



Mayor Chuck Reed  
City Council Members  
City of San Jose  
200 East Santa Clara St.  
San José, CA 95113

April 16, 2009

Re: Envision 2040 alternatives for environmental review.

Mayor Reed and Council Members,

The Sierra Club has long been active in helping San Jose address environmental concerns that arise when the city deals with land use planning. We admire and support the Mayor's Green Vision and eagerly await the draft Climate Action Plan. On April 21 you will be considering recommendations from the General Plan Task Force for alternatives to be studied in the environmental review process. There are many critical issues to be addressed in this process, most significantly is the need to address greenhouse gas emissions. General plan updates provide a key opportunity to ensure your community adequately responds to AB32 by incorporating GHG reduction goals and policies in the general plan. The environmental review process offers an excellent opportunity to study the effectiveness of proposed policies with regard to gas reduction goals. Therefore I urge you to ensure that in the process of adopting alternatives for analysis the alternatives include specific goals and policies aimed at reducing the city's carbon footprint.

In addition, and related, to the greenhouse gas emissions issue is Coyote Valley. Mid Coyote has been identified as a wildlife corridor in the Santa Clara County Habitat Conservation Plan process. It is also part of a key aquifer and watershed providing drinking water to San Jose residents. Finally, it contains viable soil for local agriculture. The Sierra Club asks you to include in one of the alternatives studied for the general plan update a change in the designation of mid Coyote Valley. We believe that conversion of this land from urban reserve to dedicated open space will provide the city with the means to achieve its housing and jobs goals within the existing urban footprint with some (maybe most) of the mitigation necessary to account for the associate growth and increase in GHGs. Only a study of this alternative can fully disclose the relationship between preserving this green space and accommodating urban growth. Incorporating this into the alternatives analysis would send a strong message that San Jose takes its Green Vision seriously.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Melissa Hippard, Chapter Director