

June 7, 2010

TO: Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan Task Force

RE: View corridors and natural areas as an element in the Land Use/Transportation 2040 General Plan

**Recommendations to become part of the 2040 General Plan:**

- 1. View corridors along transportation routes including along creeks**
- 2. Widening of creek corridors creating natural areas for wildlife and people**
- 3. Public transportation to natural areas in the hills and along the Bay**
- 4. Become more active with the Bay Area Open Space Council and its related programs like public transportation to regional parks**

As a student at UC Berkeley in the Environmental Design Masters Program an important element which was instilled into all students was that all transportation plans should have view corridor plans. **All good planners must think of saving the best views so visitors along the corridors keep a sense of the unique historical and natural context of their experience. It is clear that San Jose currently is not doing this.** If suggestions are made to this end, they are being lost in the process. These suggestions are supported by the Bay Area Open Space Council. We should become more active in their programs.

**An example of a lost opportunity:** In the past ten years as the San Carlos/Stevens Creek corridor was being planned by the Redevelopment Agency and the City Planning Department, I have made suggestions on a very important view location. In the past two years this important view has been lost because of a housing development.

**San Carlos/Stevens Creek is probably our Valley's longest most linear historical street but at the Los Gatos Creek it turns towards downtown. This intersection between the Los Gatos Creek and San Carlos is one of our most important view corridors. The long view down San Carlos coming from the west should have been a native garden park instead of the current new housing development.** It could have connected with a pedestrian bridge over to the back of our first and historical Orchard Supply location (OSH) where they could have placed their nursery.

It is important that our creek corridors have areas along them which are wider with native or naturalistic plantings so that there are places for the wildlife to live and enjoy the creek environment. **As San Jose grows in population natural areas close to where people live will be increasingly important. This experience is needed on a daily basis by our citizens. It is a different and equally important to the natural the hill area experiences.**

I attended the meetings with the developers for their open space plans and made the above suggestions. However, the ideas fell on deaf ears. This kind of grand thinking for the community does not happen by developers. It needs to come from the City's vision for its spaces because it should care about the mental and physical health of its citizens and all forms of life.

Sincerely and gratefully,

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