TRAILS AND PARK DEVELOPMENT
INTERIM REPORT for the
GUADALUPE RIVER SOUTH CORRIDOR
MASTER PLAN

City of San Jose
Department of Parks and Recreation

Prepared by:
EDAW, INC.
Landscape Architects
San Francisco, CA

In conjunction with the
GUADALUPE RIVER SOUTH
TASK FORCE & TECHNICAL COORDINATION COMMITTEES

April, 1988
March 2, 1988

City Council
City of San Jose
San Jose, California 95110

Dear Honorable Mayor and City Council:

The Guadalupe River South Master Plan Task Force Committee is pleased to submit this Interim Report for your information as prepared by EDAW, Inc. in conjunction with City Staff and this committee.

We have worked together over the last year documenting information on existing development conditions, potential flood control improvements, environmental issues and potential trails and recreation improvements. The planning process included an all-day field trip along the River as well as numerous Task Force and Technical Coordination Committee meetings.

The Committee's first and foremost priority is to ensure that the recreation potential along the Guadalupe River is realized. We have made recommendations on a preferred park plan alternative for each reach of the River in advance of a completed flood control master plan.

Our second priority is to document public and private improvement plans and projects, focusing on unresolved issues as well as design projects that will require monitoring over the next several months to ensure that goals and objectives of the Guadalupe River South Master Plan are implemented.

Our third priority is to locate a recreation park chain and trail system by documenting land areas along the river corridor that have recreation potential.

This Interim Report is submitted for information only. A Master Plan will be completed once the SCVWD has a flood control master plan and accompanying mitigation plan. The estimated completion date for a flood control master plan and environmental impact report is August, 1989. We anticipate that the Guadalupe River South Master Plan will also require an environment impact report.

The Interim Report reflects the committee's desire to create a trail system and park chain that will respect and protect the existing natural character of the river corridor, local historic resources and security of park users and property owners.

Sincerely,

The Guadalupe River South Task Force Committee
# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**San Jose City Council**

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<td>Gerald Lorentz</td>
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<td>Joseph Guerra III</td>
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City Parks & Recreation Commissioner
Councilperson Hammer - District 3
Councilperson Ianni - District 6
Councilperson Williams - District 7
Councilperson Beale - District 9
Councilperson Putman - District 10
County Trails (IGC)
# Table of Contents

I. Introduction
   - Approach
   - Planning Issues
   - Approach
   - Planning Issues
   - Land Use
   - Circulation
   - Flood Control
   - Coordination
   - Goals and Objectives
   - Summary Recommendations
   - Overview
   - Unresolved Issues
   - Purpose of the Interim Report
   - Key Projects to be Monitored

II. Site Analyses
   - Reach 6
   - Reach 7
   - Reach 8
   - Reach 9
   - Reach 10
   - Reach 11
   - Reach 12
   - Reach 13

III. Recommendations
   - Planning Goals
   - Design Statement
   - Concept Alternatives
   - Flood Control Alternatives
   - Open Space Uses
   - Trail Corridor Location
   - Planning Guidelines
   - Flood Control
   - River Park Character
   - Circulation and Safety
   - Edge Treatment/Erosion Control
   - Preservation of Existing Habitat Values
   - New Planting
   - Adjacent Development
   - Reach Improvements
   - Conclusion

IV. Appendix - Photo Survey

# List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fig. No.</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Vicinity Map</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. District/Reach Location</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Existing Land Uses</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Widened Gabion Channel Alternative—Flood Control Plan</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Widened Gabion Channel Alternative—Park Concept Plan</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Widened Earth Channel Alternative—Flood Control Plan</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Widened Earth Channel Alternative—Park Concept Plan</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Gabion Bypass Channel Alternative—Flood Control Plan</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Earth Bypass Channel Alternative—Park Concept Plan</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Underground Bypass Channel Alternative—Flood Control Plan</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Underground Bypass Channel Alternative—Park Concept Plan</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Reach 6—Existing Conditions</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Reach 6—Existing River Cross-section</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Reach 7—Existing Conditions</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Reach 7,8—Existing River Cross-section</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Reach 8—Existing Conditions</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Reach 9—Existing Conditions</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Reach 9—Existing River Cross-section</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Reach 10—Existing Conditions</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Reach 10—Existing River Cross-sections</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Reach 11—Existing Conditions</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Reach 11—Existing River Cross-section</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Reach 12—Existing Conditions</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Reach 12—Existing River Cross-section</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Route 85 Bridge Design</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Reach 13—Existing Conditions</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Concept Plan</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Recommended Erosion Control Methods</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPROACH

The primary intent of this Interim Report on the Guadalupe River South Corridor is to recommend preferred arrangements of trails and land use improvements (urban design) along nine miles of the Guadalupe River in South San Jose. Future flood control projects and habitat preservation and restoration are being planned by the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD). The Report describes the potential river environment that meets objectives of those planning for flood control, wildlife habitat restoration, improved access and riverside recreation and park development. Report recommendations should influence decision-making on flood control alternatives (see Figure 26 and “Recommendations” section).

The approach taken to arrive at interim recommendations follows the process-oriented work plan used most often for projects of this scale and complexity:

- Data Collection
- Identification of Issues
- Goals and Objectives
- Site Analyses/Opportunities and Constraints
- Concept Plan Alternatives
- Preferred Plan Alternative

Data Collection: The park planning team was composed of a Task Force selected by the Mayor and approved by City Council to represent local districts affected by the plan, and a Technical Coordination Committee appointed to assist in collecting land use, circulation and flood control data along the Guadalupe River within the planning area (see Figures 1, 2, 3). In addition, the park planning team has been able to walk the nine miles of the River, recording characteristics such as status of bank stabilization, the width of river corridor (measured from tops of banks), the adjacent land use status, vacant lands, existing informal trails, and how people utilize the river environment. Inaccessible areas have been noted.

Flood control alternatives for Reaches 6-12 have been proposed for the River by the SCVWD (see Figures 4, 6, 8, 10). A preliminary analysis by the park planning team concludes that, generally speaking, flood control solutions would result in some changes to existing land use primarily along the east bank of the River while the west bank would remain much as it is today.

Details of data collected are explained in the discussion of each reach to follow.

PLANNING ISSUES

A preliminary appraisal of issues have been addressed are identified below:

1. Land Use
   a. Relationship of river open space to residential properties and adjacent land uses (park boundary)
   b. Improvement of larger blocks of City-owned and SCVWD-owned property for park and recreational use
2. Circulation
   a. Acceptable levels of access
   b. Parking
   c. Trails connection to Almaden Lake Park and downtown Guadalupe River Park
3. Flood Control
   a. Future flood control improvements
   b. Maintenance of existing and proposed improvements
   c. Location and distribution of habitat mitigation
4. Coordination
   a. Phasing and implementation
   b. Funding of improvements
   c. Operations, maintenance and liability
   d. Approval/Authorization Format
   e. Joint use agreements with Santa Clara Valley Water District
   f. Joint use/access arrangements with the Santa Clara County Transportation District
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Park Plan recommendations for the Guadalupe River South Corridor have been completed prior to the flood control plan and EIR/EIS. However, coordination between the two plans is essential for the establishment of a river environment that provides natural habitat and optimum access and levels of use by the public while providing capacity for the 100-year flood. The following Goals for the Guadalupe River have been articulated to influence the selection of flood control methods that will:

1. Preserve and restore a natural creek environment.
2. Provide bicycle, pedestrian, equestrian and security vehicular access to the Guadalupe River for neighborhood and community recreational use.
3. Identify and integrate existing and proposed trails and parks within the planning area.
4. Provide options for maintenance access along the Guadalupe River.
5. Coordinate park master planning with flood control planning, recognizing that Water District goals to provide flood protection along the Guadalupe River are usually least cost alternatives.
6. Develop a park/trails plan that coordinates with needs and desires of involved public agencies and the community.
7. Provide a continuous park/trails network that identifies recreational opportunities for public access easements without encroaching on private property.
8. Provide for security, safety, accessibility, and visibility within the Park, especially under bridges, and over bridge crossings for the bicyclist, hiker, jogger and for the disabled.
9. Provide security and safety for private residential and commercial property adjacent to the Park.
10. Recommend standards and/or guidelines for future urban design development along the Guadalupe River Park (bridges, street closures, private and public development, etc.).

A sensitive balance between public access and privacy also needs to be achieved. Compatibility among land uses, and security of park users as well as private residents along the River must be guaranteed. The following objectives have been defined for that purpose:

- Bikes and/or pedestrian trails and future park lands will be located within existing or future SCVWD easements as determined to be feasible.
- Trails will be incorporated into existing street sidewalks and bike lanes whenever necessary.
- Trails will be located primarily at top-of-banks with an occasional trail meandering down the river bank to pass under a bridge or to provide dual access for both maintenance vehicles and pedestrians. This will achieve maximum safety while minimizing impacts on natural habitats.
- Trails will be located following input from private or quasi-public property owners whose properties adjoin or are affected by future improvements.
- Since trail alignments will be identified prior to final flood control improvements and placement of wildlife habitat, conceptual planning could influence those decisions. In turn, the alignments of the trails could be altered slightly to respond to the preferred flood control and mitigation plan alternative.
- The Interim Report for the Guadalupe River South Corridor recommends a preferred flood control solution that best integrates trails and recreation possibilities while creating a natural character.
- Recreation and other land uses proposed along the River should occur primarily outside the SCVWD right-of-way, minimizing impacts on flood control habitat mitigation.
- The Interim Report makes recommendations regarding future land use and circulation improvements primarily for vacant or underutilized land, and in conjunction with the preferred flood control solution. The extent of the widened SCVWD right-of-way has been estimated.
- The Interim Report recommends that any reestablishment of riparian habitat associated with flood control improvements shall create as natural a setting as possible ("natural" is defined as that environment that will evolve without man's interference).
- The planning team recognizes that the natural processes specific to the Guadalupe River corridor are likely to eventually predominate over any man-made improvements. To the extent feasible, both flood control and trail/recreation improvements should take into account the fact that siltation of channels and growth of wildlife habitat can diminish flood conveyance capacities. In more precise terms, the width of the river corridor should be established to accommodate all desired natural processes and cultural improvements.
EXISTING LAND USE PLAN
GUADALUPE RIVER SOUTH CORRIDOR
FIGURE 3
EXIST. GROUND TO BE REMOVED
PROP. MAINT. ROAD
MITIGATION AREA

WEST BANK SIDE SLOPE VARIES FROM 1.5:1 TO 3:1

FIGURE 4: Widened Gabion Channel Alternative - Flood Control Plan
(Source: SCVWD)

FIGURE 6: Widened Earth Channel Alternative - Flood Control Plan
(Source: SCVWD)

25 FT. MIN
300 FT. TYP.
SCVWD R.O.W. FLOOD CONTROL/MITIGATION

POSSIBLE PARK IMPROVEMENTS
POSSIBLE MITIGATION AREA

Upper Bench Trail (12 ft. min.)
Planted Gabion Bank (3:1)
Lower Bench Option (SCVWD Service road 18 ft. min.)

Preserve existing West Bank

FIGURE 5: Widened Gabion Channel Alternative - Park Concept Plan

50' (TYP)

FIGURE 7: Widened Earth Channel Alternative - Park Concept Plan

ADJACENT DEVELOPMENT

Public Street Access

Upper Bench Trail (12 ft. min.)
Planted Gabion Bank (3:1)
Lower Bench Option (SCVWD Service road 18 ft. min.)

Preserve existing West Bank

FIGURE 7: Widened Earth Channel Alternative - Park Concept Plan
FIGURE 8: Gabion Bypass Channel Alternative - Flood Control Plan
(Source: SCVWD)

FIGURE 9: Earth Bypass Channel Alternative - Park Concept Plan

FIGURE 10: Underground Bypass Channel Alternative - Flood Control Plan
(Source: SCVWD)

FIGURE 11: Underground Bypass Channel Alternative - Park Concept Plan
SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

This Interim Report has been prepared for the City of San Jose Department of Recreation, Parks and Community Services to offer recommendations for trails and park development along ten miles of the Guadalupe River between Highway 280 and Almaden Lake Park. The planning process was intended to coincide with the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) flood control master plan process for the same stretch of river. Because of delays in the flood control planning schedule, a concept plan has been completed without reflecting a final flood control plan. Representatives from SCVWD, other agencies and local districts served on Technical Coordination and Task Force Committees to provide input and feedback as staff prepared recommendations. Once the flood control master plan is completed, recommendations for trails and park improvements will be updated to master plan status, incorporating approved flood control solutions.

Purpose of the Interim Report

The Interim Report identifies issues, opportunities, possible courses of action, environmental concerns and urban land use conflicts along the Guadalupe River. The park planning process was undertaken to interpret existing urban design patterns and provide recommendations for improved public access to and use of the Guadalupe River South Corridor. Many construction and planning projects were analyzed to determine impacts on or relationships to the river corridor. A project that could have major impacts on the existing river is a flood control improvement program needed to protect adjacent development from flood damage. A flood control master plan will be completed in approximately 1 to 1-1/2 years and will recommend widening the channel to contain the 100-yr. flood waters. Flood control alternatives for each reach in the planning area have been proposed by the SCVWD (see Figures 4, 6, 8, 10). The accompanying SCVWD right-of-way required for flood control became the basis for making recommendations for park and trail improvements.

