

TO: TREATMENT PLANT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE (TPAC)

FROM: Kerrie Romanow

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON PMP
RECREATIONAL LAND USES

DATE: December 4, 2020

INFORMATION

This memo is an informational update in response to a Treatment Plant Advisory Committee (TPAC) request on October 8, 2020 for information on potential recreational uses of the planned open space approved by Council as part of the Plant Master Plan (PMP).

Exploration of recreational and open space land use concepts for San José-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility (RWF) lands occurred early in the master planning process. During a series of workshops and interviews held in 2008, staff identified opportunities for trail development on RWF lands, both to allow access to the Bay and to connect a vital segment of the Bay Trail.¹ Staff also identified opportunities for building recreational facilities on RWF lands, including eight softball fields, eight soccer fields, ten multi-purpose playfields, and a nature center, among other facilities.

In November 2013, TPAC recommended, and San José and Santa Clara City Councils approved, the following recreational land uses on RWF lands, as shown in Figure 1.

- A 40-acre Community Park in the buffer lands south of the RWF operations area with both passive and active recreation areas.² Active recreation areas included playing fields with nighttime lighting, restrooms, and concession facilities. Passive recreation areas included picnic areas, birdwatching areas, open spaces, seating areas, and trails. The western edge of the park was proposed to interface with Artesian Slough, which was to serve as a boundary between the park and the burrowing owl/grassland habitat to the

¹ Carollo, Brown and Caldwell, and SOM. 2009. *San José/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant Master Plan Task No. 5, Project Memorandum No. 8, Site Opportunities, Constraints, and Considerations*. Draft. January 2009.

² City of San José. 2013. *San José/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant Master Plan Environmental Impact Report*. State Clearinghouse No. 2011052074. City of San José File Number PP11-403. November 19, 2013.

west, and trees were to be planted along the north end of the Park to visually shield it from the Facility's operational area. Shared parking facilities with adjacent institute and office developments were also proposed in a southern portion of the Park.

- A Flexible Space area totaling approximately 389 acres, currently occupied by the Residual Solids Management (RSM) area, that would become available for other uses – including but not limited to, recreation, habitat, or other open space uses - following the retirement of the lagoons and drying bed operations. This area was increased from 247 to 389 acres in response to public feedback received on the Draft EIR (DEIR) and the First Amendment to the DEIR, which resulted in the City's Environmental Services Department advancing a revised staff-recommended land use plan to Council that excluded a previously planned 132-acre light industrial area.
- A nature museum situated on the north-eastern edge of a proposed 61-acre freshwater wetland in the RSM area. The nature museum was proposed to occupy approximately two acres and was to feature native habitat gardens and viewing platforms of nearby upland and wetland areas.
- Nine miles of trails that were proposed to connect with existing and planned segments of the Bay Trail and other proposed recreational/educational uses including the nature museum, community park and sports fields, energy field information center, as well as the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge Education Center. As shown on Figure 1, the PMP proposed the following recreational trails connecting to other recreational areas in the vicinity of the PMP planning area:
 - Community Park – Multiple trails connecting to the future Bay Trail to the north via the Owl Habitat, Facility Buffer area, Existing Operational Area, and Outfall Levee Road; the Silicon Valley Advanced Water Purification Center (SVAWPC) to the east; and Economic Development area to the south.
 - RSM Area – A trail connecting the future Bay Trail to the north and the Silicon Valley Advanced Water Purification Center and Economic Development to the south.
 - Pond A18 – A trail connecting the proposed short spur terminating at the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge Environmental Education Center to the existing Bay trail along the east side of Coyote Creek³ and a boardwalk nature trail traversing through the marsh/wetland area is proposed along the northern end of the PMP planning area.⁴ It should be noted that the boardwalk trail is not contemplated as part of the Shoreline Levee Project.

³ HT Harvey & Associates. 2007. *Pond A18 Existing Conditions and Opportunities Constraints Assessment*. Final. January 16, 2007.

⁴ City of San José. 2013. *San José/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant Master Plan Environmental Impact Report*. State Clearinghouse No. 2011052074. City of San José File Number PP11-403. November 19, 2013.

Next Steps

- The City has committed to update the PMP to evaluate, among other things, whether the Plan's assumptions and priorities have changed. The City therefore has an opportunity to refine its assumptions and priorities around recreational land uses when the next update occurs in the 2023-2024 timeframe.
- Because the recreational space is a program-level concept in the PMP, any development plans for that area would need to be evaluated at a project level in a tiered CEQA document prepared by the City and approved by any responsible agencies. If the City decides to stay within the limits of the conceptual plan that was approved in 2013, then the City will have very little to no additional environmental review.

/s/
KERRIE ROMANOW
Director, Environmental Services

For questions, please contact Jennifer Voccola-Brown, Sustainability and Compliance Division Manager, at (408) 975-2594.

Attachments: Figure 1

Figure 1



Legend

- Project Boundary
- Existing Levee
- - - Tentative Shoreline Levee
- - - Existing Trail
- Proposed Trail
- Proposed Boardwalk Trail

Land Use Plan

Economic Development Areas

- Retail, Office/R&D, and light industrial uses would be clustered into a compact footprint located adjacent to Hwy 237 to take advantage of the site's visibility and accessibility.
- Retail would anchor the intersection of Hwy 237 and Zanker Road.
- If a suitable area is determined to be available, a solar power facility area will be located on the plant lands which will provide for a variety of energy systems, such as photovoltaic solar panels.
- In addition to possible dedicated sites for renewable energy facilities, building-mounted photovoltaic solar panels are proposed for all future economic development.