I had another and a grander dream. A hundred years had passed, and I saw the valley, not, as now, only partially tamed and reeking with the wild magnificence of Nature, but from riverbed to mountain-crest humming with human life. I saw the same oaks and sycamores, but their shadows fell on mansions which were fair as temples, with their white fronts and long colonnades; I saw gardens refreshed by gleaming fountains — estates peeping from the gloom of laurel bowers — palaces, built to enshrine the new Art which will then have bloomed here — culture, plenty, peace, happiness everywhere. Was it only a dream?

A Word Picture of the San Jose Area in September of 1859 — from New Pictures of California by Bayard Taylor
The importance of the Guadalupe River was first realized when Captain Anza, one of California's early explorers, crossed it in 1776, and named it at that time. One year later, 1777, the Pueblo of San Jose was founded along the river's banks at approximately the spot where Hedding Street crosses it today. Since then, however, the river has become a neglected and unsightly channel. Now, after 190 years, the Guadalupe River is gaining the respect and interest which the citizens of San Jose once had for this natural asset.

Located along the Guadalupe River between the intersection of the Sinclair and Guadalupe Freeways and the confluence with the Los Gatos Creek, the site of the proposed Park of the Guadalupe would be centrally situated and accessible to the entire metropolitan area. Preliminary plans and a model of the Park have been made at the request of the City Council. Both were recently displayed in San Francisco at a national convention of planning officials who viewed the exhibit with interest and remarked on San Jose's fortune in having such a potential asset.

Today San Jose is the fourth largest city in California. It has five times as many citizens and covers ten times as much land area as the San Jose of 25 years ago.

Obviously San Jose is changing rapidly, and this change will continue at an even faster pace in the next quarter century as "The Garden City" becomes a metropolis of a million people. However, it is not San Jose's rate of change which is important. The questions which every citizen should be asking himself, the community and city government are, "What do we want San Jose to become?" and, "How can we accept and direct the changes we are experiencing to help build the city we want?"

We are now faced with two alternatives. Shall we continue with only "growth" as a goal, or shall we attempt to establish a distinctive character and identity for our city, different and better than the hundreds of newly emerging population centers of the United States?

We may continue on the path that has led us to the present, tackling problems as they appear. So far, this has not been disastrous, but it has not been completely successful either. San Jose may survive economically without a clear concept of its future. New streets and firehouses will be built and maintained, public health will be protected, and adequate police and fire protection will be provided. But without imaginative planning and building today, can San Jose look forward to anything more distinctive in its future than just becoming one of the world's largest municipal utilities districts?

More and more homes and neighborhood shopping centers do not make a city. A city's culture, character and the necessary revenue which allows it to become a desirable place to live all depend on the industries and cultural attractions which bring people and prosperity. We must create something which will give San Jose an identity, make it recognizable, memorable and attractive to outsiders, and arouse a sense of civic pride among its citizens.

San Jose, California's first civil settlement and first capital, has many advantages if it chooses to build a unique character. The potential dividends to its citizens and businesses are immense. However, such a task requires a great effort and vast community support.

Painful as it may be to admit, today there is a strong tendency among the people of San Jose to spend their leisure hours in recreation, sightseeing, or shopping elsewhere, because elsewhere they find more plentiful activities and distinctive surroundings.

How many millions of dollars are spent by San Joseans outside the city on leisure-time activities? Our youths are not the only ones who say that "there is nothing to do" in San Jose. Ask yourself where your own favorite theaters and art, cultural and recreation centers are located. How many millions of dollars would be spent in San Jose by people from other communities (and how much of its own citizens' earnings would be retained in the city) if San Jose could create an atmosphere that made people want to spend their leisure time here?

And what is the total impact of a cultural-recreational center or landmark? Direct business and revenue, and secondary commercial and civic revenue are obvious, but equally important is the creation of a distinctive community image that will make San Joseans identify with and care about their community. The Park of the Guadalupe can be the catalyst for San Jose's renaissance.
A preliminary plan for the Park of the Guadalupe has been prepared by the internationally-known landscape architectural firm of Lawrence Halprin and Associates. Calling for the integration of several uses and concepts, Mr. Halprin describes the proposal as having the flavors of Copenhagen’s Tivoli Gardens, with its “joie-de-vivre,” San Francisco’s Ghirardelli Square with its reflection of the “City’s” atmosphere, San Antonio River Park in Texas, and the waterways of Venice. These qualities combined with the distinctive local advantages found only in the natural assets of the Guadalupe River, will create a complex coveted and frequented by people throughout the Bay Area.

A San Jose family, wanting to spend its leisure time together away from traffic, noise and congestion, need not go far. The Park of the Guadalupe, right in the center of town, offers an atmosphere of serenity and relaxation. More than fifty acres of open space fronting water is available in which to stroll, sit, or enjoy nature. No need to worry about noisy and sometimes menacing motor traffic. By using the underpasses or bridges scattered throughout, a person can walk from one end of the park to the other (a pleasant stroll) never encountering a car. A system of landscaped walkways wind throughout the entire park, linking all activities together. Or, if you prefer not to go by foot, a water-transportation system exists for those who enjoy moving about in a water taxi, a pedal or a row boat.