The Task Force recommends a preferred flood control method for each reach of the planning area that will most effectively achieve well-secured recreational use of the Guadalupe River. A trail plan has been proposed as well, showing east or west bank locations and bridge crossings and undercrossings. Several opportunity sites for park plans have also been identified. Future park expansion opportunity areas have been considered (see Figure 27). Detailed development and preservation guidelines are included to direct future construction projects toward sensitive site design relationships with this special natural amenity. The Interim Plan addresses how trails and park improvements should link up with park improvements underway at Almaden Lake Park and the downtown Guadalupe River Park.

Below is a summary description of major findings and recommendations for each reach of the planning area, followed by a list of key projects or sites that require monitoring over the next several months. See Figure 27 for a graphic description of recommendations.

REACH 6

Issues

- Flood control methods have not been resolved.
- Portion of trail abuts residences.
- Noise and traffic hazards along Route 87.
- Trail connection to Downtown “River Walk”.

Recommended Park/Trail Features

- East bank relocated and revegetated where possible with riparian habitat.
- West bank slope and riparian vegetation is preserved.
- Continuous combined Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail along top of east bank.
- Access and Noise Barrier along Route 87 freeway.
- Parcourse or exercise course to connect to downtown river park.
- Access is exclusively from east bank.
- Provide for Nature Interpretive or Discovery Park experiences that relate to Children's Discovery Museum.
- Provide a neighborhood park/trail access along east and west bank extending under I-280 interchange into downtown.

REACH 7

Issues

- Flood control methods have not been resolved.
- Alma LRT park-and-ride lot on the west side of Lelong Street may be in conflict with a river-related linear park.
- East bank setback width may not be adequate.
- Image of LRT and Elks Lodge parking lot along east bank.

Recommended Park/Trail Features

- East bank widened and revegetated with riparian habitat.
- West bank is preserved.
- Underground bypass along Elks lodge. East bank is preserved.
- Combined Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail along east bank.
- Minimum 25' open space setback between west side of Lelonk Street ROW and extended east bank.
REACH 8
Issues
• Flood control methods have not been resolved.
• Trails adjacent to residential use.
• Residential use on both sides of River limit public access.
• Park use may impact on private residential use.
Recommended Park/Trail Features
• East bank widened and revegetated with riparian habitat.
• West bank is preserved as riparian habitat.
• Adequate width is available to separate Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails.
• River frontage road improves security for park users.
• Neighborhood-serving recreation is possible.
• Pedestrian crossing over Malone Road Bridge should be provided.

REACH 9
Issues
• Flood control method is not resolved.
• Vegetated banks are desirable.
• Proposed land use changes may infringe on public access.
• Existing narrow, steep channel may limit recreation potential.
• Urban encroachment into River corridor limits public use.
Recommended Features
• Underground bypass under Old Almaden Road is the Concept Plan recommended flood control alternative.
• East bank widened and revegetated where possible with riparian habitat.
• Design of Malone Road Bridge reconstruction.

REACH 10
Issues
• Character of the existing flood control channel.
• Pearl Ave. Bridge design.
• Proposed land use changes along the east bank may conflict with park plan.
• Traffic/pedestrian conflicts along Almaden Expressway.
Recommended Features
• East bank widened and revegetated with additional riparian and ornamental planting.
• Proposed Pearl Ave. Bridge structure will include pedestrian facility.
• Minimum 100 ft.-wide open space easement is recommended along portions of east bank for a linear park and buffer separating park from business park improvements.
• Barriers to discourage pedestrian access.

REACH 11
Issues
• Joint-use of Water Company land.
• Limited recreation and trail access between River and Thousand Oaks Park.
• Trail behind existing residences may conflict with personal privacy.
• West bank traffic hazards exist along Almaden Expressway.
• Access to River from west side residents.
Recommended Features
• Optional trail connection between River and Thousand Oaks Park is provided.
• Double fence between trail and residential property.
• New footbridge at Bryan Avenue.
• Revegetation and possible nature study use of Water Company land.
• Existing vegetation is preserved.
• Barriers to discourage pedestrian access.
**REACH 12**

**Issues**
- Public access onto SCVWD lands.
- Revegetation on SCVWD lands.
- Future development relating to River along the west bank.
- Security and safety.
- Rt. 85 bridge design.
- Chynoweth Ave. Bridge design.

**Recommended Features**
- SCVWD lands should be master planned to accommodate revegetation and passive public access, such as nature trails and experimental or demonstration gardens with a Water Conservation Theme.
- Community park will be developed at Chynoweth Ave. on west bank.
- Extensions of Sanchez Dr. and Chynoweth Ave. will provide adequate access for surveillance.
- Special structural treatment at Rt. 85 overcrossing of the Guadalupe River.

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**REACH 13**

**Issues**
- Revegetation on SCVWD lands.
- SCVWD expansion.
- Connection to Almaden Lake Park and upstream trails.
- Public access from Almaden LRT Station parking lot.

**Recommended Features**
- Development of a master plan for SCVWD Headquarters site and ponds is in progress (pending SCVWD decision to expand).
- Two footbridges.
- Connect trails between LRT Station and park.
- Joint use of LRT parking lot for weekend access to River and trails.

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**Unresolved Issues**

The following issues have not been resolved in the concept plan phase, due primarily to uncertainty about what flood control features will be adopted, and how much land area within the river corridor will be needed to provide mitigation planting for flood control, highway and private development projects over the next several years. Simply put, the size of the river corridor - the river channel and adjacent top-of-bank park/trail improvements should ultimately be as wide as possible to accommodate all mitigation sites, parks, trails, easements and existing natural habitat zones in such a way that wildlife and human activity can coincide harmoniously in a stable environment.

**Unresolved issues:**

- **Flood control preferred alternatives:** This Interim Report recommends the Task Force members' preferences for flood control methods in each Reach of the planning area. These preferences must be viewed as tentative, however, given that the SCVWD flood control master plan has not yet been completed.
- **Mitigation Sites:** When finished, the flood control feasibility study will identify the acreage of mitigation required to compensate for loss of habitat due to flood control improvements. The study may also recommend locations for mitigation planting. Freeway extensions and other projects in South San Jose are impacting or will impact the riparian corridor at some locations and will have to provide mitigation planting as well. It is not possible at this time to predict the location or size of mitigation sites that may be required, although it is anticipated that most sites will be located within the river channel.
- **Location of Opportunity Sites:** Because the SCVWD master plan is not yet complete, it is likely that opportunity sites may be adjusted in the Master Plan phase of the park plan. However, minor changes are anticipated since park opportunity sites as illustrated are intended to be located on top of banks (see Figure 27).
- **Alma Light Rail Transit Station:** The west parking lot and Lelong Street extension will be constructed in the summer of 1988, and will not accommodate the minimum 25 ft. setback needed to create a sensitive solution for trail connection. When the SCVWD widens the River, coordination and cooperation between the City and SCVWD should take place to create the minimum 25 ft. setback between an extended east bank and Lelong St. to allow for a continuous park trail.
- **General Plan Amendment Sites:** Property and proposed land use changes at Willow Glen Way are private development projects going through the amendment process that would significantly change existing conditions along the River. Those
Key Projects to be Monitored

Development along the Guadalupe River South Corridor is actively changing the character of the River. The following projects were found to be at a point in the development cycle when recommendations would have a direct, positive influence in the outcome of both the park plan and individual project:

- Flood control feasibility study (master plan).
- Alma LRT Station and Lelong Street alignment (Reach 7 - GP87-3-2).
- Almaden LRT Station (Reach 13).
- Rt. 85 Bridge Crossing (Reach 12).
- Elks lodge remodeling (Reach 7).
- Valley View Packing Co. Property (Reach 10 - GP87-7-3).
- Residential development at Willow Glen Way (Reach 9).
- Industrial Park at Willow Glen Way (Reach 9).
- Malone Road Bridge reconstruction (Reach 9).
- Willow Glen Bridge redesign (Reach 9).
- Pearl Avenue extension and Bridge Design (Reach 10).
- Chynoweth Avenue extension and Bridge Design (Reach 12).
- SCVWD headquarters master plan around the percolation ponds (Reach 13).

The progress of these projects should be monitored by a subcommittee composed of current Task Force members over the next year or until the Master Plan Phase is initiated.

Guadalupe River South

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPARISON OF FLOOD CONTROL METHODS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gabion/Earth Bypass</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Right-of-Way</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Channel Characteristics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Erosion Potential</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sedimentation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Water Quality</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engineering Considerations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safety</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessibility and Enforcement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recreation Potential</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aesthetics</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Wildlife Habitat</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Vegetation</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Fish Habitat</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Riparian Vegetation</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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*Concrete lined channel throughout the planning area would result in a loss of approximately 20 acres of riparian vegetation. (Does not include possible mitigation sites)*
Reach 6 of the planning area begins at the intersection of I-280 and State Route 87. The reach extends approximately one half mile upstream and southward terminating at the Southern Pacific Railroad bridge crossing (see Figures 3, 12, 13).

Circulation
Grant St. dead-ends perpendicular to the River edge with a chain link fence and concrete based barrier, limiting access to the River.

Route 87, presently under construction, runs parallel to the west bank of the River (approximately 150 ft. from centerline to centerline).

The Route 87 Corridor will include a light rail transit (LRT) system located within the central median.

Footpaths have been worn under I-280 interchange (east bank easement).

Most of the River in Reach 6 is easily accessible through frontage roads and Water District easements.

The LRT station is proposed near the Virginia St. bridge.

McLellan St. (a two-lane street fronting residences) runs parallel to the River on the east bank, allowing a varying easement of 50 ft. to 150 ft. from centerline of the River to the edge of the roadway.

The Virginia St. bridge crosses the River at a height of approximately 20 ft. above the river bottom.

The Southern Pacific Railroad bridge (terminus of Reach 6), a half wood/half steel structure in aged condition, stands approximately 20 ft. clear above the river bed. A new bridge to accommodate a second track will be built parallel to the existing bridge alignment.

Land Use
Exclusively residential land uses exist along the east bank of the River.

Residential dwellings are single family; medium density; approximately 1/8 acre lots; approximately 40 years in age; with an average, 1,500 square feet of living space.

The land to the west of the River in all of Reach 6 is allocated exclusively for transportation purposes.

The residential block nearest I-280 are the only homes in Reach 6 to directly join to the SCVWD right-of-way. Many homes on the block are noted as SCVWD (FEE), which refers to the FEE title of the property.

River Character
The pattern of the River is basically straight with a sweeping bend approaching Reach 7.

The overall character of the River is natural, with a minimal amount of man-made features, other than bridge overcrossings and small patches of bank stabilization.

The cleanliness is moderate overall. Trash and debris are scattered under and adjacent to the I-280 interchange, resulting from transient use and seasonal flooding.

Remains from concrete foundations, irrigation flood pipes and miscellaneous construction materials periodically litter the banks and low-flow channel.

The Route 87 Corridor area west of the River is naturally landscaped with a variety of tall trees buffering the northern bank up to Virginia Street.
### Existing Flood Control Features

The close proximity of residences and roadways on the east bank of the river channel has resulted in the installation of several erosion-control measures: concrete sacks, stone riprap and concrete chip debris.

The west bank, supporting a variety of mature vegetation, remains relatively stable.

The existing channel is not wide enough to convey the 100-year flood. Flood control methods being considered by SCVWD include a separate bypass channel (see Figure 8).

The bypass channel concept would result in:

- Natural stream channel will remain undisturbed. Parallel earth bypass channel with earth or gabion banks will be excavated.
- Decreased erosion will occur in natural channel.
- The limitations of the I-280 overpass will not allow the use of a bypass channel, resulting in disturbance to the natural stream channel and a loss of fish and wildlife habitat, and riparian vegetation of the River. Otherwise, benefits to those features might increase in the other locations of Reach 6.
- Up to 64 residences on McLellan Ave. and Palm St. might be lost due to channel excavation.

### Opportunities & Constraints

#### Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preservation of the natural channel would occur, creating adjacent open space for a possible linear park and trailway.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lines of site into opposite channels would be blocked by center berm. Bypass channel could be an attractive nuisance, especially during dry season.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility by patrol vehicles between channels would be difficult. Center berm could attract transients and/or criminal activities. Dumping of trash could continue.</td>
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#### Constraints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraint</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The noise and physical obstruction of the transportation systems in the area may be a detraction from a scenic, natural and/or recreational environment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residential properties near the northeast bank may limit access to and along the River.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A continuous path along the east bank would be limited by existing steep reinforced concrete sack banks between I-280 and Virginia St.</td>
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</table>

#### The west bank, surrounding the Route 87 Corridor, allows only limited usable land for park recreation and access to the River.

Most of the east bank, as it exists, allows access along the River. A few vacant and residential properties could be acquired when and if the opportunity arises to create opportunities for neighborhood parks (see Illustrative Plan).

The area under and around I-280 is generously landscaped, simulating a natural environment.

