

REPUBLIC URBAN PROPERTIES LLC  
WEST COAST DIVISION

August 10, 2009

Hon. Sam Liccardo and Shirley Lewis – Co-Chairs  
Envision 2040 General Plan Task Force  
200 East Santa Clara Street #300  
San Jose, CA

RE: Additional Parkland Discussion on “Policies and Implementation Strategies for Parks, Recreation and Open Space”

Dear Co-Chairs and Task Force Members:

I wanted to first thank every one for informative and passionate discussion on the future of San Jose’s Parkland development related to the “Key Envision Policy Issue” associated with “large versus pocket parks”. It was too bad that we did not get to finish the other three (3) policy issues but I look forward to our August meeting where we can finish this important complimentary document to the new General Plan. In preparation for our next meeting, I would like to submit some written comments on the DRAFT GreenPrint related to the “performance standards” and the Parkland Policy Issue #4: “3.5 acres per 1,000 populations”.

**Parkland Policy Issue #4 – 3.5 Acres per 1,000 residents**

In addition to discussion and recommendations on Policy Discussion #4 – “performance standards” the Task Force should also discuss and make recommendations on Chapter 3 of the GreenPrint called “Financing and Market Strategies”. The recommendations in Chapter 3 set the stage for how the city will fund and maintain parkland in the GP2040 General Plan. To comment on the 3.5 acres per 1,000 residents as part of Discussion Topic #4, we must also comment on many of the Council policies related to the San Jose Municipal Code (Chapters 14.25 and 19.38) that governs Parkland Dedication and Park Impact Fees (“PDO/PIO”).

Chapter 3 loosely defines specific funding goals on Pages 33-38, and these goals should be commented on by the Task Force as part of the discussion of performance standards. As an example, many Task Force Members and community members have expressed sincere interest in policy direction that defines “Public-Private” partnerships in situations where a developer (commercial or residential) dedicates, improves and maintains PUBLIC parkland (whether active or passive). The DRAFT GreenPrint sets a goal in Chapter 3, *Section 13 – Pursue Privately Owned and Maintained Public Recreation Space*”; but stops short of specific recommendations on funding. In the case of this recommendation, the Task Force could provide comment and recommendations to the City Council on performance standards that would allow developers and builders to provide neighborhood serving parkland in a public-private agreement that would allow

the developer to receive full parkland credit versus the 50% that is the current PIO threshold.

The Task Force should also be discussing and commenting on future role of the Redevelopment Agency in the area of parkland development and maintenance as noted in "*Recommendation #9 – Partner with the RDA to support recreation areas in RDA zones*". Most if not all the transit corridors and villages will fall into a redevelopment zone, and City PRNS and RDA Staff must be prepared to work in coordination to determine where and how much RDA money will be spent on acquisition, enhancement and long-term maintenance.

Finally, "*Recommendation #11 – Develop a Parks and Recreation Community Foundation*" is critical for the future of the City as industry and private investment can play a large role in parkland development. In 2008, a City Leadership delegation, sponsored by the Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce, visited the City of Chicago and was given a tour of Millennium Park. Millennium Park is an excellent example this funding recommendation, and I believe much could be learned in this GreenPrint by providing examples in both Chapter 3 and Chapter 5 "Urban Strategies". The more examples we can map in the GreenPrint of what has worked in other cities, the more we can engage our local employers and private investors on the large "branding" and "beatification" opportunities that exists in San Jose.

The GreenPrint is a great attempt to map out the future recreation space in the City which goes hand-in-glove with master planning, safety, health and economic vitality. The goals and policies outlined in the GreenPrint set the goals, but these goals cannot be reached with the current financing structure whether for the development of new parkland, or the maintenance of existing parkland. Since it appears that State of California will be relying more and more on local government to provide key quality of life services such as parkland, we here in San Jose need to make sure those new adopted policies and guidelines also include realistic local funding measures.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Regards,

Michael R. Van Every  
GP2040 Task Force Member

CC: San Jose Planning Staff