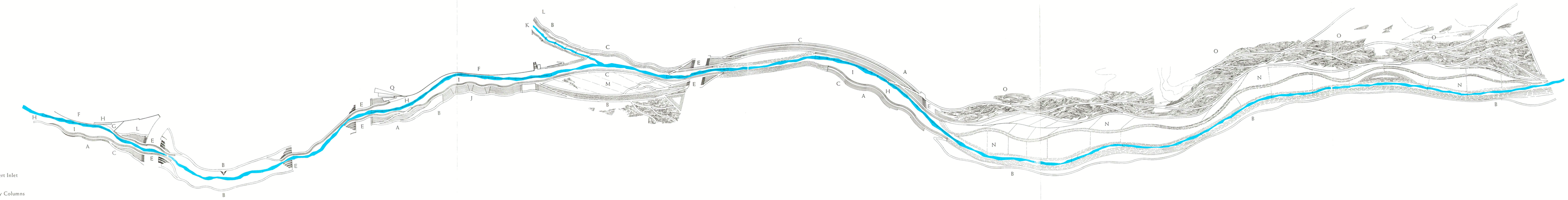
GUADALUPE RIVER PARK



LEGEND

A Gabions
B Top of Bank Riverwalk
C Mid Bank Riverwalk
D Channel Bottom
E Stone Terraces
F Concrete Vertical Wall
G Weir Structure for Box Culvert Inlet
H SCVWD Maintenance Ramp
I Low Flow Channel
J Concrete Collars for Freeway Columns
K Los Gatos Creek
L Plaza
M Flood Meadow
N Mitigation Planting and Revegetation
O Wave Berms
P Guadalupe Gardens
Q Concrete Outfall for Box Culvert Outlet (Fountain Site)

FLOOD CONTROL SYSTEM
UNDERLAY

ZONE A | ZONE B | ZONE C | ZONE D | ZONE E | ZONE F

LEGEND

1 Riverwalk
2 Access Point
3 Children's Play Area
4 Water Feature
5 Picnic Area
6 Visitor Center
7 Pedestrian Bridge
8 Playfields
9 Public Assembly
10 Carousel
11 Parking
12 Private Development Site/Parking Lot
13 Rudder Plaza
14 San Jose Sister City
15 Dublin Sister City
16 Okayama Sister City
17 Vera Cruz Sister City
18 Tainan Sister City
19 McEnery Park
20 Parade of Animals
21 Monopoly in the Park
22 Veteran's Memorial
23 Historic Features of Park Avenue Bridge
GRP Boundary

MASTER PLAN
OVERLAY

Hargreaves Associates — Landscape Architects and Planners
AN West — Civil Engineers
AGS — Geotechnical Engineers
H.T. Harvey and Associates — Ecological and Environmental Planning

0 125 250 500 1000

PLAN SUMMARY

The Guadalupe River exists today as a sinuous green ribbon through downtown San Jose. This green ribbon articulates the presence of the river in the urban landscape, but because visual and physical access to the river is limited, the river's presence is largely hidden. The intent is to reveal this hidden treasure.

The refined Guadalupe River Park Master Plan reveals the river by providing access for people either at points to the river itself, or along its banks, by creating water features along it which reflect the river's presence, and by developing open spaces so that people can gather along its banks and enjoy the rare resource of a natural river in a vital urban area. With the implementation of the Corps of Engineers' Flood Control Project, some of the banks will be removed and the river channel will be widened in most zones. The park plan includes river walks, and it reestablishes vegetation and riparian habitat to the maximum extent - possible within the new banks so that the river's presence as a green ribbon is not lost and its resource as an oasis for people and wildlife is enhanced.

The Guadalupe River Park celebrates the confluence of downtown San Jose and the river. The river park becomes a unique place for people to be part of a natural system, where they may experience the respite provided by water, wildlife, and vegetation in the midst of the activity of the city's center.

NEEDS

The Corps of Engineers' Guadalupe River Flood Control project is essential to the elimination of a critical flood threat that exists in the downtown area of San Jose. Current estimated damage associated with a 1% (i.e., 100-year) flood, which would inundate the urban center of San Jose, is in excess of $72 million. Such a flood has about a 10% chance of occurring during the next 10 years. The most recent overbankings of the Guadalupe River occurred in 1982, 1983, 1986, and 1995.

The development of the Guadalupe River Park will significantly enhance the urban environment of downtown San Jose and fulfill a need for open space and recreational areas. The park will border the western edge of the downtown area and serve as a greenbelt of open space in the most intensely developed portion of the city. The park will complement the attractiveness of the surrounding private businesses and public uses. A pedestrian link will be created which will connect many of the major activity nodes in the area including the McEnery Convention Center and the San Jose Arena. Public transit will also serve the park to insure sufficient public access and includes a Light Rail Transit station adjacent to the park.