The Task Force has recommended that the following activities be considered in Reach 6:

- Biological interpretive laboratory.
- Physical fitness course for downtown workers as well as adjacent homeowners.
- A nature study area, possibly related to the Children's Discovery Museum or Youth Science Institute.
- Trail connection to downtown "River Walk".
- Provide access to the Virginia LRT Station.
- Direct any future bridge plans (W. Virginia, Willow, Alma) to integrate park plans, maintenance and pedestrian access to the River.
REACH 7

FIGURE 14: Reach 7-Existing Conditions

Reach 7 begins after the Southern Pacific Railroad crossing and extends 3/4 of a mile under two major street overcrossings (Willow St. and Alma Ave.) and terminates at the Western Pacific Railroad bridge overcrossing (see Figures 3, 14, 15).

Circulation

The future Route 87 Corridor will cross over the River as the channel bends westerly. It then crosses Willow St. and travels through an old abandoned golf course. Route 87 continues in a southeasterly direction crossing Alma St., above the Western Pacific Railroad tracks and away from the planning area.

The Route 87 Corridor will include two Park & Ride rail transportation stations, Caltrain to the east of Route 87 and the LRT (Alma Station) to the west.

Lelong Ave. will be extended southward to provide access to the LRT and Caltrain stations.

The CalTrans commuter bike path will extend from Willow St. southward along the east edge of the Route 87 corridor. From Willow St. northward, bicycle circulation will extend into the downtown.

West of the Route 87 overcrossing, Willow St. crosses the River at a distance of approximately 25 ft. above the river bed on a concrete bridge.

Alma Ave. (a four-lane road) crosses over the River (clearing approximately 25 ft. from the river bed), with a reinforced concrete bridge.

The Western Pacific Railroad bridge crossing clears the river bed by approximately 20 ft. with a steel framed wooden structure.

Access between Willow and Alma Sts., to the River originates from Alma St. on the east bank.

Beyond Alma St. to the south, a five foot wide path has been worn on the east bank, terminating at the railroad crossing.

Pedestrian access over the railroad bridge overcrossing is possible but not intended because of unsafe conditions.

Land Use

The Route 87 Corridor has acquired residential parcels north of Willow St. near the river.

The land between Willow and Alma Sts. that is now the Route 87 Corridor was formerly the Alma Golf Course.
FIGURE 15

- REACH SEVEN - EXISTING SECTION -

- REACH EIGHT - EXISTING SECTION -
North of Willow St., the River passes through a mixture of residential and commercial parcels.

South of Willow St., the east bank land, jurisdiction of Santa Clara County, continues at an approximate width of 700 feet. On the west bank, vacant private property continues at a width of 500 feet.

Continuing south on the west bank, a SCVWD easement to the River crosses on to 17 private residential properties. The property lines extend out to the river centerline.

On the west bank adjacent to Alma St., a SCVWD parcel (approximately 1/2 acre) is used as a viable community garden (the Willows Community Garden).

A 140 ft. wide easement, under the jurisdiction of the State, follows the river centerline on the east bank, south, up to Alma St.

South of Alma St., on the east bank, the San Jose Elks Club parcel continues up to the centerline of the River, yet allows an access path of approximately 5 ft. wide along the east bank of the River.

A vacant parcel, under state jurisdiction, runs along the east bank of the River 600 ft. to the east (from the centerline of the River) until it ends at the Western Pacific Railroad tracks.

South of Alma St. on the west bank, a commercial parcel meets the centerline of the River, and continues approximately 180 ft. south.

SCVWD land on the west bank continues along the River south to the railroad tracks. This easement fronts a high density residential development to the west.

**River Character**

The pattern of the River bends to the west in the first half of Reach 7, then extends in a straight channel upstream into Reach 8.

Overall appearance of the River is natural with patches of bank stabilization.

The vegetation is heavy in most areas along Reach 7 with the exception of the Old Alma Golf Course.

Cleanliness of the channel is moderate with a major debris backup, south of Alma St., due to an obstruction of vegetation.

**Existing Flood Control Features**

Existing erosion control measures include: major riprap stabilization along the east bank near Alma Street at the old Golf Course; sand bag reinforcement at water pipe outlets; and stabilized foundations near bridge overcrossings.

Major flooding problems have been noted in the Elks Club parking area and State land between Alma Ave. and the Western Pacific railroad tracks. Flooding is evidenced by high water marks on tree trunks and debris remaining in tree branches.

On banks near and under Route 87, regrading and vegetation removal has occurred.

Similar to Reach 6, the flood control method receiving most attention is a bypass concept. Again the effects would be: (see Figure 8)

- Natural stream channel to remain undisturbed. Earth bypass channel with, earth or gabion banks to be excavated.
- Covered bypass channel could be built under the existing Elks Club parking lot.
- Existing erosion would be repaired.
- Reduced level of maintenance in the natural stream channel would occur.
- Loss of one commercial establishment would occur.

• Preservation of the natural channel would continue, while creating adjacent open space for a possible linear park and trailway system.
• Existing fish and wildlife habitat and riparian vegetation would remain static or increase due to decreased maintenance in the stream channel.
• Lines of site into opposite channels would be blocked by center berm. Bypass channel could be an attractive nuisance, especially during dry season.
• Accessibility by patrol vehicles between channels would be difficult. Center berm could attract transients and/or criminal activities. Dumping of trash could continue.
OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Opportunities

Most of the northern section of Reach 7 will be accessible and open for possible recreational use, after the completion of Route 87.

The proposed commuter bike system could be connected to future Guadalupe River trails.

Improved access to a trailway junction at the Alma LRT station may induce public to use bicycles instead of cars, and improve public access and use of the River corridor.

An area east of the River (the old Alma Golf Course) provides a possibility for public access to the River, adjacent to the Alma LRT station.

The Willows Community Garden is a unique type of recreational feature that adds interest and diversity to the area.

The path worn on the east bank between Alma St. and the end of Reach 7 provides adequate pedestrian access along the river edge as it exists.

Constraints

The crossing of existing Route 87 over the River is a visual and physical obstruction in conjunction with recreational uses.

The introduction of the park and ride transportation facilities will increase the vehicular circulation in the vicinity of the River.

The established residences between Willow and Alma Sts. are in close proximity to the River, discouraging the development of the west bank for recreational purposes.

An easement needs to be established between the east bank of the River and the Elks facility to provide for a continuous trail, and flood control improvements.
Reach 8 extends one quarter mile south from the Western Pacific Railroad bridge overcrossing to the Willow Glen Way Bridge (see Figures 3, 15, 16).

**Circulation**

Vehicular service access to the River (in the northern section of Reach 8) originates from Creek Dr.

A SCVWD service access road to the River (approximately 20 ft. wide) runs along the west bank, behind solidly fenced residential backyards for 700 ft., until blocked by residential back yards.

In the northern section of Reach 8, access along the River is limited on the east bank due to the proximity of the neighboring residential properties.

Mid-reach, an approximately 15 ft. wide concrete ramp structure, running parallel to the service road on the west bank, angles down to the river basin.

There is limited access to the River from Willow Glen Way, due to the proximity of neighboring residences on both the east and west banks.

**Land Use**

Only residential land uses border the River and river easements. The Western Pacific Railroad crossing the River east/west averages a 100 ft. wide right-of-way. An approximately 2 acre vacant parcel is situated close to the River between the Western Pacific Railroad tracks and Creek Dr.

The SCVWD easement on the east bank travels from the Western Pacific Railroad right-of-way and runs south 200 ft., and east 50 ft., from centerline of the River, and terminates at residential properties in both directions.

The SCVWD easement on the west bank travels along the River 700 ft. south, at a width of 60 ft. from the centerline of the River, until it terminates at a residential property.

The SCVWD easement on the east bank travels from the Western Pacific Railroad right-of-way and runs south 200 ft., and east 50 ft., from centerline of the River, and terminates at residential properties in both directions.

**River Character**

Passing through one residential block, Reach 8 has an almost straight form with a slight curve to the west.

A small SCVWD easement further upstream, on the west bank, is surrounded by residences with limited access.

Residences along the River are 1/8-1/4 acre lots, approximately 30 years in age and well maintained.

The 1/4 acre lot residences on the east and south/west banks have property lines terminating at the river centerline.

White water conditions occur at the base of the concrete ramp, where low flow water rushes over large boulders in the river channel.

The service/access road on the west bank has scenic quality with mature vegetation and attractive, well maintained residential fences lining its path.

Erosion-controlling concrete sacks line most of the west bank, producing a grayish white background to the trees.

The tall trees lining the east bank of the river create a canopy along the water and banks.
Existing Flood Control Features

Previous flooding and erosion problems have been corrected by the installation of extensive concrete sack wall lining on the west bank. Reaching Approximately 20 ft. high, the sack walls open in pockets for existing tree trunks.

The east bank bears evidence of high flood waters deteriorating residential fences, backyards, and river banks.

No introduced stabilization efforts are evident on the east bank except for a small 40 ft. long patch of riprap at the base of Willow Glen Way bridge.

A flood control design alternative being considered by the SCVWD is the gabion bypass channel.

The features of a bypass channel are as follows: (see Figure 8)

- Natural stream channel to remain undisturbed except at erosion sites.
- Existing erosion sites would be repaired.
- Preservation of the natural channel would remain, while creating adjacent open space for a possible linear park and pathway.
- Twenty-three residences could be lost due to excavation.

- Lines of site into opposite channels would be blocked by center berm. Bypass channel could be an attractive nuisance, especially during dry season.
- Accessibility by patrol vehicles between channels would be difficult. Center berm could attract transients and/or criminal activities. Dumping of trash could continue.

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Opportunities

At the beginning of Reach 8, the service/access road along the west bank of the River (extending half the length of the reach) provides a generous and attractive pathway as it exists.

A large parcel of vacant land west of the River and adjacent to the railroad tracks, may be suitable for recreational uses.

The stabilized concrete sack banks on the west side of the River contrasts with the natural features of water and trees. The ramp down to the river basin allows emergency access as well as safe, close contact with the water, for users.

Constraints

Due to the lack of riparian on the west bank, to develop or change the east bank would result in a disturbance to the riparian habitat in the reach (unless special measures are taken).

Flooding problems occur in the reach, as it exists due to the narrow channel.

The residential properties terminating the existing SCVWD service/access path, discourage safe access along the west bank of the River, up to Willow Glen Way.

Existing steep slopes on the east bank limit development for access.
Reach 9 begins at Willow Glen Way bridge, extends south under Malone Road bridge one mile, and terminates at Curtner Ave. (see Figures 3, 17, 18).

**Circulation**

Willow Glen Way bridge (a two-lane overcrossing clearing approximately 25 ft. above the river basin) is an eclectic arrangement of materials and uses. The bridge is a reinforced concrete structure with a steel railing and cyclone fence barrier. It also supports a steel truss framed pedestrian walkway connected to the bridge along the south side. (This bridge has been identified as an archaeologically significant structure.)

On the east bank, a maintenance access to the River from Willow Glen Way exists through San Jose Water Company land. A ramped path, on this site, provides a service access to the river basin.

After intersecting Creek Dr., Pine Ave. continues east for a short distance and terminates on the west bank of the River.

Almaden Rd. (a two-lane med./high speed collector street) fronts the east side of the River, upstream, along the remaining portion of the reach.

The distance from the river centerline to the edge of Almaden Rd. varies from 40 ft. to 230 ft.

Malone Rd. bridge joins Almaden Rd. to the west side of the River. The concrete reinforced structure is planned to be expanded and/or replaced (Project is managed by the City's Design and Construction section).

Access to the River from Almaden Rd., on the east bank, is uncomplicated due to the large amount of vacant land bordering the River.

Curtner Ave. bridge (a four-lane overcrossing) connects to an extensive concrete wall reinforcement system, stabilizing the east bank.

Access to the river's edge is difficult in the Curtner Ave. area due to the tall vertical walls on the east bank, and the close proximity of residential properties on the west.

**Land Use**

An open, approximately three acre parcel (on the east bank, just south of the Willow Glen overcrossing) is under the jurisdiction of the San Jose Water Company. With the exception of an access way, one 40 ft. dia. water tank and various small equipment, the site is relatively open. Most of the site has been cleared. A strip of vegetation 50 ft. wide remains along the river edge (bringing the property line down to the river centerline).
South of Willow Glen Way, properties along the west bank are well-maintained residences, approximately 1/4 acre lots. Five properties nearest the Willow Glen Way bridge have 50 ft. wide SCVWD easements adjacent to the River.

Up to Malone Rd., the west bank continues with 1/4 acre residential properties. Property lines average to the depth of the river centerline (yet do not match the course of the River exactly).

Residential properties (1/4 acre average) continue along the west bank, up to Malone Rd.

On the east bank, along Almaden Rd. and up to Malone Rd., sections of land, under various ownerships, remain virtually open and unused.

As the River bends east towards Almaden Rd., SCVWD land allows the first access to the River from Almaden Rd.

Further south, San Jose Water Company land, on Almaden Rd., is fenced along the roadway where water tanks and equipment are in use. This unfenced water company land is a grassy, tree-covered, sloped terrace leading down to the River.

An approximately 1-acre vacant, private parcel of land (on the corner of Malone and Almaden Rds.) is an unused fenced lot bearing little vegetation on the upper bank and full vegetation on the river's edge.

