



Envision San Jose Task Force

May 26, 2009

Dear Envision 2040 Task Force Members;

On behalf of our 3,126 members living in San Jose the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club urges you demonstrate your understanding of the environmental challenges we face by voting to eliminate development as an option for Coyote Valley and South Almaden Valley. Tonight you have the opportunity to make a bold statement in favor of preserving farmlands and open space while ensuring that San Jose continues on the path of sustainability. Specifically, we ask you to do the following:

- Remove the Urban Reserve designation from Mid-Coyote Valley.
- Withdraw the UGB from North Coyote Valley. This would "grandfather" existing development and existing permits, but the Coyote Valley Research Park permits would not be renewed if they expire without construction, as seems very likely.
- Withdraw the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) from South Almaden Valley.
- Develop a "Green Vision" planning option that focuses all planned growth within the existing urban footprint.
- Require the development of a Farmland Mitigation Program prior to the conversion of prime farmland to other uses anywhere in the City

You have the opportunity to transform the growing Silicon Valley into the "Silicon Archipelago" whose shores begin at San Jose: cities of economically vibrant, high-tech development surrounded by productive farmland and environmentally vibrant, natural open space. The San Jose/Alviso/Milpitas area, excepting development merging with Santa Clara, already qualifies with open space and Baylands on three sides. The wonderful news just this week about protection of 966-acre Rancho San Vicente adds to this legacy, a feat that was possible only because Coyote Valley development has been stopped so far.

Imagine a real greenbelt surrounding San Jose from the East to the West providing human recreation opportunities and species habitat. San Jose now has Tule elk grazing within city limits.

Coyote Ridge has one of the best wildflower displays in the state. The “Everglades of the West” is being restored to the north, along with verdant river and creek courses connecting natural areas. What is missing is a vision that commits to protecting these areas, along with the farmland that physically connects natural areas together and connects the present and future San Jose to its past.

Our future is defined by the climate crisis and requires different planning from the past. We need to stop outward-sprawling expansion and preserving our remaining farmland that bring us nutritious food from nearby - not from another hemisphere. You have the chance now to plan for this future that preserves what we have and will make San Jose, and the greater region, a much better place for generations to come. Please vote no to development in San Jose’s remaining undeveloped green spaces.

Please contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Melissa Hippard  
Chapter Director

Cc: Mayor Chuck Reed

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