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## Trail Project Moves Forward With Council's OK on Railroad Land Purchase

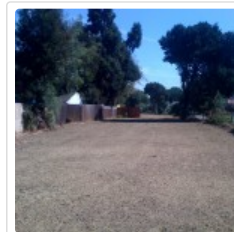
The Willow Glen Spur, a strip of railroad land that could have been sold to developers for housing, will forever be open space and serve as a vital connector of three trails designed for recreation and commuting across San Jose.

The San Jose City Council voted unanimously on Tuesday, September 27, to buy nearly 8 acres of land from the Union Pacific Railroad for the **Three Creeks Trail project**, an effort that was recommended 10 years ago in the city's **Greenprint** and supported by environmentally minded San Jose residents and agencies. The trail will link to the Los Gatos Creek Trail and future segments of the Coyote Creek Trail and the Guadalupe River Trail.

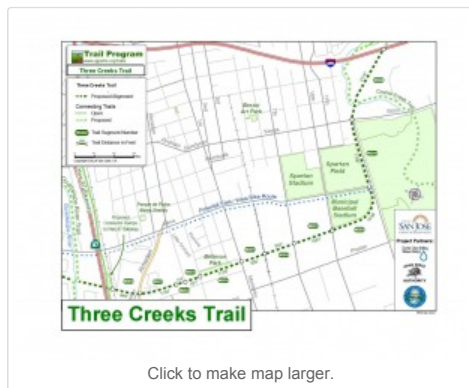
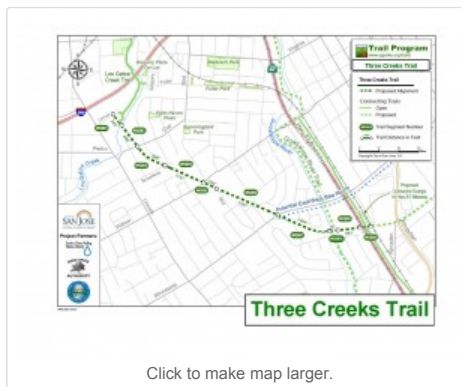
The council voted to spend \$6.25 million for the land from Union Pacific Railroad and for the removal of a billboard along former railroad tracks. The strip, called the Western Alignment, stretches from Lonus Street to Minnesota Avenue.

The Open Space Authority and Santa Clara County is contributing \$2 million each for the project, with the rest coming from the city parks and Council District 6 conveyance and construction tax fund. The county is also contributing \$1 million toward the purchase of land for the Eastern Alignment, which will connect the Three Creeks Trail to Kelley Park. The Santa Clara Valley Water District is putting in \$450,000 to preserve a historic train trestle along the trail.

After thanking the residents, agencies and nonprofits that helped to make possible this significant milestone, Councilman Pierluigi Oliverio added, "I also want to thank the recession. This land was zoned for housing. Without a housing recession this land was going to be gone because the railroad has certain powers under law and they have the ability to act. With the recession we were able to stop that from going forward."



View of future trail from Coe Avenue.



After the land is purchased, the community will be

involved in developing a design for the trail. That's where imagination comes into play, said Larry Ames, a longtime neighborhood lobbyist for the Three Creeks Trail Project. Maybe a dog run or picnic tables and park benches?

One thing is for sure, said Ames: "It won't be under townhouses where it would have been lost forever."

**Save Our Trails**, a nonprofit organization that also worked to move the project forward, has pledged to maintain and cleanup the trails, president Taisia McMahon told the council.



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