The western bank south of Almaden Rd. bridge (under same ownership as the northern vacant lot) has received major bank stabilization treatment creating a barren concrete easement extending 450 ft. along Almaden Rd.

On the west bank (also under the same private ownership), a natural 40 ft. wide easement, with moderate vegetation, fronts small residential properties to the west.

Traveling south next to Almaden Rd., a 1-acre vacant parcel (under private ownership) carries the river path through one half of the lot. Relatively flat, the land supports an attractive variety of natural and introduced ornamental vegetation.

Parallelly the property on the west, the river's course passes through SCVWD land. Mainly covering the west bank, this land supports a number of bank stabilization measures, and buffers a two-story attached residential development to the north-west.

Continuing south along the west bank, the river centerline follows the property lines of nine 1/4-acre lot residences.

After passing a 1/4 acre SCVWD lot ten 1/2-acre residential lots abut the west bank, south to Curtner Ave. bridge.

Neighboring the vacant parcel (back on the east bank) are two 1/2 acre residential lots (both under the same ownership); one supporting an abandoned (or underutilized) residence; one supporting an active residence. These Properties and structures are due for purchase and demolition by the SCVWD. Both properties occupy the land between Almaden Rd. and the river's centerline.

Approaching Curtner Ave. a 1/4 acre parcel lies vacant between Almaden Rd. and the river edge.

The remaining land area adjacent to the River up to the Curtner Ave. bridge, is owned by Santa Clara County.

**River Character**

Throughout Reach 9 the River undulates regularly from east to west approximately every 500 ft.

At the Willow Glen Way bridge, the appearance of the River on the west bank is clean. Although the bank treatments are unnatural, an interesting effect is caused by the salt and pepper stone riprap bank leading around to an access ramp under a canopy of mature trees.

The alignment of the River passes through mature and sometimes heavy vegetation.

At some points, residents have taken advantage of the river's course through their properties by adorning the upper banks with ornamental vegetation, decks, and treehouses.

The abundant growth of vegetation and the natural appearance of the River is abruptly interrupted by a variety of stark, unvegetated flood control bank treatments that occur approximately every 900 ft.

The tree covered properties between Almaden Rd. and the river path is an attractive scene as one travels by car, yet at the roadway elevation the river basin is not visible.

The eastern bank slopes, near Curtner Ave. and Almaden Rd., have steep inclines down to the river basin.

Near Curtner Ave., a tall leaning retaining wall on the east bank, and a bed of rubble on the west bank, create a visual eyesore to the north from the bridge overcrossing.

**Existing Flood Control Features**

Significant bank stabilization measures have been introduced along the deeper bends of the river channel to control erosion caused by scouring. Existing roads and development limit the opportunity to widen the channel significantly.

The types of bank treatments vary greatly within the reach. Some are concrete slab and sack walls (vertical and inclined); some are rubble and stone riprap; while one is a peculiar, yet interesting, wooden log structure. Most of the features stretch between 200-400 ft. in distance, and include railings or barriers along them.

An area near Curtner Ave. bridge on the west bank appears to have previously eroded, displacing vegetation and structures at the rear of a residential lot.

Several flood control alternatives are being considered in Reach 9, including underground bypasses, east bank widening and west bank widening (see Figures 4, 6 and 10).
OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Opportunities

Water Company land near Willow Glen Way (east bank) presents an opportunity to develop appropriate land use activities for the River on the underutilized portion of the site.

As Pine Ave. dead ends into the west river bank, it presents an opportunity to develop a special access point to the River.

The Water Company land provides a generous scenic and natural buffer between the River and Almaden Rd.

The purchase and redevelopment of the many privately owned vacant parcels that continue along Almaden Rd. would allow an appropriate recreational path with a minimum of occupant displacement. Some parcels would provide for excellent mini-parks.

The County land following the River and Almaden Rd. provides valuable access to the River, yet is perhaps too narrow for optimum access path conditions.

Some SCVWD land exists on the west bank providing a possibility to widen the river basin in both directions.

The ten residences closest to Curtner Ave. (west bank) are expansive properties with possible underutilized rear yards. In that area, introduced easements could allow for widening of the River to the west.

Constraints

On the east bank near Willow Glen Way, a concrete sack wall lessens the natural appearance of the River, and contrasts with the east bank which is a large stone riprap wall.

The Riverbank narrows near the Guadalupe Ave. cul-de-sac properties, on the east bank.

A concrete sack bank (east side where the River joins Almaden Rd.) creates a visual and physical obstruction from Almaden Rd. and surrounding area.

The sloped concrete wall (at Malone Rd. overcrossing) stabilizing the east bank creates an equally obtrusive element in the river landscape.

The vertical concrete wall at Curtner Ave. overcrossing is a visual eyesore, appears unstable and creates a hazardous drop to the river basin from the east bank.

The residence nearest Curtner Ave., on the west bank, which has been affected by stabilization problems, is too close to the River. The steep bank is dangerous.
Reach 10 begins at the Curtner Ave. bridge, passes under the Almaden Expressway north and south overcrossings, continues under Hillsdale Ave. and terminates after a one and one quarter mile distance at the Capitol Expressway bridge.

Subreach 10A starts at Curtner Avenue and ends at the Almaden Expressway.-Subreach 10B starts at the southbound Almaden Expressway and ends at the northbound Almaden Expressway.
Subreach 10C starts at the northbound Almaden Expressway and ends at the Capitol Expressway (see Figures 3, 19, 20).
Circulation

Subreach 10A

The Curtner Ave. bridge overcrossing, spanning a distance of 100 ft., clearing the channel bottom by approximately 25 ft. Almaden Rd. crosses Curtner Ave. and continues south along the east side of the River 1/4 mile until it intersects and joins the Almaden Expressway.

Subreach 10B

The Almaden Expressway continues northeast as one two-way road, formed from two separate roadways (both the Almaden Expressway, one southbound, one northbound) coming from the south. At this point the River continues only under the southbound overcrossing. The southbound Almaden Expressway travels west of the River and the northbound travels to the east, straddling the River for 1/4 mile.

Subreach 10C

After the River passes under the northbound Almaden Expressway it arrives in an expansive area of land. Wren Dr. borders the northern side from which comes an access road into the River area through a metal gate and a barrier of large boulders. Residences along Skylark Drive back onto the western border of the River area. Between the residences and a recently established flood wall bordering the river, is a private road accessing the back lots of the Skylark residences. This road ends at the Valley View Packing Plant site, and intersects with Blue Jay Drive. Between Blue Jay Drive and Hillsdale Avenue there is no public access to the east bank of the River. Along the west bank, at this point, the Old Almaden Road travels close to the River, and eventually joins the Almaden Expressway to the north.

Old Almaden Road continues south to the Hillsdale Avenue Bridge, an old, narrow two-lane structure bearing warning signs alerting pedestrians. Old Almaden Road dead-ends at the Capitol Expressway (traveling to the east) and Hillsdale Boulevard (traveling to the west). This fast moving six lane expressway crosses the River by a bridge.

Land Use

Subreach 10A

The east bank between Curtner Avenue and Almaden Expressway (across from the Willow Glen Shopping Center) is a narrow steep strip of vacant land partially owned by the County. The property line crosses over to the west of the River center line.

The west bank in this stretch is composed of mostly residential lots encroaching into the River channel with backyard decks and terraces. The southwest corner of land adjacent to the southbound Almaden Expressway is under the jurisdiction of the SCVWD.

Subreach 10B

The one-quarter mile wedge of land between north- and southbound Almaden Expressway is bisected by the Guadalupe River channel. The portion of land to the west bank of the River is partially under the ownership of the SCVWD and partially under a SCVWD easement. The more narrow east bank is under the jurisdiction of the SCVWD. Both banks are not safely accessible to pedestrians from surrounding streets.

West of the southbound Almaden Expressway is a neighborhood park and residences; and beyond the northbound Almaden Expressway are commercial and residential uses.

Subreach 10C

The expansive area of vacant land bordered by Skylark Dr. is owned by the SCVWD. The land is relatively bare with the exception of a few cacti and shrubs. The most open and accessible area is the east bank.

Traveling south on a worn trail parallel to Skylark Dr., one enters the Valley View Packing plant site. At the Northwest corner of the property an old prune drying plant, orchard, and residence remains (and has been recognized as having some historical significance). The Valley View site (a 48 acre parcel) is approximately 1,000 ft. south of Blue Jay Drive. The Valley View site is generally planned for industrial park, high density residential and combined industrial/commercial uses.

The SCVWD owns much of the west bank following along the Old Almaden Road.

Adjacent to the east bank between Hillsdale Avenue and the Capital Expressway is a commercial car dealership; and to the west, is the Old Almaden Road. This segment of the River is not easily accessible by vehicle or on foot because of the narrow Hillsdale Bridge.
River Character

The river character of Reach 10 varies in appearance and form by Subreach.

Subreach 10A

Reach 10A is a very narrow, steep and densely vegetated waterway. The deep "V"-shaped channel makes it difficult to appreciate the appearance of the River as well as gain access for maintenance.

Neighboring residences have added charm to the River by extending backyard gardens onto the river banks. The construction appears unsturdy, however, and is vulnerable to destruction caused by flooding.

Subreach 10B

The wedge of open space in Subreach 10B is attractive with its spacious vegetated west bank. The intrusion of cars on either side from the Almaden Expressway, creates a noise problem in the area. Visibility from the river to surrounding uses is limited by existing vegetation acting as a barrier.

Subreach 10C

Most of Subreach 10C is very spacious with practically no vegetation. The rounded east bank gently slopes down to the River channel. The service/entry gate, with large boulders and swinging metal gate limits vehicular access to maintenance vehicles only.

The residences backing onto this portion of the River do not create a visual asset to the area with garages being used for car repairs and rubbish areas. The 3 ft. high flood wall in this area is a deteriorating concrete structure.

After the streamgauge located in Subreach 10C the river character changes to a more meandering vegetated channel. Deep and narrow in width, the channel cannot be easily seen from Old Almaden Road or the east bank. The same features continue under Hillsdale Avenue to Reach 11.

The appearance of the River at Hillsdale Avenue Bridge and Capitol Expressway Bridge is degraded by exposed utility lines attached the structures and concrete debris surrounding the structures.

Existing Flood Control Features

In the section between Curtner and Almaden Expressway, the narrow steep banks, pinched by residential on one side and Almaden Rd. on the other, create turbulence in high water flows. This consequently causes erosion within the channel.

The Canoas Creek outfall entering the River perpendicularly creates a turbulent force against the west bank. During high floods, water backs up Canoas Creek for thousand of feet, threatening development.

Reach 10B is reinforced by gabions on the west bank, while the banks in Reach 10C is supported by an abundance of concrete debris (especially near the flood control streamgauge), and deteriorating concrete retaining walls.

Reach 10B is bounded on the east bank by a concrete flood wall which shows evidence of recently being raised in height, to protect the neighboring residences.

Flood control methods being considered by the SCVWD for Reach 10 are focussing on these:

- covered bypass (east bank) (see Figure 10)
- east bank widening (see Figures 4, 6)
- west bank widening (see Figures 4, 6)
- west bank bypass (see Figure 8)
OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Opportunities

A parcel of SCVWD land in Subreach 10B may provide for passive recreational uses.

The stretch of the River between the north and southbound Almaden Expressway provides a wide easement for possible recreation and/or trails.

The barricaded sidewalk, along southbound Almaden, may allow access for cyclists from the west bank to Roy Ave. mini-park and the residential areas to the west.

Access from the Roy Ave. mini-park across to the River may be aided by a pedestrian overcrossing above Almaden Expressway South.

A passageway may be possible under the Almaden Expressway northbound overcrossing.

The SCVWD land east of the River near Wren Dr. is a long rectangular open area that could become a park-like setting along the River. With existing barriers and gates, the necessary improvement would mainly be planting, possibly as mitigation for flood control improvements.

Portions of the Valley View Packing Company land east of the River, provides an excellent, if limited opportunity for recreational uses. The possible preservation and integration of the orchard form as a part of the recreational site may serve as a tribute to agricultural practices, and its strong foundation in San Jose’s history. The site is currently planned for industrial, residential and commercial development. At the northwest corner of the property is an abandoned prune-drying farmstead that has been identified as having some historical significance.

Future development of this property includes a Pearl Ave. extension that would cross the River and intersect with Old Almaden Rd. This road would accommodate auto traffic currently using Hillsdale Ave. and Bridge. There is an opportunity to use the existing Hillsdale Bridge for only pedestrian crossings.

The Canoas Creek outfall creates a barrier for access along the east bank in Subreach 10B.

The narrow, very steep and heavily vegetated river banks between Curtner Ave. and Almaden Expressway create both accessibility and flood control hazards.

Access to the River from the neighboring communities to the west is limited due to the presence of the Almaden Expressway. Of particular concern is the hazardous nature of existing pedestrian access to the River from Roy Mini Park.

The proposal to develop the Valley View Packing Company site as an industrial park limits the potential for major recreational uses.

The best existing path along the River, changes banks 2-3 times, and becomes impassible near the small Hillsdale Ave. overcrossing with vehicles.

The Hillsdale Ave. Bridge is too narrow to provide safe pedestrian and bike crossing as long as the bridge is used for vehicular crossings.

