

PLANNING PROCESS



4. PLANNING PROCESS

The master planning process included input from community members, stakeholders, and a number of agencies. The input received was integrated into the Master Plan through the following steps of development:

- Project Start-Up
- Site Inventory and Analysis
- Community Outreach
- Master Plan Refinement
- Environmental Analysis and CEQA Clearance

The following is a summary of all meetings involved in the planning process:

MEETING	DATE
Project Kick-Off (City Meeting #1)	1/10/13
Coordination Meeting #1	1/28/13
Coordination Meeting #2	Unnecessary*
Coordination Meeting #3	2/25/13
City Meeting #2	3/13/13
Community Workshop #1	3/19/13
City Meeting #3	5/1/13
Coordination Meeting #4	5/1/13
Community Workshop #2	5/29/13
City Meeting #4	5/30/13
City Meeting #5	6/5/13
City Meeting #6	6/24/13
City Meeting #7	7/8/13
City Meeting #8	7/17/13
Community Workshop #3	7/24/13

*see description on following page

4.1 PROJECT START-UP

The project Kick-Off meeting (City Meeting #1) was held on January 10th, 2013 with City and Consultant to establish:

- Meeting procedures and communication standards
- Data needs through a review of existing information from the City
- Content and format for all deliverables
- Project schedule

IN THIS SECTION:

- 4.1 Project Start-up
- 4.2 Site Inventory and Analysis
- 4.3 Community Outreach and Master Plan Refinement
- 4.4 Environmental Analysis and CEQA Clearance



Site walk with the City of San José and team consultants

- Initial project concerns
- City's design objectives
- Community Workshop #1 goals and format
- Status of Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) work (concerning past clean-up work and certification as a clean site)

4.2 SITE INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS



Coordination Meeting #1 was held on January 28th, 2013 with City DOT and Consultant to review:

- Street crossings
- Crossing signage and controls
- Right-of-ways

Coordination Meeting #2 scheduled with DTSC was determined to be unnecessary because the site had been cleaned and certified by the State of California as a clean site.

Coordination Meeting #3 was held on February 25th, 2013 with City, Consultant, SCVWD, and USACE to review:

- Flood control plans for Guadalupe River
- Guadalupe River bridge options in context of future flood control

4.3 COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND MASTER PLAN REFINEMENT

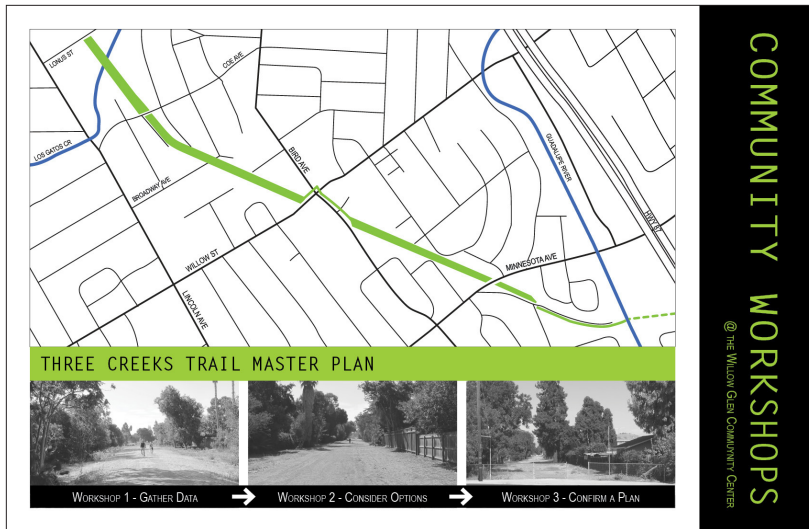
With site and technical data, the project team was prepared to engage and gather input from the community.

Through a process of dialogue and analysis, design refinements were made to consider and address comments from the City and community members. This process of refinement has resulted in the recommended trail alignment shown in this document.

Refinements to the trail alignment and amenities were presented and discussed on the following occasions:

City Meeting #2 was held on March 13th, 2013 with City and Consultant to prepare for community engagement by developing and reviewing:

- Public Workshop #1 agenda
- Public Workshop #1 materials
- Public Workshop #1 presentation



Front of postcard notification for schedule of the community workshop series



Tweet from Twitter #SANJOSETRAILS

Community Workshop #1 was held on March 19th, 2013 with City, Consultant, and approximately 70 community members. Held at the Willow Glen Community Center, the purpose of the workshop was to gather data from the community to help create a comprehensive master plan for trail development. The workshop started with a brief presentation to familiarize workshop attendees with the project scope and objectives, the initial site analysis, and the role of community members in the process. Participants were then given the chance to ask questions, review materials, and provide input.

