TRAIL DESIGN

Innovation & Quality

San José is developing a 100-mile network of trails. In pursuing this ambitious goal by 2022, the City seeks to be the recognized national leader for trail integration in the urban environment.

A number of brand promises guide the planning and design of trails. San José strives to innovate by studying, testing and deploying innovative practices. Quality is reflected in the consistency of design, place-making elements, and attention to detail.

Trail Specifications

Trails are designed to meet requirements set forth by the Caltrans Highway Design Manual.

Paved trails are typically 16' wide, consisting of a 12' wide band of asphalt concrete and 2' wide gravel shoulders. The combination provides a solid surface for biking and walking, a more resilient surface for jogging and equestrian users, and the width necessary for the occasional service vehicle. Under-crossings are paved with Portland cement concrete to better withstand extended periods beneath water.

Riparian Areas

Many of San José's trails are along sensitive waterways. Staff coordinates early in the design process with permitting agencies. This allows the designers to address special conditions and produce recreational projects that preserve and enhance the natural environment while permitting access.

Amenities

A number of amenities support the quiet enjoyment of trails. Interpretive stations help educate about our valley's creeks and rivers, local history and other matters. Master Plans guide the deployment of interpretive panels at approximately 1-mile increments.
Gateway treatments at roadway entry points build awareness of the trail system. They occur through the use of decorative pavement, seating walls, custom furnishings and/or structures.

The quality design of San José's trails make them a popular destination for recreation and commuting.

Recycled Materials

The city specifies the use of recycled asphalt concrete for new trails. A feasibility study documents that recycled asphalt reduces the burden on landfills, is cost competitive and meets all existing specifications for durability.

Warm-Mix Asphalt Paving

The Highway 237 Bikeway was the south bay's first test site for warm mix asphalt. The lower heat product requires less energy consumption during formulation and reduces carbon monoxide pollution. Warm-mix also adheres better to recycled asphalt so waste is reduced.

Reflective Striping

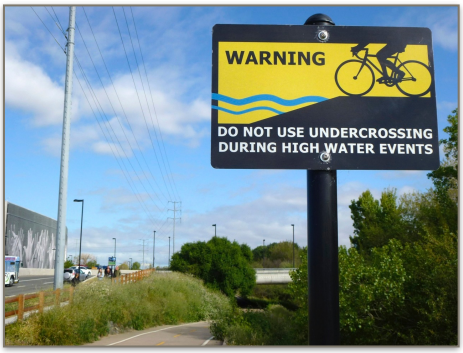
San José trails use a special formulation that applies the highest reflective glass beads (common to airports) and is secured to pavement using an ultra-thin thermoplastic striping material. Traditional lighting is not permitted within sensitive riparian environments so the reflectance permits cyclists to use trails in early morning and evening hours. All new trails include the centerline striping and on-going maintenance seeks to update and/or add the striping.

Mileage Markers

Mileage signs are being posted on all trail systems at 1/4-mile increments. These signs are branded for each trail system, and are recognized as addressed by the City's 911 Center. This link to emergency services helps to speed the provision of emergency services and provide a method to track incidents and alter design or maintenance practices as a result.

Signage

San José has a unique collection of trail signs that greet users with Trail Name and Rules, supplemental signs provide information and safety guidance along the trails. The signs are recognizable as unique to San José.



Saving Money

Construction signs at trail sites use a template that is 60% smaller than traditional construction signs. The same information is conveyed but is scaled for readers that walk or bike past. This approach requires less material, offers less space for vandalism, and is easier to install.

San José Trails