Constraints

The narrow, very steep and heavily vegetated river banks between Curtner Ave. and Almaden Expressway create both accessibility and flood control hazards.
Reach 11 of the planning area begins at the Capitol Expressway Bridge, continues south approximately one mile terminating at the Branham Lane Bridge (see Figures 3, 21, 22).

Circulation

The Capitol Expressway crosses the River near the Almaden Expressway turnoff at Chard Dr.

To the west of the River, the Almaden Expressway borders the length of Reach 11. The high speed expressway prohibits safe pedestrian crossing between the two ends of the Reach.

Within the northern portion of the Reach, the west bank is excluded from direct vehicular access. A SCVWD service road enters adjacent to a residence on Steval Pl. and continues along a newly cleared bench on the east bank.

The southern portion of Reach 11 can be accessed on the east bank from Thousand Oaks Dr. (running parallel to the River); and through residential cul-de-sac streets ending perpendicular to the river channel.

Land Use

The northern portion of the Reach beyond the river channel is developed as commercial businesses and car dealerships to the east, and retail/commercial to the west.

The northern River channel (eastern bank) is composed of County and SCVWD lands and easements. The northern west bank is County land upstream to the concrete ramp (mid-reach).

From the concrete ramp the entire west bank (up to Branham Lane) is a mixture of private residential, commercial, and SCVWD land. Ross Creek outfall consumes a small portion of SCVWD land, and two narrow easements buffer commercial properties fronting onto the River.
The east bank from Capitol Expressway to Branham Ln. is primarily residential.

A residential lot on the east bank, (across from the concrete ramp) on the east bank, approximately two acres large, crosses into the river preventing access along the west bank at that point.

Between the River and Thousand Oaks Dr., a vacant, fenced parcel of City land and partially open, Water Company land, compose a large, relatively open space along the east bank. The Water Company land is vacant except for a few enclosed cyclone cages housing pumping equipment. These lots adjoin Thousand Oaks Park, east of Thousand Oaks Dr.

The remaining east bank up to Branham Lane (fronting the residential cul-de-sacs) is an existing service road under SCVWD jurisdiction. Residential properties continue beyond that edge to the east.

**River Character**

The northern half of Reach 11 is somewhat deep and narrow, with steep, vegetated banks.

The meandering path graded by the SCVWD on the upper bench of the east bank is a wide, nicely cleared area where significant vegetation has been preserved.

The residential property joining the River mid-reach supports a variety of vegetation, with an especially large display of cacti.

The large plot of Water Company and City land between Thousand Oaks Drive and the River is an attractive shady grove of eucalyptus trees.

The service road along the east bank up to Branham Lane runs between high residential fences to the east and vegetation inside the river channel. Periodically, the cul-de-sac streets meet the path's edge with a low barrier fence.

The concrete ramp (mid-reach) creates an interesting transition to the River. At lower flows, it produces a cascading effect in the water and a daring bridge crossing for children. At the lower point of the ramp one can get an attractive view up- and downstream.

The west bank, from the concrete ramp up to Branham Lane, is not easily accessible. The Ross Creek outfall creates an interesting feature in the River. The vegetation surrounding the box channel helps soften the structural concrete retaining walls and sacks.

**Continuing upstream, the west bank remains relatively steep and vegetated. The commercial properties on top of the west bank, unfortunately, turn their back onto the River, showing blank unattractive service entrances along the river edge as viewed from the east bank.**

**Existing Flood Control Features**

In Reach 11 there are few existing physical flood control improvements. Major erosion is occurring between the River and the Almaden Expressway, resulting in hazardous conditions at top of west bank. Moderate erosion is also occurring consistently throughout the course of the channel.

The concrete ramp structure entering the river channel creates a somewhat hazardous crossing to the River. Large broken sections of concrete have been placed in the channel to control erosion.

The confluence from Ross Creek enters at an angle to the River. The flow is guided in a downstream direction through a curvilinear concrete channel.

Flood control solutions being considered in Reach 11 are focused mainly on a one bank widening solution, affecting either the east or west bank (see Figures 4, 6).
OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Opportunities

The pedestrian and bike path under the Almaden Expressway at Hillsdale Boulevard represents a good example of a possible design for a landscaped pathway along the River in conditions under bridge overcrossings.

The linear open space along the east bank, near Capitol Expressway, could offer a generous easement joining new and existing trails along the River.

The service road cleared among mature vegetation (along the east bank paralleling Wellington Square) provides an attractive path along the top bank of the River.

The City and Water Company land east of the River and adjacent to Thousand Oaks Park could provide for an attractive recreational area for the River with functions and uses separate from the Thousand Oaks community park.

The continuing access path along the east bank up to Branham Lane is functional, as it exists.

The concrete ramp down to the River (on the west bank) offers an interesting feature to the River, while providing access and a cascading effect during low flows.

The underutilized and vacant lots (west of the River next to Almaden Expressway and near Branham Lane) may provide functional land for river improvements. The two underutilized lots straddling the Ross Creek channel may be used to develop a more attractive and functional course for the water outlet.

Constraints

Future public access or trails behind private residential lots may not be acceptable to the neighborhood.

Access to the River along the reach from communities to the west is blocked by the presence of the Almaden Expressway.

One private residence blocks access along the east bank from the Water Company land (near Capitol Expressway) to the existing SCVWD service road.

Access from cul-de-sac streets ending at the east bank of the River may be a concern of residents (yet may also be important for police safety checks).

Existing pedestrian access along the west bank, may be difficult where slopes are steep or where the path narrows along the safety barrier of the Almaden Expressway.

Access along the west bank near Branham Lane is difficult due to the close proximity of commercial properties.
REACH 12

Reach 12 begins at Branham Lane, extending upstream slightly over a mile, and terminates at Blossom Hill Road (see Figures 3, 23, 24).

Circulation

Within the first half of Reach 12, no existing roadways come in close proximity to the River channel. The only access way to the River is a SCVWD service road, traveling along the east bank. Continuing across a temporary dam the service road continues along the top of the west bank.

Chynoweth Avenue (mid-reach) is proposed to extend across the River to connect to the Almaden Expressway. The service road, continuing along the west bank, connects to an extension of Sanchez Drive, which intersects with Blossom Hill Road.

Another service road continues from the south-western percolation ponds along the River up to Blossom Hill Road.

From the north-eastern percolation pond another SCVWD service road starts along the River's edge and extends to Blossom Hill Road.

FIGURE 23: Reach 12-Existing Conditions
Land Use

The SCVWD owns a small, narrow strip of land adjoining Branham Lane. This parcel follows along the upper east bank for approximately 1000 ft. soon becoming wider and easily accessible. This land supports the present service road along the River.

The River right-of-way in the northern half of the Reach, under SCVWD jurisdiction, varies from 100 to 350 ft.

Residential properties border the River right-of-way along the east side. These homes back onto the River with mostly enclosed rear yards. Some properties take advantage of the River's amenities through a visually open fence or low gate, and a few of these have landscaped terraces down to existing informal paths.

The land bordering the north-western edge of the Reach is mainly commercial, with some commercial/industrial.

In the center two-thirds portion of Reach 12 (as the River meanders to the east), a very large agricultural plot of land (presently in use) along the west bank extends from the River edge to the Almaden Expressway.

Continuing south, Sanchez Dr. separates a cluster of high density residential units to the west from the River and Water District land. New residential complexes are proposed along Sanchez Dr. as it continues northward.

In the southern half of the Reach the SCVWD District land consumes quite a large area. The three percolation ponds presently used to replenish the water table cover a large area. The largest body is on the east side of the River (near Chynoweth Ave.). The two smaller ponds parallel Sanchez Dr. to the west of the River.

The right-of-width in the southern portion of Reach 12 varies from 250 to 1000 ft.

To the east of the River, closest to Blossom Hill Road, a residential complex is under construction (near the percolation pond) and fronting Blossom Hill Road is a commercial complex.

On the southwest corner of Blossom Hill Rd. and Sanchez Dr., an isolated commercial/office site abuts the river corridor.

At Blossom Hill Road, the two service roads one on either side of the River cross under the bridge on a very low bench with Gabion reinforced banks.

Crossing the River at the percolation ponds (two-thirds upstream in the reach) will be the proposed State Highway 85. The structure is proposed to span the percolation ponds and River in a 1,600 foot long bridge structure. The two separate, parallel structures (east and southbound lanes) will consume a 200 foot right of way, with an ground clearance of approximately 25 ft. in height. The column spacing will be located between the River and percolation ponds on the upper banks (see Figure 25).

River Character

Reach 12 is one of the most special places in the River planning area. The wide vacant land areas following the river corridor offer a serene natural scene.

The open agricultural land off the west bank, produces an attractive green space along the River.

The westerly views of rolling hills and greenery are more impressive than the residential boundary bordering the east bank.

Although the water bodies are man-made and vegetation is limited, the general appearance is relatively natural. The vistas to rolling landscaped hills in the distance help compensate for the sparse vegetation along the River.

Existing Flood Control Features

The entire stretch of Reach 12 provides a generously wide channel for flood water conveyance. The percolation ponds straddling the river channel hold overflow and runoff water to replenish the water table.

Likely flood control improvements being considered by the SCVWD in their study for improvements in Reach 12, is the earth channel w/mitigation areas (see Figure 6).
FIGURE 25: Route 85 Bridge Preliminary Design

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Opportunities

The Branham Lane bridge spans the entire River corridor, providing an opportunity to develop a pedestrian/bike underpass.

The generous existing path following the east bank (partly under the ownership of the SCVWD) southward from Branham Ln. offers an obvious trail for pedestrian and bicycle use, up to a narrow point where it turns away from the neighboring residential properties.

The course of the River changing in Reach 12 to a wider basin, allows for a greater variety of recreational uses.

The expansive undeveloped land, west of the River upstream to the retention ponds can be considered a valuable asset. Adjacent vacant land can be considered as possible open space, thus expanding the Guadalupe River Park while incorporating the aesthetic and functional qualities of the River Park into the design of the built development.

The retention ponds provide an opportunity for the establishment of a stable, naturally scenic setting in the urban environment.

The proposed extension of Chynoweth Ave. will provide vehicular access to the River and retention ponds mid-reach from the east.

The wide basin and banks next to Blossom Hill Rd. create a good opportunity for a mini-park that might serve employees and residents in the area.

Constraints

The cyclone fence perpendicular to the east bank (near the northern retention pond) blocks access and causes a hazardous situation for those who try to pass it while using informal paths.

The presence of the retention ponds indicates a special need to monitor elements of development that may cause harm to the water supply, above ground and to the water table.

The proposed Route 85 crossing over the River and retention ponds will introduce aspects of noise, and visual and physical obstruction that could impact the aesthetics and serenity of the area.

The new office/commercial and residential developments surrounding Reach 12 may not be giving adequate attention to the delicate biological and aesthetic qualities of the waterways in their planning and implementation stages.
REACH 13

FIGURE 26: Reach 13-Existing Conditions

Reach 13 begins at Blossom Hill Road Bridge, continues upstream three-quarters of a mile, and terminates at the Almaden Expressway Overpass. Feeding into the Guadalupe is Los Alamitos Creek, draining north from Almaden Lake, under Coleman Avenue Bridge and joins the Guadalupe River (see Figures 3, 26).

Circulation

No established roads come in close contact to the River’s edge. Access to the River is possible through the SCVWD service roads, traveling along the River’s Banks.

From under Blossom Hill Road, two service roads straddle the lower bench of the River. The east bank road terminates (one-third the way up the reach) in a native grass area.

The west bank road continues along the river edge up to the SCVWD Headquarters site (fronting the Almaden Expressway).

Crossing the river is possible at a temporary SCVWD dam placed two-thirds upstream in the Reach. This dirt crossing allows passage for maintenance purposes under Coleman Avenue, to Almaden Lake Park.

A Southern Pacific Railroad spur sitting idol east of the River terminates before Coleman Avenue. This spur will be developed as the Almaden Branch of the Guadalupe Corridor Project LRT system.

Land Use

Commercial properties border the River right-of-way and Blossom Hill Road on both the west and east banks.

The 150-foot wide River right-of-way connecting from under Blossom Hill Rd., continues for approximately 400 ft., until it joins with the site of the SCVWD Headquarters. A portion of the SCVWD Headquarters site is open for public use as a picnic area and is occupied primarily on the weekends.

Other than the commercial property near Blossom Hill, the western portion of the River is mainly devoted to retention ponds. These two ponds are partially landscaped with riparian vegetation.

The Headquarters building is situated near one of the ponds with an ample parking lot to the south. A varying strip of land (150-500 ft.) along the east bank is also under the jurisdiction of the Santa Clara County Transportation District. There is presently no development on this land. However, the new Almaden Branch of the LRT system and the Almaden Park-n-ride lot are planned for this portion of land (corner of Coleman Rd. and Winfield Avenue). This development would utilize the old S.P. Railroad spur and consume a good portion of the available land.
River Character

The presence of the SCVWD Headquarters has greatly affected the quality of the River in Reach 13. The scenic qualities of the ponds and some landscaping, begin to establish an appropriate park interface with the River.

The setting currently serves as an attractive jogging area up to Reach 12 percolation ponds, however, the grounds are not as vegetated as they could be. An increase in landscaping would be a desirable feature.