Community input refined the project objectives. The main themes were:

- **Trail Design** - provide a wide enough trail that it can accommodate commuting cyclists and slower pedestrians without conflict.
- **Trail alignment** - Design a meandering trail for interest and speed control.
- **Intersection design** - Safety at street crossings is the top priority.
- **Gateways** - Design iconic gateways that incorporate interpretive themes.
- **Amenities** - Develop different types of activities along the trail, both active and passive.
- **Public art** - There was a strong support for art along the trail.

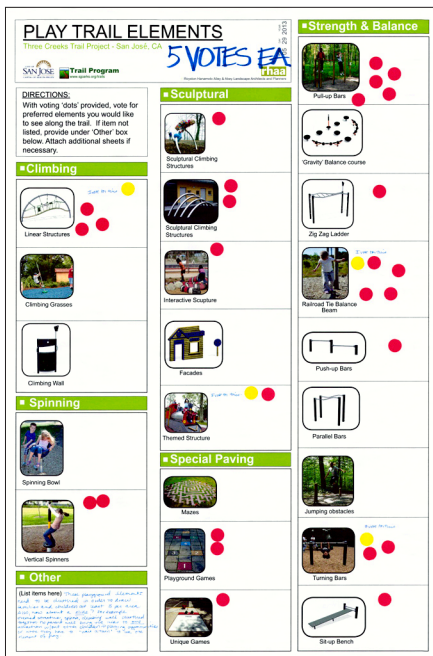
The full list of comments and responses can be found in the Workshop #1 Comment Matrix in Appendix A.



Community Workshop 1



Community Workshop 1 feedback session board and notes



Community Workshop 2 play equipment voting board

City Meeting #3 was held on May 1st, 2013 with City and Consultant to review:

- Conceptual trail alignment that responds to community input
- Conceptual entry plaza design
- Preliminary Master Plan document layout and formatting
- Possible historic themes for interpretive material
- Public Workshop #2 agenda and format

Coordination Meeting #4 was held on May 1st, 2013 with City, City Department of Transportation (DOT), and Consultant to obtain DOT's input on ideas collected from the community in Workshop #1. Preferred options for each at-grade crossing were identified.

Community Workshop #2 was held on May 29th, 2013 with City, Consultant, and approximately 75 community members at the Willow Glen Community Center. The purpose of the workshop was to receive feedback and comments on the design options proposed for the Three Creeks Trail. The workshop consisted of two presentations, an update on the status of the Los Gatos Creek Pedestrian Bridge project followed by a more in depth presentation of the design options proposed for the trail. After the presentations, the participants engaged in small group discussions and gave feedback on the proposed design options.

Community input refined the project objectives. The main themes were:

- **Gateways** - Use a combination of different gateway styles that are abstract interpretations of historic structures.
- **Play areas** - Need one large, centrally located playground in addition to smaller areas along the trail.
- **Intersection design** - Support user activated signals at crosswalks.
- **Trail amenities** - Need durable, vandal resistant site furnishings that deter sleeping.

The full list of comments and responses can be found in the Workshop #2 Comment Matrix in Appendix A.

City Meeting #4 was held on May 30th, 2013 with City and Consultant to review input from Public Workshop #2 and confirm direction for future refinement.

City Meeting #5 was held on June 5th, 2013 with City and Consultant to refine the Master Plan further. Gateways, special features, and play area designs were discussed and refined. This meeting was followed by a site walk with City and Consultant to review specific locations for gateways, special features, and play areas to insure visibility and compatibility with adjoining properties.

SCVWD Tour of Native and Drought-Tolerant Landscapes

On June 13th, 2013 City staff met with SCVWD staff at native plant landscapes along the Guadalupe River (Harliss Avenue) for insights on these landscapes.

Northern California Native Plant Society Meeting

City Staff attended this meeting to gather data and review the planting concept on June 19th, 2013.

City Meeting #6 was held on June 24th, 2013 with City and Consultants to review further refinements to the Master Plan in the following areas:

- The Bird Avenue playground design
- The Trail Feature layout plan
- The planting concept

City Meeting #7 was held on July 8th, 2013 with City and Consultant to review:

- Bench and fence designs
- Gateway designs
- Revised Bird Avenue playground design
- Revised planting concept
- Master Plan table of contents

City Meeting #8 was held on July 17th, 2013 with City and Consultant to review:

- Workshop 3 format
- Workshop 3 agenda
- Workshop 3 visual materials
- Workshop 3 presentation
- Master Plan interpretive materials

Community Workshop #3 was held on July 24th, 2013 with City, Consultant, and approximately 60 Willow Glen community members. The purpose of this workshop was to present the Three Creeks Trail Master Plan to the community and seek any final comments on the refined design. The workshop began with a presentation describing each of the components of the Trail Master Plan and an explanation of the next steps in the Master Plan process. At the conclusion of the presentation, the participants were invited to examine the Master Plan materials first-hand and provide comments during an open house period.