Another San Jose family, also intent on spending an afternoon of leisure, but in a more lively manner, will find many and varied activities to choose from, all centrally located in the park. The specialty commercial, crafts, and entertainment center with its main plaza and lagoon appeals to the entire family -- the toddlers, the teenagers, and the parents.

Couples, young and old, will find an endless array of activities to their liking, whatever their particular tastes may be. Groups of any size or type (church, school, civic, or community-wide) will find they, too have facilities serving their needs. This is what can be in San Jose a few years from now.
In the South Park the river widens, forming a lake. The massive interchange of the Guadalupe and Sinclair Freeways covers about 100 acres of land, most of which is integrated into the park. This use of freeway lands in and around the interchange is unique in that previously unused areas are made available for public use. A common green with rolling lawns and trees fronting the river offers passive outdoor uses such as casual strolling, free play, sunning, people watching. Facilities in the South Park include: boathouse, tennis courts, multi-purpose building for group uses, administration center, snack bar, a children’s island with a sculpture playhouse, and an amphitheater. Youthful imagination can create many different but real worlds on the children’s island where tales of “Treasure Island” and other fables can be relived. The amphitheater will be ideal for Shakespeare, musical events such as “pops” concerts in the Arthur Fiedler tradition, outdoor graduation exercises, flower shows, book sales and art shows.
Specialty — Commercial

Teen Center — a gathering place for teenagers. The type of shops and activities will be oriented solely to the demand of teenagers and will specialize in facilities designed exclusively for them. The facilities will include record shops, book shops, hobby shops, teen galleries and studios (for paintings, sculpture and music), gift shops, a soda fountain for meeting friends and quenching thirst, an outdoor paved area (for eating, playing table games, dancing, and listening to small group bands) — an area for teen self-expression and relaxation away from the pressures of everyday life.

Tot Center — solely for tots, the play area is related to tot shops and includes a toy shop, specially selected tot book shop (books from all over the world), record shop, candy shop and pet shop.
Art-Craft Center and Private Galleries — a center where private creations of pottery, weaving, sculpture, glass blowing, special furniture making, book binding, leather goods, jewelry, and portrait painting can be observed. A private gallery for display of local talent, small studios and a theater for a small workshop are proposed. The outdoor paved area for exhibit and display will change continuously to reflect new work and talent. A craft center with high ceilings and skylights will provide an atmosphere where the artist and the public can unite in pursuing the arts.

General Commercial Specialty — includes an expresso coffee shop, book shop, restaurants (an international center — Italian, Spanish, Oriental, etc. cuisine), beer pub, florist, key shop, sport shop, candy store, all related to a walkway system and terrace area for extending all facilities outdoors.
PLAN OF THE PARK OF THE GUADALUPE FREEWAY

Parking Lagoon Community Theatre
Bandstand — to be used continuously by different groups, including private and public schools (elementary, high school and college). A wide range of musical offerings (quartets, solos, pop, blues, folk music, swing, as well as classical) will be available for the enjoyment of all.

Movie Theater — for showing documentary, art or very special educational films, foreign movies, or old classics.

Information Center of the City of San Jose — an information booth for public convenience will be provided with maps locating points of interest, organizations, and churches; a calendar of events, activities, and art exhibits will be displayed to help acquaint the community with goings-on in the area. An organization similar to Europe’s youth hostels, could be created to receive out of town visitors wishing to be placed in private homes. International exchange students or students and guests from San Jose’s sister cities will find valuable assistance in the Information Center’s services.

Outdoor Stands — attractive kiosks, fruit stands, and flower stands will help enhance the liveliness of the area. The cry of the sidewalk vendor selling pizza, pop corn, ice cream, fish and chips, will add a musical note.
North Park

This area extends north from the specialty commercial center and relates to the new community theater, St. Joseph’s School, and the proposed apartment complex in the Park Center renewal area. It continues under the freeway and terminates in a North Lake with additional community facilities. The North Park has a floral island with a glass arboretum, a wildlife center, a bowling alley, and a multi-purpose building for local groups and organizations, boat docks, court games, and merry-go-round at the point where the Guadalupe River and the Los Gatos Creek merge. Water facilities other than boating, can be fishing, waterfalls, fountains, sailing for children, and fly casting practice area for fishermen. Swans swimming in the lake, evening water pageants and daytime floral pageants would become natural and usual events.
SUGGESTED STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The opportunity is here for taking positive action in making the Park of the Guadalupe a reality. Success is possible only if the park plan is implemented in a comprehensive manner. Piecemeal action will allow development to proceed in an unrelated manner.