The improved landscaped areas upstream (Almaden Lake Park and Los Alamitos Creek) provide an attractive example of river park potential. This level of improvement should logically extend downstream.

Existing Flood Control Features

The path under the Blossom Hill Rd. bridge drops substantially in relation to the average height in Reaches 12 and 13. The maintenance road, on a lower bench in the River, is cut away from the west and east bank, and retained by gabion reinforcement within which is planted riparian vegetation.

A streamgauge/retention system is placed in the middle of Reach 13 causing the channel flow to back up and retain a higher water level upstream.

The ponds allow water to percolate into the ground to replenish subsurface supplies. Apparently no new flood control features are required at this time in Reach 13.

opportunities and constraints

opportunities

Blossom Hill Rd. bridge span provides a generous area underneath for a wide pathway.

Both the east and west banks, as they exist, provide a wide service road, on SCVWD land.

The existing service road continues primarily along the west bank of the River, providing an excellent recreational trail from Blossom Hill Rd. overcrossing to the SCVWD landscaped retention ponds.

The further enhancement of the SCVWD Headquarters area, with an increase in landscaping and amenities, could create an appropriate and special terminus for the Guadalupe River south trail network.

The SCVWD parking area could possibly be extended to include needed recreational parking for trail users. The proximity to the Almaden Expressway and the placement along the trail system reinforces the parking lot as an appropriate site.

Access to the east bank, across the dirt fill path, offers the possibility to continue a path under Coleman Ave. to the Almaden Lake Park trails.

The SCVWD land to the east between the River and the LRT system could be designated as passive recreation. Water fowl will use this area during the rainy seasons and during storms at the ocean front.

constraints

Bank stabilization and revegetation test plots just south of Blossom Hill Rd. bridge provide excellent examples of erosion control and natural river elements that would be appropriate throughout the River Park.

The service path along the River, under Blossom Hill Rd. runs close to the low flow channel level, making it feasible that the path will be under water and inaccessible during high flow seasons.

The retention dam may be an inviting hazard to children using the trail system.

The introduction of trail users in the SCVWD Headquarters area may result in vandalism and/or loitering.

Vehicular access to the east bank in most of Reach 13 is limited by the light rail corridor and the absence of maintained roads leading down to the River.

The Almaden LRT Station parking lot and transit operator service building will occupy a major portion of vacant land east of the River, thus limiting major recreation/open space uses.
PLANNING GOALS

Goals for the Guadalupe River South Master Plan have been articulated to address coordination:

1. Preserve and restore a natural creek environment.
2. Provide bicycle, pedestrian and security/vehicle access to the Guadalupe River for neighborhood and community recreational use.
3. Identify and integrate existing and proposed trails and parks within the planning area.
4. Provide options for maintenance access along the Guadalupe River.
5. Coordinate park master planning with flood control planning, recognizing that Water District goals to provide flood protection along the Guadalupe River South Planning Area usually do not address recreation potential.
6. Develop a park/trails plan that coordinates with needs involving public agencies and the desires of the community.
7. Provide a continuous park/trails network that identifies recreational opportunities for public access easements without encroaching on private property.
8. Provide for security, safety, accessibility, and visibility within the Park, especially under bridges and over bridge crossings for the bicyclist, hiker, jogger, and for the disabled.
9. Provide security and safety for private residential and commercial property adjacent to the Park.
10. Recommend standards and/or guidelines for future urban design development features along the Guadalupe River South Corridor (such as bridges, street closures, public and private development).

DESIGN STATEMENT

The Guadalupe River flowing through South San Jose, originally the source of irrigation water, and sustenance for early settlers, has in recent years been ignored as a public-oriented amenity. In addition, run-off from urban development projects has increased the 100-year flood flow expectation, requiring widening of the river channel, potentially limiting use of the River as primarily a flood control channel.

The design concept for future improvements along the Guadalupe River South Corridor is to couple flood control improvements with public access improvements. The resulting environment should have as natural an appearance as possible. Flood waters should be conveyed at velocities that minimize erosion. Bank stabilization methods that appear natural and allow both tree and shrub growth should be installed. A continuous system of bicycle and hiking/jogging trails should be located primarily at tops of banks, within Santa Clara Valley Water District easements and adjacent to roadways or public-oriented land uses. Joint-use agreements between the City of San Jose and other agencies owning land along the river corridor should be pursued to guarantee public access and responsible use and stewardship of the Guadalupe River South Corridor.

Future park plan improvements will eventually link to adopted park improvements at either end of the planning area: the Almaden Lake Park to the south and the Guadalupe River Park in downtown San Jose to the north.

CONCEPT ALTERNATIVES

Flood Control Alternatives

Alternative plans for locating recreation use and trails within the Guadalupe River South Corridor are dependent upon four possible flood control improvement alternatives being evaluated by SCVWD. Each flood control alternative represents a unique method of altering the existing river channel to accommodate the 100-year flood flows.

The four possible flood control alternatives are:

1. Widened Gabion Channel (see Figure 4);
2. Widened Earth Channel (see Figure 6);
3. Gabion Bypass Channel (see Figure 8); and
4. Underground Bypass Channel (see Figure 10).

A park and trails improvement alternative has been prepared by the concept planning team for each flood control alternative (see Figures 5, 7, 9, 11).

The attempt has been made to make the most of the conditions that could result from each type of flood control alternative. The following is a preliminary evaluation based on the potential for quality park and trail use and access.

Alternatives 1 and 2 would result in the widening of one bank and the short-term destruction of existing riparian habitat on that bank. However, in the long-term, the character of and access to the river corridor could reflect a more natural appearance. Alternatives 3 and 4 would result in minimum destruction to existing riparian habitat. Alternative 3, the Gabion Bypass Channel, would result in a drainage pattern that is uncharacteristically artificial, and public access is impeded. The underground bypass channel would be efficient from a hydrologic point of view and could allow some public use above the covered bypass. However, the construction and maintenance costs are usually excessive over a significant length.

Flood control improvements will most likely include a combination of Alternatives 1 through 4. Several combinations are being evaluated by the SCVWD. The sequence and combinations of preferred flood control improvements had not been adopted at the
completion of this report. However, the
general right-of-way being considered by
SCVWD has been incorporated into the
Concept Plan influencing the location of a
preliminary park boundary (see Figure 27).
A complete evaluation and EIR will be
prepared for a Final Master Plan for the
Guadalupe River South Corridor and a
flood control improvement plan will be
adopted.

Open Space Uses

Alternative park or recreation uses are
recommended generally at the tops of
existing and/or extended banks where flood
control improvements are expected. These
areas are shown as “opportunity sites” on
the Concept Plan (see Figure 27). Several
uses are being considered and are discussed
under the “Reach Improvements” section
to follow. One use for which much of the
open space within the river corridor may be
planned is mitigation planting, the extent of
which cannot be measured until a final floo d
control plan is approved.

Trail Corridor Location

The proposed trail corridor location is
shown on Figure 27. Recommendations on
the preferred trail location are based on
goals and guidelines developed by the Task
Force Committee and Technical
Coordination Committee members.
Generally, a continuous trail is to be located
adjacent to public streets, public uses or
within joint-use easements, and on at least
one side of the River. The trail system
should incorporate bicycle and hiking paths
together within a 12'-wide right-of-way
whenever practical, and utilize existing
sidewalks or bicycle lanes wherever
necessary. Neighborhoods are encouraged
to implement local trail systems to
interconnect various features and uses as
desired. The proposed trail location is
subject to refinement when flood control
improvements are adopted. More specific
characteristics of the trail corridor are
highlighted, under the “Reach
Improvements” section.

PLANNING GUIDELINES

Flood Control

- The planning team preferred flood
control solutions are the widened
earth channel and the underground
bypass. These solutions allow the
most appropriate, long-term
restoration of a natural character in
the river corridor, while optimizing
trails and recreation improvements
along accessible edges of one river
corridor.
- The increased flood control right-of-
way width should accommodate
mitigation planting at point of loss
wherever possible.
- The increased SCVWD right-of-way
width should accommodate flatter
slopes and permanent vegetation
along expanded banks within the river
corridor.
- Identify inter-agency responsibilities
for establishment and management of
flood control and park and trail
improvements.
- Avoid proposing any channel
alternations which would reduce
streamflows.
- Support efforts to increase, or at least
maintain existing, streamflows during
the summer months.
- Provide access for SCVWD
maintenance and water management
activities.
- Avoid proposing any channel
alternations which would interfere
with the migration of anadromous
fisheries (i.e., barriers to salmon and
steelhead migration).

River Park Character

- General character of the Guadalupe
River South Corridor should reflect a
natural self-repairing riparian
ecosystem.
- Trail activities should be focussed on
nature observation and interpretation.
- Recreation activities should be
focussed on passive uses at tops of
banks including picnicking, casual
play areas, parcours, theme gardens,
educational experiences, public art,
and sight-seeing.
- Areas of concentrated use/activity
(playfields, picnic areas, parking lots,
etc.) should be set back at least 50',
and in many instances as much as 100',
from the outer edge of existing
riparian vegetation, or from the top-
of-bank, whichever is greater.
- Active recreation activities will occur
primarily beyond the SCVWD right-
of-way.
- The Guadalupe River South Corridor
boundary should be expanded beyond
the SCVWD right-of-way and should
be bordered by public streets and/or
uses wherever possible.
- Short-term clean-up projects should
be organized to increase public
awareness of and appreciation for the
Guadalupe River South Corridor.
- Focus park development away from
prime riparian habitats (e.g., mature,
multi-layered, cottonwood forests).
- Avoid planning facilities, development
or recreational uses in or immediately
adjacent to potential mitigation sites.

Circulation and Safety

- The continuous river trail right-of-way
shall be a minimum of 12 feet in
width. For combined bicycle/jogging
trails, provide a 10-foot-wide asphalt
path for bicycles, engineered for
occasional service vehicle access.
Provide a minimum 2-foot wide gravel
or crushed stone jogging path
adjacent to the asphalt path.
- Provide separate bicycle and jogging
paths wherever possible. Minimum
width for jogging paths is 3 feet;
minimum width for bicycle paths is
8 feet. Use bicycle paths, lanes and
route designations to link into existing
bicycle networks.
Recommendations
Landscape plans for parklands located within 300 feet of existing riparian vegetation or the top-of-bank, whichever is greater, should employ appropriate native plant species.

Provide barriers at multiuse intersections to prohibit unauthorized vehicular access.

Direct visitor access away from sensitive areas.

Existing extensive pond area provides potential riparian interpretation area.

Design buffer areas between proposed urban uses and natural river habitat.

Building service and garbage areas that must face the river edge are to be screened from view.

Ensure preservation of existing open space/rural habitat conditions wherever they are adjacent to the existing riparian habitat unless covering all of those riparian areas with parklands or private development.

Provide safe crossing under bridge on both sides of river.

Initial information and park access signs on major streets in neighborhoods surrounding the river corridor.

Involvement in the Rt. 85 bridge and right-of-way, provides an opportunity to impact the development with park-like aesthetic qualities.

Possible access away to be obtained from cul-de-sac roads.

Involvement in the Rt. 85 bridge and right-of-way, provides an opportunity to impact the development with park-like aesthetic qualities.

Install information and park access signs on major streets in neighborhoods surrounding the river corridor.

SCVWD Headquarters/ Los Alamitos ponds area is presently under evaluation for future expansion; Los Alamitos ponds are underutilized as a nature interpretive area for public observation.

Pioneer High School (5 blocks from river)
New trails should incorporate bike/pedestrian elements.

Vehicular access to敏感的 corridor and site areas should be to a minimum from the top of bank, in an open space buffer.

Leaves should be constructed with minimum impact to the surrounding area.

A pedestrian path and crossing should be implemented in the new Pearl Avenue bridge design.

Pedestrian crossing to and from the west river bank will occur at Koch Lane through a signalised intersection.

All bridge improvement projects should incorporate rail designs that maintain minimum head clearance for pedestrian and bicycle use.

The public trail corridor should not include a pedestrian crossing.

Designated areas (bicycle routes) should be provided to minimise conflict with the River.

Urban design/pedestrian improvements should be implemented to identify the pedestrian crossing along Creek Drive.

New bridges should incorporate bike/pedestrian elements.

Trails should be constructed with minimum impact to the surrounding area.

