



Callander Associates  
Landscape Architecture, Inc.

## Via E-Mail

April 23, 2009

### Meeting Summary

## Coyote Creek Trail, Montague Expressway to Lower Silver Creek

### RE: Public Meeting #1

Date of Meeting: Thursday, April 16, 2009, 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Location of Meeting: Roosevelt Community Center, 901 E. Santa Clara Street, San José  
5 pages

### Attendees:

#### *City of San José:*

Yves Zsutty, Program Manager, Department of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services,  
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Arlene Nakagawara, Associate Landscape Architect, Department of Public Works,  
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Stephanie Fong, Office of Councilmember Kansen Chu, [stephanie.fong@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:stephanie.fong@sanjoseca.gov)

Jennifer Easton, Office of Cultural Affairs, [jennifer.easton@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:jennifer.easton@sanjoseca.gov)

#### *Consultant:*

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Theresa Zaro, Project Assistant, Callander Associates, [tzaro@callanderassociates.com](mailto:tzaro@callanderassociates.com)

#### *Community:*

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Urban Design  
Land Planning  
Park and Recreation Planning  
Environmental Planning

Peter E. Callander, ASLA, Principal  
A. Mark Slichter, ASLA, Principal  
Brian G. Fletcher, ASLA, Principal  
Erik Smith, ASLA, Principal  
Benjamin W. Woodside, ASLA, Principal

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Omar Torres  
Joan Corsiglia

The meeting was convened to discuss and explain a proposed trail alignment for the Coyote Creek Trail from Montague Expressway to Lower Silver Creek. The presentation included a brief overview of the entire city-wide Trail Program, recent progress and upcoming projects within the City's trail network, trail planning challenges and opportunities that were encountered, and typical trail amenities and features. Comments, ideas, and questions from the community were noted and are to be responded to as part of a second community meeting. Following is the information that was discussed and/or suggested in our meeting.

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### Public Discussion – Trail Alignment

- Consider opportunities for a trail on both sides of Coyote Creek. For example, the trail reach north of Montague Expressway (west side of the creek is officially open, east side of the creek is also unofficially used) and portions of Guadalupe River Trail run along both sides of the river.
- Trails on both sides of the creek could offer varied experiences (one side paved, the other unpaved), create a loop for runners, and make circulation easier. The Alameda Creek Trail in Niles is one example of this approach.
- Provide access to destinations like parks, picnic areas, libraries, stores, etc.
- Separate trail uses (higher speed bicyclists, for example) from active park uses (playgrounds, sports fields) with a low buffer. Lack of a buffer has created conflicts on the Los Gatos Creek Trail and Los Alamitos Creek Trail. *Coyote Creek Trail at Stonegate Park (under construction) referenced as example where fencing is used to prevent children in a play yard from possible conflicts with trail users.*
- Trail alignment should be defined in consultation with the Santa Clara Valley Water District. Their plans for flood control may offer trail opportunities along new levees and diversion channels as well as a potential new Charcot Avenue bridge that could be designed to be wider to accommodate a creek crossing. *The City has established a project Technical Advisory Committee and is coordinating with District staff to understand all current and future projects and related opportunities.*
- Explore the possibility of trail alignment on the west side of creek between Charcot Avenue and Brokaw Road.
- Trail network allows downtown dwellers to access open space, and allows people to get downtown easily for work and play.

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- Coyote Creek Trail will be part of the vast Bay Area Ridge Trail, eventually linking to over 500 miles of trails along the Bay Area ridge-top perimeter. Linkage of the trail to the San Francisco Bay Trail will facilitate access to habitat areas such as the Don Edwards Wildlife Refuge and the San Francisco Bay estuaries. Incorporating plans for restoration along Coyote Creek may offer an opportunity to access federal funding in a joint trail/restoration project. For example, a restoration program proposed at the San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant could move forward in conjunction with nearby trail projects.
- Access points for proposed BART station locations will be included in the master plan.
- Investigate reopening O'Toole Avenue (now used as a one-way vehicular off-ramp from I-880) to two-way bicycle traffic.
- Brokaw Road, between Coyote Creek and O'Toole Avenue, has no bike lanes, creating a potentially dangerous situation for bicyclists that could be alleviated by the trail in this section.
- Avoid sharp turns at undercrossing ramps, bridge approaches and trail access points – they are difficult for bicyclists to maneuver without slowing down.