CITIZEN'S COMMITTEE — A comprehensive approach can best be assured through the efforts of a citizen's committee whose function would be the support, pursuit and coordination, of all activities aimed at implementing the Park of the Guadalupe.

All the citizens of San Jose will benefit from the project. Greater tax revenues will help keep the tax-rate down; commercial activities will be a boon to the business community; San Jose's new image and vitality will entice industries to locate in the area, creating more employment opportunities. It only seems right, then, that San Jose's citizens, those who stand to gain the most, should be called upon to lend their support to the project. The citizen's committee should be composed of people from the entire community and should rely on professional expertise from industry, finance, and business. The committee should recruit area-wide support. It should act as liaison between the community, professional staff, consultants, and the City Council.

NEXT STEPS — The preliminary plan exists. Assuming that it will be formally adopted, what are the next steps to be taken? First, the area should be protected from development which could hinder the project as proposed in the preliminary plan. By use of the City's zoning ordinance, and plan line designations, the City Council can pass a resolution limiting potentially harmful development.

The next step should be land acquisition. There are approximately 85 acres of land to be purchased of which 50 acres will be devoted to open space. Once land is obtained, development can occur along priorities established by availability of funds.

COSTS AND FUNDING — Monies for acquiring and developing the park may be obtained through sale of general obligation bonds, and through Federal assistance. If the city were to apply for Federal assistance or sell revenue bonds, the park would have to be declared a renewal project and be administered by the Renewal Agency. However, to receive priority consideration for Federally assisted projects, established national goals must be met. Very briefly, the national goals state that most of the area and facilities within a project area should be devoted exclusively to the social and economic benefit of people in the low and middle income brackets by providing housing and employment. This means the park boundaries would have to be expanded to almost double the present size in order to accommodate those uses required by the national goals. If the goals are met, along with many other technical requirements, application for an assisted project may be processed within three years.

Local financing provides a more direct method of implementing the park with funds for the purchase and development of land coming from the sale of general obligation bonds. Using its powers of eminent domain the city can acquire land for public use and lease the specialty, commercial, craft, and entertainment centers to private developers.

Flood control problems along the Guadalupe River will be expensive to solve. Precise engineering studies are needed to determine the costs. The Santa Clara County Flood Control District has declared its intent to designate an undetermined sum towards channelization of the river.
MONIES AVAILABLE — There are approximately 40 acres to be developed for public use. Federal programs are available which could provide grants to 90% of the total cost for developing public facilities and, in some cases, for acquiring land.

Some of the grants are:

1) Outdoor Recreation Assistance — Provides funds up to 50% for planning, acquiring and developing all types of outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

2) Urban Beautification — Provides funds up to 50% to assist local programs for beautification and improvement of open space and other public land in urban areas.

3) Neighborhood Facilities — Provides grants up to 75% to help establish multipurpose neighborhood centers offering concerted community health, recreational, or social services. The St. James Park Community Center was financed with such a grant.

4) Open Space Land — 50% matching grants for acquiring, developing, and preserving open space land.

5) Highway Beautification — Provides financial assistance to State highway departments for beautifying highways. Inasmuch as the Sinclair and Guadalupe Freeways are Federal-aid highways, they qualify for assistance under this program. The city may request the State to apply for funds to landscape areas of the Park bordering the freeways.

SUMMARY OF STEPS NEEDED TO IMPLEMENT THE PARK OF THE GUADALUPE

Give official sanction for developing the Park of the Guadalupe by adopting the proposed plan.

Form a citizen’s committee to foster implementation of the park plan.

Establish plan lines for the river and adopt a special zoning district for the remaining park area.

Begin land acquisition using a variety of Federal, State, and local funds.

Prepare final architectural and engineering plans for public facilities.

Establish priorities for development and coordinate construction of public facilities and the leasing of land for private development.
The plans for the Park of the Guadalupe pose a unique opportunity and challenge for the development of San Jose. Several million dollars will be expended in costs associated with the aesthetic development of the park and in the planned structures.

As the Park develops, it will act as a catalyst for the improvement of surrounding property in an ever-widening circle. In fact this project can provide a great stimulus for the development of San Jose as the financial, business and cultural center of the South Bay.

The greater benefit, though, lies in the long range impact the Park will have on the economy. Because of its unique qualities, it will attract nation-wide attention as a visitor attraction. This can be attested to through its similarity to the river development in San Antonio, Texas. Related developments in other areas such as San Diego, St. Louis, San Francisco, Philadelphia, and Hartford give proof to the importance of this project.

Equally important is the role the Park of the Guadalupe will play as a focal point for the citizens of San Jose. It will be a place where they can go for their own personal enjoyment, or to take part in many events and celebrations such as the Fiesta de las Rosas or the Cinco de Mayo.

Most important of all is the identity San Jose will inherit as a result of the Park. This identity will give its citizens a great sense of pride for their community.
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