Pedestrian crossing should be maintained.
LEGEND

- **TRAIL**
- **TRAIL CROSSING UNDER BRIDGE**
- **TRAIL CROSSING AT GRADE WITH BRIDGE**
- **PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE CROSSINGS OVER RIVER**
- **ARCHAEOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT SITES**
- **ARCHAEOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS**
- **OPPORTUNITY SITES FOR PARK DEVELOPMENT**
- **NEW OR REPLACED BRIDGES**

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**PROPOSED LRT COMMUTER BIKE PATH SEPARATE FROM RIVER PARK**

**ESTABLISHED BIKE LANE**

**TO SIGNIFICANT RECREATIONAL SITES IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO RIVER PARK.**

**CIRCULATION ACCESS POINTS TO RIVER PARK**

**SCHOOLS**

**ACCESS BARRIERS REQUIRED TO IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**

**FUTURE PARK EXPANSION SITES**

**PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY**

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**Provide trail crossing for pedestrians and vehicles under bridge.**

**Provide signal at intersection to control traffic into park-and-ride lot.**

**Provide trail crossing at street intersection.**

**Provide signalized crossing at LIHPCA and Willow Street.**

**Provide lighted emergency telephone boxes at trail access points.**

**Potential neighborhood park.**

**Future potential park acquisition.**

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**Connect trail to downtown "River Walk."**

**Possible parking area along public access and adjacent to the park and trail system.**

**Trail crossing at street intersection.**

**Trail at top of bank.**

**Landscape buffer.**

**Provide lighted贯通 emergency telephone boxes at trail access points.**

**Potential neighborhood park.**

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**Provide public streets adjacent to the river corridor where possible, thus allowing maximum pedestrian, maintenance and visual access.**

**Changes to adjacent land uses should be sensitive to the river park corridor; buildings and site improvements should be set back to a minimum of 100 feet from the anticipated top of bank, to provide an open space buffer and trail corridor along the river edge.**

**Urban design/street improvements should be implemented to identify visual focal points along Creek Drive.**

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**New Willow Glen Bridge design to accommodate a trail under-crossing.**

**Urban design/street improvements should be implemented to identify visual focal points along Creek Drive.**
Bicycle/pedestrian conflicts should be mitigated by using centerline striping, fence mazes, crushed granite or stone shoulders or posted speed limits.

Trails should be located primarily at tops of banks.

Pedestrian and bicycle access to the trails and park chain shall be encouraged at controlled intersections.

Add traffic signals, if warranted, where the river trail crosses public streets.

Mid-block access points for pedestrians and bicyclists should be discouraged and avoided wherever possible.

The public trail corridor should not be located behind residential development.

Trail access should occur on both sides of a street where the trail passes under roadway bridges.

Install information and park access signs on major streets in neighborhoods surrounding the river corridor.

Reduce speed limits to 25 miles per hour near the river corridor where children are playing.

The river trail shall meet standards established by California State handicapped access codes.

Provide barriers at trail/street intersections to prohibit unauthorized vehicle access.

Locate the trail along at least one side of the river channel, preferably within the SCVWD easement. Connect to planned or existing trails proposed or built at both ends of the planning area.

Orient the trail to maximize the river experience. Allow the trail to pass under existing or proposed bridges wherever possible.

Trails under bridges should be well-lighted and visible from the streets above.

All bridge improvement projects should incorporate trail designs. Maintain a minimum head clearance of 12 feet for equestrian police park patrol use when trails pass under bridge structures.

Pedestrian footbridges should be installed occasionally to provide access to trails on both sides of the River. Bridges should allow for equestrian and vehicular crossings to improve security along the river.

Linear trails (i.e., trails paralleling the River on the floodplain) should be situated outside of the existing riparian habitat for the majority of their length.

Desired access to the river bottom (i.e., water's edge) should be provided by means of well-defined lateral trails to specific points along the River.

Trail access to top-of-bank vantage points should be provided by means of either lateral spurts off the main trail (which is situated outside of the existing riparian habitat) or by means of a sinuous alignment of the main trail (i.e., weaving in and out of the top-of-bank riparian habitat).

Provide opportunities for people to observe/enjoy the river environs by means of controlled access points (e.g., railed overlooks, footbridge crossings, etc.).

Minimize the use of anticipated maintenance roads/access routes as trail corridors. Decisions on whether or not trails should be sited on maintenance roads must be made on a case by case basis depending on user safety considerations and the value and sensitivity of the habitats that may be impacted by regular use.

Keep all lighting out of the prime riparian habitat whenever possible.

Lighted trails or other facilities requiring lighting should not be constructed within the channel cross section except under all bridges.

Direct all lighting downwards toward the ground from low level fixtures.

Edge Treatment/Erosion Control

River banks should be graded to incorporate both flood control requirements and successful passive use of the riparian corridor.

Where possible the river channel should be widened beyond minimum engineering standards to allow permanent vegetation to establish along the banks.

Soil bioengineering methods should be used for bank stabilization. This method incorporates a combination of living plants and inert structural systems to create a self-repairing system.

Rip-rap should be used only within the first 7 feet measured from the channel bottom. Stones should include a variety of diameters and be placed to simulate a natural cobble stream bottom and edge condition.
Acceptable erosional control methods include: (see Figure 28).

- a widened vegetated channel that minimizes erosion;
- soil bioengineering methods;
- precast concrete interlocking/stacking systems that allow vegetation to establish within the units;
- sculptural concrete terraces where appropriate; and
- retaining walls and vegetated terracing.

Edge treatments should improve sight lines into the river channel and trails.

Edge conditions should reflect adjacent land uses, creating appropriate transitions or barriers.

Install safe and attractive barriers at hazardous steep banks.

Preservation of Existing Habitat Values

- Preserve special habitat elements which provide cover, forage, and nesting areas for wildlife (e.g., brush and brambles such as poison oak and blackberry and dead wood and snags).
- Avoid introducing any facilities or use into riparian areas which have a well-developed multi-layered canopy and understory.
- Keep construction (including trails) outside of the drip line of ordinance trees.

Direct visitor access away from sensitive areas.

Attempt to site visitor access within the riparian corridor in areas which are already highly disturbed. Propose measures to enhance the habitat value of these areas.

Adjacent Development

Existing and future land uses and development adjacent to the Guadalupe River South Corridor will play a critical role in the success and quality of the trail corridor. An improved visual image of the River can attract private development and activity to the area. Diverse and well-planned development can encourage responsible use of the corridor and preserve the natural character.

The following policies are quoted from the City of San Jose Horizon 2000 General Plan:

"The City should control land development along designated Trails and Pathways Corridors in order to provide sufficient trail right-of-way and to ensure that new development adjacent to the corridors does not detract from the scenic and aesthetic qualities of the corridor."

"Bridges and other public improvements within designated Trails and Pathways Corridors should be designed to provide safe and secure routes for trails, including grade separation of roadways and trails whenever feasible."

**Figure 28: Recommended Erosion Control Methods**
“When new development occurs adjacent to a designated Trails and Pathways Corridor, the City should encourage the developer to install and maintain the trail.”

“The City should promote cooperative interagency planning of pathways, bikeways and equestrian trails.”

“The City, in cooperation with the Santa Clara Valley Water District, should restrict, or carefully regulate, public and private development in watershed areas, especially those necessary for the effective functioning of reservoirs, ponds, and streams, and for the prevention of excessive siltation.”

“Water resources should be utilized in a manner which does not deplete the supply of surface or ground water, and efforts to conserve water supplies, both local and imported, should be encouraged.”

“The City should encourage the Santa Clara Valley Water District to restrict public access and recreational uses on water related lands when water quality could be degraded.”

“The City should protect important groundwater recharge areas, particularly creeks and creeksides, from urban encroachment.”

The planning team has articulated more specific guidelines regarding land use adjacent to the Guadalupe River South Corridor:

- Widen the overall effect of the riparian habitat wherever possible (e.g., through plantings of groves of native trees outside of the existing top of bank vegetation.

- Ensure preservation of existing open space/rural habitat conditions wherever they are adjacent to the existing riparian habitat. Avoid converting all of these areas to landscape parklands or private development.

- Maximize the availability of water in the river channel/corridor during the summer months.

- Develop creative uses of ancillary areas (e.g., by-pass channels) which may be acquired or modified for the flood control project.

- Prepare a detailed Operations and Maintenance Manual which explains the rationale for vegetation management of parklands within, and adjacent to, the riparian corridor.

- Provide public streets adjacent to the river corridor where possible, thus allowing maximum pedestrian, maintenance, and visual access.

- Building service and garbage areas that must face the river edge are to be screened from view.

- New building fronts are to be oriented toward the river corridor.

- Buildings and site improvements should be set back to a minimum of 100 feet from the anticipated top-of-bank to provide an open space transition and trail easement along the river edge.

New Planting

- The general planting design for the river corridor should incorporate a diverse palette of native vegetation species, suited to the specific natural habitat.

- Landscaping designs for park sites located adjacent to the river corridor should emphasize the use of appropriate native plant materials.

- Landscaping plans for parklands located within 100 feet of existing riparian vegetation or the top-of-bank, whichever is greater, should employ only appropriate native plant species.

- Avoid planting that may block views from streets to trails.

- Plant native vegetation for erosion control where feasible. Plants should always be integrated with engineered erosion control methods.

- Keep all facilities away from existing or potential “danger zones” (e.g., dead or dying trees which might be classified as hazard trees).

- Use plantings of relatively impenetrable types of native plant materials to discourage off-trail use.

- Prohibit visitors from taking dogs, horses, bicycles or off-road vehicles into the riparian corridor. Confine these uses to specifically designed trails outside riparian habitat zones. (These zones will be designated during completion of the Park Master Plan phase.)

- Design buffer areas between proposed high-use areas and existing valuable habitat.

- Plant thickets of native vegetation in these buffer areas as a means of reducing indiscriminate access to valuable habitat.

REACH IMPROVEMENTS

General recommendations defining the size and character of the Guadalupe River South Corridor evolved from three basic tasks:

1. Recommend flood control improvements and mitigation (widening and bank stabilization) that would result in a long-term stable natural river corridor;

2. Identify numerous open space and park opportunity sites beyond the Santa Clara Valley Water District flood control project boundary; and

3. Incorporate public or quasi-public land uses and public streets adjacent to the River into the planning area boundary.
Figure 27 illustrates the planning area boundary and recreation/trail opportunities proposed in this Interim Report. Potential park opportunity areas and future expansion areas are also located. The total planning area encompasses approximately 400 acres. Opportunity areas for park development total approximately 40 acres. Future park expansion areas were identified within a sphere of influence zone approximately 3,000 ft. wide (1,500 ft. either side of the River).

The following is a description of the character, trail location and potential open space opportunities for each reach in the planning area. The locations and alignments of park improvements were distilled from many hours spent in walking the River, making field observations, and reviewing preliminary concepts for flood control, trails and recreation potential with members of the Technical Coordination and Task Force committees.

**Reach 6**

**General Description.** Reach 6 extends from Highway 280 south to the Southern Pacific railroad bridge. The existing river channel will be augmented along the east bank to provide capacity for a 100-year flood event. The resulting right-of-way could be between 200 and 400 feet wide, measured from tops of banks. The west side of the River will be bounded by State Rt. 87, the east side by portions of Palm Street, Harliss Avenue, Willow Street and private residences.

**Trail Location.** The combination bicycle and jogging/hiking trail will connect to the downtown Guadalupe River Park “River Walk” along the west bank up to Grant Street. The trail will then cross the River on a new pedestrian bridge just north of Grant Street to the east bank, meandering through open space defined by existing streets and residences. The trail will cross Virginia Street at the intersection and continue southward following the alignment of McLellan Avenue, crossing under both the existing and proposed new rail bridges, meandering westward, parallel to Willow Street passing under State Rt. 87. At the intersection of Willow Street and Lelong Street, the trail will cross Willow Street at a signal (if warranted) into Reach 7. A trail spur will extend westward along Willow Street to an open space parcel at the northeast corner of Willow St. and Minnesota Avenue.

**Open Space Improvements.** Potential open space areas remaining outside the improved river corridor will be linear in form. Areas on the east side of the River could be developed as neighborhood-serving mini-parks, a parcours along the trail, a wheelchair sports course or perhaps discovery gardens related to the Children’s Discovery Museum in the downtown park just north of Highway 280. The west boundary of Reach 6 should be heavily planted as a noise buffer between Rt. 87 and the River. Pedestrian access to the west edge parallel to Rt. 87 will be prohibited until the River passes under Rt. 87 at Willow Street. The residential properties at Palm St. and West Virginia St., Harliss Avenue and Edwards Avenue, each of which back onto the River should be considered as future park expansion sites. Potential open space where Hull, Fuller and Atlanta Streets dead-end at the River could be developed as a neighborhood park. This park would require emergency call boxes and patrolable street frontage.

**Reach 7**

**General Description.** Reach 7 extends upstream from Willow St. to the Western Pacific Railroad Bridge south of the Elks Lodge. The existing river channel will be augmented for flood control improvements along the east bank. Lelong St. will be extended south to W. Alma Ave. and serve as a frontage road to the River. Development to the east will consist of Rt. 87 and the Alma LRT Station. Development to the west will remain residential.

**Trail Location.** The trail crossing at Willow St. and Lelong St. should be considered for signalization. The trail will then extend southward on the east bank parallel to the River and Lelong St., crossing at a signal on W. Alma Ave. and then follow an existing path along a stretch of the River to the Western Pacific Railroad Bridge. The preferred flood control solution in this stretch would result in leaving the existing river channel untouched, and building a box culvert under the Elks Lodge parking lot. A biking trail spur will extend north from W. Alma Ave. into the Willows Community Garden along the West Bank. A bicycle/hiking trail spur will cross the River westward at the beginning of Reach 8, tying into Creek Drive.

**Open Space Improvements.** Two sites have been identified as having park-related improvement opportunities: the corner of W. Alma Ave. and Lelong St.; and the Willows Community Garden site. Of special concern is the need to coordinate flood control/park improvements with the Alma LRT station parking lot and Lelong Street. Guidelines for setbacks and trail width established in this Interim Report may be in direct conflict with LRT station improvements. The recommended setback between the Lelong Street right-of-way and extended top-of-east-bank is a minimum of 25 feet.

