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**From:** LAmes@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, June 28, 2010 6:41 AM  
**To:** District3  
**Cc:** Butler, Lee; Crabtree, Andrew; lawrence.ames@lmco.com  
**Subject:** comments on the Envision 2040 Plan  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Dear Co-chairs Sam Licardo and Shirley Lewis,

I am writing to express my support for the Envision 2040 General Plan Updates, and to reiterate a number of points I have made in public comment over the years:

I am very pleased that the Envision 2040 reflects the Mayor's Green Vision for a sustainable city. The challenges in accommodating the anticipated 40% growth over the next 30 years, without sprawling outward beyond the current boundaries and without destroying the quality of life within those boundaries, will be daunting indeed.

A number of specific points:

- **Historic Preservation:** please implement the "Neighborhoods of Distinction" program to help preserve the history: historic building and districts add "character" to the community and can serve as the nucleus of the planned villages. Specially, do not try to increase the density of established communities by the indiscriminant introduction of incompatible structures. (Please: no more boxy 4-plexes in amongst the Victorians or bungalows.)
- **Riparian corridor setbacks:** incorporate the existing Riparian Setback Policy, including the 100' setbacks, and give it some "teeth". Presently, they are only considered "guidelines" that can be ignored.
- Please, get rid of "the 2-acre rule". In the past, this has been used to grant exceptions to too many otherwise good policies and regulations, and has allowed for inappropriate developments.
- I applaud the commitment to walkable / bikeable communities. As you've said, "design the city for cars, you get more cars; design the city for people and you get a good city". As I've noted before, this may require specific ordinances to promote/require/support the various pedestrian cut-throughs that make a community walkable.
- Encourage the concept of "complete streets". All the residents pay for the streets and roadways: they shouldn't be the exclusive province of trucks and automobiles.
- I love the village concept. As I've said on more than one occasion, I am quite happy in my region of San José: I live in Willow Glen, which is a very walkable community, one with shops, restaurants, library, schools, groceries, and transportation all within easy walking distance. I live in a community where folks know one-another and enjoy visiting and talking. My wish is that other parts of San José can be encouraged to grow into comparable communities.
- I appreciate the intent of aiming for a high jobs:employed resident ratio -- it is high time that San José stopped being the bedroom community for Silicon Valley and took its rightful place as its capitol. I would have concerns if San José actually approached the goal of 1.3:1, however, as that would mean an incredible number of folks would be commuting in from elsewhere (Gilroy and Morgan Hill? Central Valley?), and that in turn would contribute to traffic congestion and

greenhouse gases. I think we need adequate housing for our employees, which is closer to a 1:1 ratio. But aim high, and plan for high-quality “driving” jobs rather than simply settling for “support-level” jobs.

- I fully support the phasing of housing development. For too long, the developers have acted like little kids who eat the desert first and then claim to be too full for their veggies. The developers need to eat their spinach: San José needs to grow strong in body, to grow into a strong city, one with industry and retail as well as housing.
- The downtown / Diridon Station area will grow into something quite special: plan on it! The high-speed rail, CalTrain, BART, Light Rail, and creekside trail systems will all serve the Arena and potential Stadium, as well as retail / offices / entertainment. I want to see a broad pedestrian walkway conveniently linking this area to downtown and the adjacent San José State University campus.
- I applaud the vision of San José’s “Central Park” being distributed along the Guadalupe River (Rose-garden, Arena Greens, Children’s Discovery Museum) and Coyote Creek (Happy Hollow, Japanese Tea Garden, History Museum), all linked by the network of Guadalupe, Coyote, and The 3-Creeks Trails.
- I do recognize that walking and biking is not for everyone, and not at every time -- after all, it does get cold and rainy even here on occasion -- and private cars do need to be accommodated. They do not have to be catered to, however. I think that the 2040 plan reaches a reasonable balance. I appreciate the goal of “Grand Boulevards” and “Main Streets”. I think that The Alameda in the Rose garden District should be classified as what the plan calls a “Main Street”, even though it is part of what is being called “the Grand Boulevard” vision for El Camino. San José’s definition of Grand Boulevard seems to be an attractive car-oriented roadway (e.g., Hillsdale, Meridian), whereas the Main Streets are more pedestrian-oriented with street-level retail shops. The Alameda is aiming towards the later, but the Coleman / Autumn Parkway bypass of the area should be classified as a Grand Boulevard, making it the main and attractive entrance to downtown San José from I-880.
- I didn’t find the list of Main Streets and Grand Boulevards on the website, but they should include:
  - Lincoln Avenue in Willow Glen
  - San Fernando from Diridon Station to San José State
  - Willow St. from 87 to Monterey Highway
  - Jackson in Japantown
  - 13th St. south from US 101
  - and any of the keys streets of the corridor developments (e.g., Winchester, Saratoga, and Bascom).
  - In addition, Skyway from 101 to the airport should be a Grand Boulevard -- a gateway into San José from the airport.
- Please incorporate the Greenprint, as updated, into the General Plan: give it the force of law, rather than just being a collection of nice ideas. Specifically, include the 3.5 acre parkland per 1000 residents and the accessibility of parkland.
- While it is appropriate to develop high-density developments along the transit corridors and near transit nodes, it is important to respect the surrounding established communities. The use of “transition zones”, with developments of mid-level density and height acting as a “buffer” between the high-density project

Overall, I am very pleased with the goals, vision, and specifics of the Plan. I may think of a few points I have overlooked for the moment: I’ll speak to them on Monday.

I look forward to living in this well-designed city for many years to come!

~Lawrence Ames,  
resident of the village of Willow Glen in San José.