Community input refined the project objectives. The main themes were:

- **Maintenance** - Use durable materials and low maintenance planting to ensure the trail appears well kept.
- **Signage** - Install necessary rules and regulations to ensure safe trail usage.
- **Trail amenities** - Need durable, vandalism resistant site furnishings that deter sleeping.
- **Support** - Support for the plan was expressed by the community. In particular, support was expressed for the updates to gateway and plaza design.



Community Workshop 3

The full list of comments and responses can be found in the Workshop 3 Comment Matrix in Appendix A.

The following meetings occurred during the planning period but were specific to discuss the existing Los Gatos Creek railroad bridge:

MEETING	DATE
Save Our Trails Board Meeting	7/19/13
Willow Glen Neighborhood Association Meeting	7/17/13
Save Our Trails Member Meeting	9/9/13

LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

Appendix A lists all of the input received at the three workshops. The matrices categorize and respond to each of the 276 comments received. Of this number, the city was able to accomplish the following:

- 67% Incorporated in master plan
- 24% Not incorporated due to technical, policy or other challenges
- 3% To be determined during design
- 6% DOT Responsibility during design

4.4 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND CEQA CLEARANCE

As required by the CEQA guidelines, an environmental evaluation was conducted to describe the environmental setting, assess project impacts, and identify measures to mitigate any potential impacts to a less-than-significant level. An assessment is required of project impacts for the following areas (as set forth in the most current CEQA Environmental Checklist Form):

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture/Forest resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology/Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazardous Materials
- Land Use/Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Population/Housing
- Public Services/Utilities
- Recreation
- Transportation

To address the above required topics, the following technical studies were conducted:

- Archeological Investigation
- Biological Assessment
- Initial Study

Each of these studies involved performing a field review, analyzing project impacts, and identifying mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level where applicable. The overall impact is not deemed significant and the Initial Study concluded that the trail was eligible for a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). The council adopted a resolution to approve the MND and adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan on [INSERT DATE]

4.5 DIAGRAMMATIC PLANNING

Potential Three Creeks Trail preliminary alignments shown on plans are diagrammatic and to be used for general planning purposes only.



Mature trees in the trail corridor

The overall impact is not deemed significant and the Initial Study concluded that the trail was eligible for a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND).

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION



5. INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

Developing the trail alignment along the former railroad right of way through the residential and commercial areas of Willow Glen neighborhood of San Jose required resolving a number of physical, environmental, land ownership, and regulatory issues. This necessitated the involvement of several agencies and various departments of the City of San José. See the table below for a summary of agency approval requirements.

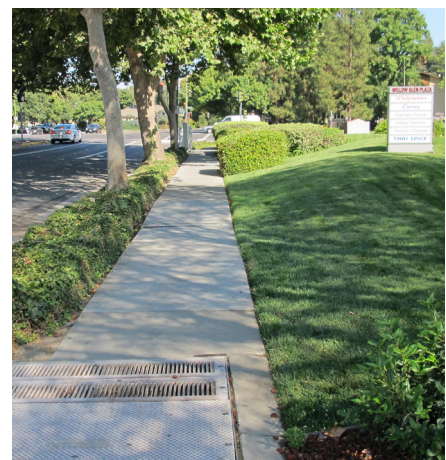
IN THIS SECTION:

- 5.1 Property Ownership
- 5.2 Environmental Requirements
- 5.3 Agency Requirements

Agency Name	Type of Approval	Reason for Approval Requirement
Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for storm water discharges associated with construction and land disturbance activities.	Construction-related discharge of storm water runoff causing soil disturbance of one or more acres Federal permit issuers must certify construction activity meets state water quality standards.
Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD)	Joint Use Agreement Encroachment Permit Construction Permit	Permanent trail connection within SCVWD right-of-way (ROW) construction activity within SCVWD ROW

5.1 PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

The proposed trail alignment passes through the well-established residential area of San José, including several crossings of residential, collector, and arterial streets and through an intersection with several commercial properties. Most of the property between Lonus Street and the Guadalupe River required for construction of the proposed trail alignment is currently owned by the City of San José, including all of the street crossings. Three areas of development might require engagement with private property owners to discuss the feasibility of the City acquiring property rights for a trail use: 1) Near the intersection of Bird Ave and Willow Street, a small portion of the trail alignment may require acquisition of an easement or fee title from commercial property owners if they are willing. Discussions with the landowners



Sidewalk on east side of Bird Avenue just north of the Bird Avenue gateway. This is one area where the width of the sidewalk would ideally be increased if privately owned land can be acquired.

should be started at the earliest possible time. The intent would be to widen the 4 foot sidewalk to a 6 or 8 foot path. 2) At the end of Falcon Court, there is one parcel owned by the Santa Clara Valley Water District that may require a joint use agreement to gain access to the proposed trail connection. 3) The parcel adjacent to the Guadalupe River is privately owned and may require acquisition if owner is willing.

