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## Park leaders want to expand vision of Guadalupe River Park and Gardens

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Leaders at Guadalupe River Park and Gardens want to transform the park into the Central Park of the region, and in October they plan to bring sketches of potential projects to city committees and neighborhood associations to gather feedback.

Leslee Hamilton, executive director of the Friends of Guadalupe River Park and Gardens, said her nonprofit group is wrapping up a "visioning" process that they hope to take to community leaders from October to February.

The River Park and Gardens include a 3-mile strip along the Guadalupe River downtown and 200 acres of open space in the Gardens that were cleared for the flight path of Mineta San Jose International Airport.

Large portions of the park are undeveloped because earlier plans had been conservative with public spending, but Hamilton said she hoped that bold plans might attract private funding for projects like a playground, dog park and planting of dozens of trees.

"What we have now is an opportunity to create an incredible park," Hamilton said at a city meeting in late August.

Because the park is in the airport's flight path, part of the push for more development stems from an interpretation of Federal Aviation Administration rules that has widened in recent years, and it could allow more trees and buildings in the park.

City officials ultimately decide what is built in the park, but the Friends of Guadalupe nonprofit supports and plans projects, and helps raise money. The group wants to enhance the park in part to spur economic development in San Jose. Business representatives from companies like Adobe have said they have trouble attracting employees to San Jose rather than its office in San Francisco, and that a lively arts and music scene and a better network of parks and trails here would help.

Hamilton said Guadalupe River Park and Gardens would never be as large as New York's Central Park or Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, but it has potential. "I see this park in its early stages of development ... and it's going to take a few more generations to finish it off. But this is an amazing opportunity," she said.

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