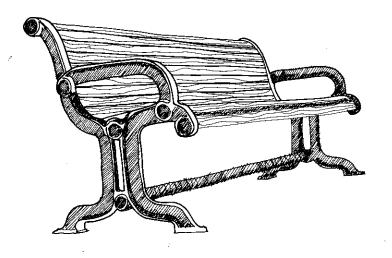
Paving

To select the most suitable paving materials, the following elements have been considered: expense, texture, color, and hierarchy of use. The plaza is the most prominent space and should receive special paving materials. Brick paving with granite banding has been proposed for the median strips to link the transit mall with the park. The perimeter walkway and double corridor paths will receive heavy pedestrian flow and require a durable material such as brick. The secondary paths should be naturalized to blend in with the park surroundings. Cement stabilized decomposed granite, softer in color and texture, has been proposed for the curved diagonal secondary paths.



Benches

The proposed benches are eight feet long with backs consisting of ornamental cast iron supports and 2 x hardwood slats. The proposed locations for the benches are as follows: grouped in pairs in the plaza under the trees, along the diagonal paths, at all corners and along the main axis to the park. They will be set off the path so that no interference with circulation will occur.

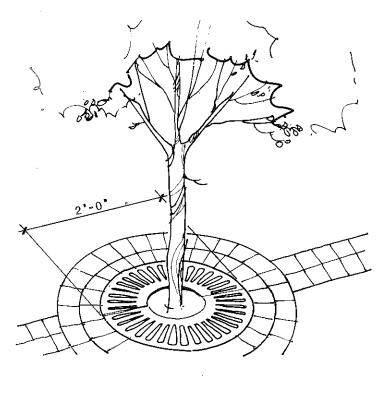


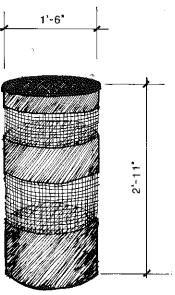
Tree Grates

The proposed tree grates are identical to those used in the transit mall. These heavy cast iron grates will be set flush with the paving. Only trees in the plaza along Second Street will receive grates. The paving will be carefully detailed around the grates to integrate with the paving pattern. They serve a dual purpose of protection and provide the early American theme.

Trash Receptacles

Receptacles will be located in the plaza, along the pathways, and among the furniture groupings. The detailing is very simple with alternating bands of perforated and 16 gauge solid steel. The lid is solid and the receptacle will be painted to match the bench cast iron supports. All receptacles will be anchored by a chaining ring.





Cost Estimate

A preliminary cost estimate for St. James Park has been developed for the proposed amendments. The elements included are landscape amenities such as bollards, drinking fountains, benches, trash receptacles, tree grates, and lighting. New and improved pathways made of brick and decomposed granite will replace the older sidewalks. The plaza hardscape is primarily brick with granite banding as a special feature. The focal point of the plaza are two granite fountains. The addition of palms along Third Street and informal massing of trees will reinforce the existing mature trees on the site.

Engineering and inspection costs, as well as a 10% contingency is reflected in the total project cost of \$3,247,842.00. This sum was developed in general terms and is based on current construction costs.

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Historic Information on St. James Park Report dated May 29, 1979, prepared by the City Landscape Architectural Staff.

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"102 Years of Historic Milestones," San Jose Mercury, October 26, 1950.

"Park Improvements," Daily Times Newspaper, Page 5, Column 3, September 22, 1887.

"Sunshine, Fruit and Flowers; Santa Clara Co. & Its Resources," San Jose Mercury, Smith & Eaton, 1895.

MPA Design Team

MPA Design, Landscape Architects and Urban Designers, was commissioned in 1984 to design the master plan for St. James Park. Lafayette Park in Washington, D.C., designed in our association with John Carl Warnecke, is our most relevant project in respect to size and historical significance to St. James Park. We are optimistic that St. James Park will have the same richness and stature of Lafayette Park.

Credits go to the following at MPA Design:

Michael Painter
Jerrold Mitchell
Jacque Keller-Wilkinson
Lisa Caronna-Perley
Thomas Klope
Pamela Andrews
Laurie Romano-Rivera
Michelle Koo
Carolyn Stratton
Helen Mealy

0 SAN JOSE MEMORANDUM

The Honorable Mayor and City Council JAMES PARK MASTER PLAN

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SUBJECT APPROVAL OF ST.

APPROVED

DATE DATE FROM D. Kent Dewell John Popovich September 25, 1985

Council District No. W

BACKGROUND: St. James Park is a 7.5 acre park lottle park is bordered on the West by First Street, by St. John Street and on the North by St. James and heavily covered with mature trees. Existing monuments, and a Senior Center building. Existing in the park are numerous Street, East by James Street. park located ij downtown San Jose. Third Street, South The 7.5 site is flat

Michael Painter and Associates to prepare a Master Plan for St. James St. James Park is being designed as a Historical Park of the 1880's. Master Plan major emphasis was to develop a Historical Park of the 1880's but to include the San Jose Transit Mall and the Historical Zone around the park. The Park On April 24, flowers and numerous seating areas. includes 1984, the City Council approved an agreement to hire fountains, brick walkways, antique lights, trees, grass, the Park. Te firm of

approved by the ANALYSIS: Parks and Recreation Commission. property owners The proposed master plan for St. and business Senior Citizen Commission, Historical Land Marks Commission, persons of, the surrounding district, and the James Park has been reviewed

RECOMMENDATION: Council as The proposed master plan for St. prepared by Michael Painter and James)Park to be Associates and approved by City staff.

6281X LEB/RMR:mjm Direct tor of NT DEWELL Public Works

Parks

and Recreation

JOHN POROVICH,

Acting Director

COST IMPLICATIONS:

COST OF PROJECT:

Construction:

Contingencies:

TOTAL:

\$2,497,842.00 500,000.00 250,000.00

\$3,247,842.00

5 SOURCE 유 FUNDING:

-Construction/Conveyance ਰ æ×

ч OPERATING COST: Full Fiscal Year \$131,000.00