### Public Discussion – Trail Amenities and Historical Context

- Alum Rock Park is a historically significant destination that could be reached from Coyote Creek Trail via the future Penitencia Creek trail. Architectural and interpretive elements along Coyote Creek Trail might be used to draw attention to this trail-accessible destination.
- Penitencia Creek was named for the Franciscan padres who traveled through the area to do penitence. Penitencia Creek's alignment has been altered significantly in proceeding years.
- Benches make the trail more usable for a greater variety of people. They offer rest stops for older family members or a quiet place to enjoy nature.
- Plan for wide areas on the creek side of the trail for relaxation and wildlife viewing.
- Consider bridges or higher lookout areas that can serve as overlooks along the trail. Examples of good bridges and engineering-intensive trail solutions include Stevens Creek Trail in Mountain View and its pedestrian access bridge at Moffett Boulevard.
- Include interpretive and/or educational features along the trail. Tell the story of the Creek itself and its role in Santa Clara Valley's history.
- Include water fountains as a trail amenity.

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### Next Steps

- A second public meeting will be held this summer, and notices will again be mailed to all nearby residents and businesses.
- This meeting's PowerPoint presentation and comments form can be found at the following website address: <http://www.sjparks.org/Trails/coyote/index.asp>

In addition to comments and discussion that took place during the meeting, comments were written on questionnaire forms distributed at the meeting and were also submitted via email prior to or shortly following the meeting. These comments are summarized below.

### Additional Comments

- Design trail in accordance with the provisions of local and state documents including
  1. Santa Clara Valley Water Resources Protection Collaborative Guidelines & Standards
  2. Santa Clara County's Uniform Inter-jurisdictional Trail Design, Use and Management Guidelines
  3. California Recreational Trails Act
  4. Santa Clara Basin Watershed Management Initiative's Action Plan
  5. San Jose's Riparian Corridor Policy Study
- Provide adequate sanitation facilities in appropriate locations along the trail.
- Provide interpretive nodes and paths as well as recreational creek access points, nature study, fishing and small manually powered boating opportunities.
- Include the development and/or continuation of a recreational boating trail along Coyote Creek in concert with state and county codes and plans.
- The trail would provide many people working in the area a marvelous opportunity to take a walk at lunch, and a great way to commute.
- Trails are likely to be used more if they are easily accessible from neighborhoods.
- Investigate a VTA project that proposes a bridge for bicyclists crossing Coyote Creek to connect Brokaw to the future Coyote Creek trail and, more immediately, a solution to restore bicycle access across the O'Toole Avenue/I-880 offramp.

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- Design for potential accommodation of equestrians as well as cyclists and walkers. Trail width and surface, undercrossing vertical clearances, and bridge design should all be considered with regard to equestrian trail use.
- Watson Park may be a good site for another formal trailhead feature, establishing a highly-visible focal point for the community.
- Penitencia Creek confluence will also be a highly attractive location, with connections to the Bay Area Ridge Trail on Penitencia Creek Trail and a planned BART extension station.
- Designing the best possible trail with the most attractive amenities (interpretive displays, drinking fountains, benches, etc.) will help to make the Penitencia Creek confluence site a favorite destination for trail users.

-END-

The information above is Callander Associates' understanding of items discussed and decisions reached at the meeting, as well as comments received prior to or shortly after the meeting. Callander Associates is proceeding with the project based on this understanding. If you have any questions, additions, or corrections to this memo, please contact this office in writing within three days.

Submitted by:



Theresa Zaro, Callander Associates

cc: City of San José attendees  
Jan Palajac, City of San José  
Callander Associates attendees