Several State-owned lands within the freeway right-of-way could be leased for park-related uses. The Willows Community Garden will continue to function. The vacant site south of the Elks Lodge parking lot will be reserved for future Elks expansion and should be patrolable by police, especially at night. An emergency call box should be located at the LRT parking lot and the corner of Creek Drive.

**Reach 8**

**General Description.** Reach 8 extends from the Western Pacific Railroad Bridge to Willow Glen Way. Flood control improvements in Reach 8 will augment the east bank of the River. Mackey Avenue will become a river frontage road. Residential land use will remain along both the east and west banks.

**Trail Location.** The trail will continue along the east bank, crossing the railroad tracks at grade with appropriate signalization or traffic control. At this point southward the trail will remain along the east bank and could split into two smaller trails—one perhaps reserved for hiking only and tying into the Mackey Ave. sidewalk. The existing...
Open Space Improvements. The improved river channel could be between 200 and 300 feet wide (measured from tops-of-banks). The remaining linear open space on the east bank between the channel and Mackey Avenue will be considered for neighborhood park uses such as parkways, picnic areas and casual lawn games.

Reach 9

General Description. Reach 9 of the Guadalupe River extends upstream from Willow Glen Way to Curtner Ave. Throughout the reach, flood control and erosion control improvements will take place primarily on the east bank. Residential land use will remain along the west bank. Existing riparian habitat will be preserved. Along the east bank between Willow Glen Way and Old Almaden Rd. a mix of residential, commercial and open space uses were recently approved. Future land use plans should be coordinated with flood control and park planning. The remainder of the east bank will be bordered by Old Almaden Rd. The preferred flood control solution would be to build a box culvert under Old Almaden Rd.

Trail Location. The trail in Reach 9 begins at the historically significant Willow Glen Way Bridge, crossing the street at the Northern Road/Willow Glen Way intersection. The trail will continue through the San Jose Water Company parcel along the top of the east bank, then crosses the River at a new footbridge opposite where Pine Ave. dead-ends at top of west bank. From this point, the “trail” follows Creek Dr. southward, using existing sidewalks and new bike lanes in the roadway. Signs and perhaps lighting should be installed to identify this stretch of the trail corridor. At Bird Ave., the trail will connect to Malone Rd., crossing at a signalized crosswalk, if warranted, at the intersection of Malone Rd. and Old Almaden Rd. The redesign of Malone Rd. Bridge should incorporate sidewalks for pedestrians along both edges of the bridge. Bike lane connections will be made to commuter bike lanes on Old Almaden Rd. from Curtner Ave. to Willow Glen Way. The river trail will continue upstream along the east side adjacent to Old Almaden Rd. into Reach 10. The trail will cross Curtner Ave. at grade in a signalized crosswalk.

Open Space Improvements. The extent of park or usable open space in Reach 9 is limited due to existing roads and neighborhoods. The narrow corridor resulting from urban encroachment is relatively difficult to access because of steep slopes, private property boundaries and traffic on Old Almaden Rd. Therefore, the Concept Planning Team recommends that Reach 9 becomes primarily a native habitat preserve allowing minimum public access. The stretch of trail between Malone Rd. and Curtner Ave. should be considered a nature trail for hiking only, diverting bicycle traffic to lanes on Old Almaden Rd.

Reach 10

General Description. This reach extends from Curtner Ave. to the Capitol Expressway. The character of this reach of the River changes dramatically from a narrow enclosed section to a recently improved flood control channel between Almaden Expressway and Blue Jay Dr. Flood control improvements being considered for the stretch of river between Curtner Ave. and the Cannaas Creek inlet is an underground bypass along the east bank. This stretch of river is constrained by residential use and Old Almaden Rd. The upstream stretch of Reach 10 between Blue Jay Dr. and the Capitol Expressway will be widened to resemble flood control improvements just downstream. Adjacent land throughout Reach 10 is developed as a wide variety of commercial and residential uses. A large old orchard open space along the east bank between Blue Jay Dr. and the Valley View Cannery will be developed as industrial and commercial uses, including a new bridge over the River and possibly the abandonment of the Hillside Ave. Bridge as a vehicular route.

Trail Location. Extending along the east bank from Reach 9, the trail will follow Old Almaden Rd. upstream to the intersection of Old Almaden Rd. and Almaden Expressway. The trail will cross the southbound Almaden Expressway at a signalized crosswalk and continue along the east bank of the River. A safety barrier should be installed between the trail and northbound Almaden Expressway lanes. This stretch of the trail may be too narrow for both bike and hiking use. Bicycle traffic could be connected to commuter bike lanes planned for Almaden Expressway. At the northbound Almaden Expressway Bridge near Wren Dr., the trail will drop down into the river channel, passing under the bridge and extending upstream along the east bank adjacent to an existing back alley serving two blocks of residences between Wren Dr. and Blue Jay Dr. It is recommended that sufficient barriers be installed to limit dumping of trash and debris into the river channel.

A number of improvements are proposed to Almaden Expressway and Capitol Expressway in the planning area. Commuter bike lanes are proposed. Widening is also planned for the Capitol Expressway affecting the bridge over the River. Trailways will need to be coordinated.

Adjacent to the old orchard between Blue Jay Dr. and Hillside Ave. the trail will meander through a minimum 100 foot wide open space easement measured from top of extend east bank created by flood control improvements. Any future development in the area will require dedication of this easement for public access. A proposed bridge crossing within this trail section referred to as the Pearl Ave. Bridge should be designed to incorporate clear spans over the River and a 10 foot minimum wide pedestrian/bicycle lane along both the north or south sides.

A trail spur will connect the east bank trail with a west bank trail over the Pearl Ave. Bridge. This spur will extend downstream to the north, crossing the Almaden Expressway at a sequence of signalized crosswalks and connecting with sidewalks along Koch Lane. Other sidewalk connections from abandoned school sites in the area to the river trail should be made. At the Hillside Ave. Bridge the trail will cross at street level, dropping down into the river channel under
the Capitol Expressway Bridge, continuing into Reach 11.

**Open Space Improvements.** The existing barricaded walkway connecting Old Almaden Rd. and the Roy Ave. Mini Park should be reevaluated. The planning team recommends that the walkway be either upgraded to a permanent feature, or eliminated. Because of high traffic speeds and volumes on the Almaden Expressway, access to the river corridor from west side neighborhoods be directed to Koch Lane or Old Almaden Rd. signalized crossings. Open space improvement sites have been identified at the corner of Wren Dr. and Skylark Dr. and along the 100 foot-wide easement buffer adjacent to future development in the old orchard area. The majority of barren open space within the widened channel could be used for mitigation planting with lateral trails extending from the main trail to the water edge.

The corner site at Wren Dr. could be developed as a neighborhood park serving residents to the east. West bank improvements throughout Reach 10 will focus on native habitat restoration and erosion control.

Improvements to the flood and trail corridor between Hillsdale Ave. Bridge and the Capitol Expressway will require adjusting the boundary of the existing car dealership along the east bank.

**Reach 11**

**General Description.** Reach 11 extends from Capitol Expressway to Branham Lane.

Car dealerships and the Thousand Oaks neighborhood about the river corridor on the east bank. The Almaden Expressway borders the corridor to the west. Limited development exists between the Ross Creek inlet and Branham Ln. City and Water Company vacant land and the Thousand Oaks Park create a significant open space within the reach, and adjacent to the River. Flood control in the reach may affect both banks.

**Trail Location.** Throughout the reach, the preferred trail location is along the east bank. The trail will pass under the Capitol Expressway Bridge with connecting links to bicycle lanes on the Expressway. The structural solution is similar to that existing at the Almaden/Capitol Expressway overcrossing. Trail spurs could occur throughout the reach at Steval Pl., through the City and Water Company land, to Thousand Oaks Park, Harvest Meadow Ct., Royal Acers Ct., and Golden Acers Ct.

A footbridge will cross the River connecting east and west banks in alignment with Bryan Avenue. The Concept Plan recommends an elevated pedestrian crossing at Bryan Ave. and over the Almaden Expressway to provide residents to the west access to the Guadalupe River.

All improvements proposed within the rights-of-way of Almaden Expressway and Capitol Expressway, including trail crossings under bridges, must be approved by the Santa Clara County Transportation Agency, and a County encroachment permit must be obtained before any work is performed within any County right-of-way. The County will retain right-of-way in these areas in order to maintain and improve facilities. The City will be responsible for maintenance of any facilities that are constructed as a part of the park corridor.

**Open Space Improvements.** As in Reach 9, the river corridor is quite narrow suggesting minimum park improvements. The trail experience should dominate. Connections to Thousand Oaks Park and residents to the west are desirable but raise some safety issues. Any trail development behind residences will include fence buffers and continuous visual surveillance from public streets such as the Almaden Expressway and Chard Drive. The open space at the City and Water Company land contributes significantly to the image of the river corridor. This area is also the site of a farm complex since torn down that could be symbolically resurrected as a public art form. This site could also be used as an outdoor lab/interpretive area by local schools.

**Reach 12**

**General Description.** This reach extends from Branham Lane to Blossom Hill Road. Residential development dominates the east bank and portions of the west bank. A majority of open space in the area to the west is planned for high-density residential. Future Rt. 85 will cross the corridor on an elevated structure. Chynoweth Ave. will cross the River and connect to the Almaden Expressway. The river channel needs only minimum widening for flood control. A number of percolation ponds straddle the river channel. Sanchez Dr. will extend northward to future Chynoweth Avenue.

**Trail Location.** The trail should cross under Branham Lane then immediately cross to the west bank via a footbridge, continuing upstream to the percolation ponds. From this point a series of trail options should be considered to integrate the river channel and ponds. One trail will follow the edge of Sanchez Drive. Trails will pass under the Rt. 85 clear-span bridge over the river channel. The trails will extend into Reach 13 under Blossom Hill Rd. Bridge. The Chynoweth Ave. Bridge should be designed to allow the trailway to extend under the bridge structure.

**Open Space Improvements.** Two sites have been identified on the east bank for possible mini parks. A major open space site has been located north of the proposed Chynoweth Ave. extension for neighborhood park use, including ball diamonds. The open banks around the percolation ponds and river channel should be master planned to establish a permanent natural habitat to preserve to the extent allowable without thwarting water conservation purposes. All private development will be planned to either visually or physically feature the river corridor. Sanchez Dr. will serve as a river frontage road to allow visual surveillance into the river corridor.

The preliminary Route 85 Bridge design is shown in Figure 25. The design features have been coordinated with CalTrans and include soffit lighting capability and the possibility of adding or imprinting the words "Guadalupe River Parcchain" onto the structure.
Reach 13

General Description. This reach extends from Blossom Hill Road to Coleman Avenue. This stretch of the River represents the terminus of the Planning Area. The southerly portion of the east bank is bordered by vacant land to be used for the Almaden LRT station and park-n-ride lot. Beyond the open space to the east, are a mixture of commercial/retail buildings fronting Winnfield Avenue. Almost the entire west bank, with the exception of a small commercial property on Blossom Hill Road, is devoted to the SCVWD Headquarters and the Los Alamitos percolation ponds.

The river channel seems to need no flood control improvements. Two trails (straddling the River) presently cross under the Blossom Hill Road bridge into the reach. Presently only the west bank trail continues the length of the reach. The trail leads into the pond and headquarters area and eventually to Almaden Lake or Almaden Expressway.

Trail Location. The existing trails in the reach may suffice in their present location and width. The east bank trail could continue either through or adjacent to the proposed Almaden LRT station and up to Coleman Avenue Bridge. The west bank trail should continue along its present path while developing another diverted path through the Los Alamitos percolation ponds. As the trail extends on the west bank, to Coleman Avenue, a pedestrian bridge should be introduced to cross over the River path as it flows under the Almaden Expressway roadway. This pedestrian bridge would connect the northwest portion of the Almaden Lake Park with the west bank of the Guadalupe River. Another pedestrian bridge should also be introduced over the confluence of Almaden Lake, to connect the Almaden LRT station to the western portion of Reach 13, and the Almaden Expressway. This would reduce pedestrian and bike traffic along the Coleman Avenue Bridge. A proposed trail could cross west under the Almaden Expressway to connect with a future trailway on the Guadalupe River and the Almaden Winery area.

Open Space Improvements. Along the east bank, the development of the Almaden LRT station brings about the opportunity of creating a park-like landscape buffer between the proposed parking area and the River edge. On the west bank, the percolation ponds offer an exceptional opportunity to develop a major public amenity while establishing riparian habitat adjacent to existing water features. Future expansion of the SCVWD Headquarters should address the feasibility of establishing a nature interpretive center and other public open space uses.

CONCLUSION

This Interim Report has documented existing natural and cultural features along the Guadalupe River, assessed future public and private development and recommended public improvements that will help to realize the potential of the Guadalupe River as a regional public amenity.

Once flood control improvements are agreed to, more site-specific trails and passive and active recreation uses will be located and designed. Through the process, the planning team has been reminded of the complexity involved in anticipating and guiding development along the Guadalupe River Park chain. More powerfully, the vision of successfully creating a regional public open space amenity lingers.