5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

The project must adhere and comply with numerous environmental requirements. The planned alignment has accommodated the following requirements:

- For the section adjacent to Los Gatos Creek, the design must consider the City of San José's Riparian Corridor Policy Study. This policy states that development adjacent to riparian habitats provide a minimum 100' setback from the edge of the riparian corridor or top of bank, whichever is greater. The one exception is lower impact uses, such as trail development, which may be sited as close as 10' from the edge of the riparian corridor. In instances where a multi-use trail is aligned on an existing maintenance road in flood control channels, a setback is not required. Trails may enter the riparian corridor where there is no reasonable alternative which avoids or reduces the encroachment into the setback area. No lighting should be directed into the riparian corridor, unless required for safety at undercrossings.
- Environmental clearance must be obtained under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The CEQA clearance includes a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP). The MMRP states all the mitigation measures which are necessary to reduce project impacts to a less than significant level. The MMRP is used to ensure compliance with mitigation measures during project implementation. These measures are typically incorporated into the construction documents for the project.
- Special status species such as steelhead trout and Chinook salmon are currently found in Los Gatos Creek. Mitigation measures within the footprint of the creek will be covered under a separate CEQA process.

5.3 AGENCY REQUIREMENTS

- The City of San José utilizes the County of Santa Clara standards for multi-use trails. The County's recommendation for a multi-use trail is a 12-foot wide paved surface with 2-foot unpaved and hard packed gravel shoulders on either side; the minimum is an 8-foot wide paved surface with 2-foot shoulders.
- The City of San José Department of Transportation (SJDOT) has jurisdiction over all the local, collector, and arterial street crossings through the project area. All trail crossings and crosswalks, including signage and pavement markings, must be coordinated and approved by the City DOT.
- The City of San José has a tree ordinance and discourages the removal of "Heritage" trees. Tree removal is not anticipated as a part of this project because the right of way was cleared of vegetation in the middle of the corridor as part of its former railway use. Steps were taken to preserve trees as the site was substantially cleaned, and every effort should be taken to preserve and support existing trees.
- The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is responsible for conserving, protecting, and managing California's fish, wildlife, and native plant resources within the banks of the creek. To meet this responsibility, the CDFW must be notified prior to beginning any activity that will substantially modify a river, stream, or lake. If the CDFW determines that the activity could substantially adversely affect an existing fish and wildlife resource, a Streambed Alteration Agreement is required. In addition, a certified CEQA document is required before any work may be performed within a creek channel. Work within the creek channel will be completed as a separate CEQA document and independent of this master plan.
- The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB) mission is to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources, which includes managing construction-related discharge of storm water runoff. Adhering to the latest National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements, project owners disturbing more than one-acre of land must obtain a General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity from the RWQCB prior to commencing construction activities.

- Provision C.3 of the 2009 Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit addresses the control of storm water impacts associated with new development and redevelopment projects. The latest requirement states that impervious trails greater than 10 feet wide or located within 50 feet of the top of a creek bank creating 10,000 square feet or more of newly constructed contiguous impervious surface must address both soluble and insoluble storm water runoff pollutant discharges and prevent increases in runoff flows. Exceptions to this requirement are provided if the impervious trails are built to direct storm water runoff to adjacent vegetated areas or other non-erodible permeable areas, or if permeable surfaces are used. This is generally accomplished through use of low impact development techniques that maximize on-site detention, retention, and infiltration of storm water to mimic a site's predevelopment hydrology. Both source control measures to keep pollutants out of storm water runoff and site design measures to maximize infiltration in pervious areas are required. The project will direct run-off into vegetated areas.
- The SCVWD manages waterways within the County for purposes of flood protection, stream and creek stewardship, underground aquifer management, and district-built reservoir maintenance. A construction permit is required for trail improvements, access, or use of construction staging area within SCVWD jurisdiction. In addition, a certified CEQA document is required before any work may be performed within a creek channel. Work within the creek channel will be completed as a separate CEQA document and independent of this master plan. Trail construction in proximity to the Los Gatos Creek and Guadalupe River may be subject to SCVWD review and permits.