A combination of gardens, plazas, trail systems, refurbished major streetscapes, and revegetation will enhance and improve the surroundings. The provisions of this unique waterway experience will help revitalize the downtown area, boost economic growth, and encourage private development to provide compatible amenities for the citizens of the region.

OBJECTIVES

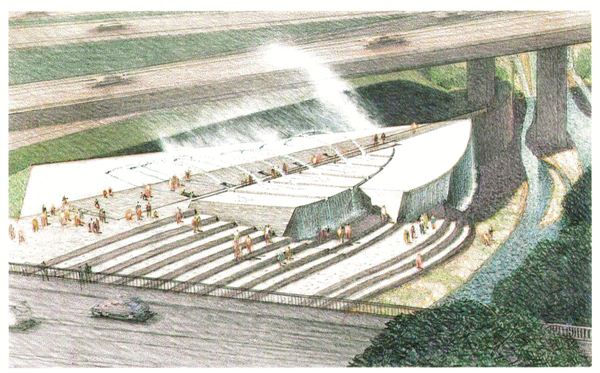
- The provision of open space along the river for recreation and relaxation of workers and residents in an urban environment.
- The enhancement of the Guadalupe River as both a valuable riparian habitat and a natural resource to be enjoyed by the citizens of San Jose and other communities.
- The development of a linear urban park that can provide opportunities for development of private and public facilities.
- The utilization of designs and materials to accommodate flood control in the Guadalupe River without restricting human access to the river itself, and to limit the erection of concrete barriers within the channel or along its banks.

PARK SYSTEMS

The proposed park plan maintains the basic program uses of the 1985 Master Plan. These uses include passive recreation, lunch-time gathering, picnic, large events, the experience of a variety of water features, children's play areas, and the continuous river walk. The plan accommodates these uses and adjusts to the environmental constraint of retaining natural banks wherever the approved Corps of Engineers' Flood Control Project leaves them intact.

The refined Guadalupe River Park Master Plan can be defined in terms of five systems: the flood control system, the river walk, access points, habitat, and water.

ZONE B
VIEW OF RIVER
ACCESS POINT
AT PARK AVENUE
LOOKING EAST



ZONE B
VIEW OF ACCESS
POINT WITH
INTERACTIVE
FOUNTAIN
AND WATERFALL
OVER THE BOX
CULVERT AT
PARK AVENUE
LOOKING WEST

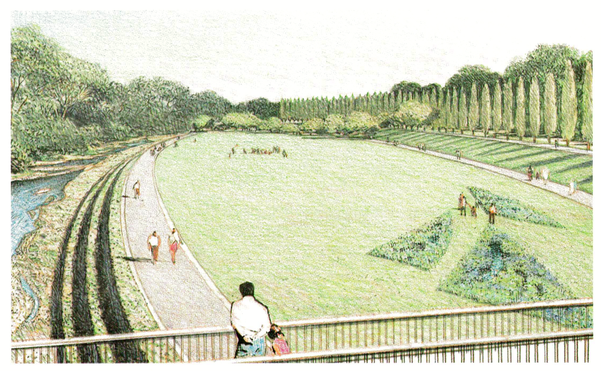
FLOOD CONTROL SYSTEM

Corps of Engineers: The Corps of Engineers' Flood Control Project proposed to utilize a system of U-shaped concrete channels, trapezoidal rip-rap channels, and expanded river banks with flood berms. Zone A underneath the Interstate 280 freeway interchange proposed 17-foot high vertical walls that are 800 feet long. The Corps' plans for Zones B and C, between Park Avenue and Santa Clara Street, call for a U-shaped concrete channel with two 17-foot high vertical concrete walls and a concrete bottom extending a length of approximately 1,800 feet. Zone D proposed a natural bank on the west side and around the confluence point, and an expanded high-flow channel with reinforced bank to the east. Zone E proposed a trapezoidal rip-rap channel on both sides and bottom. Zone F proposed a native bank on the east side, with an expanded high-flow channel and earthen embankment on the west side. Throughout the Corps' proposed project, there was no provision for access by people or a river walk system.

Park: The refined Guadalupe River Park Master Plan accommodates the same flood control needs as the Corps of Engineers' Flood Control Project, but modifies the treatments of the river banks. The park plan for Zone A, underneath the Interstate 280 Freeway Interchange, proposes to curve the west vertical concrete wall and terrace the east wall. The east wall terraces are planted gabions which incorporate a river walk and create an undulating channel edge. The park plans for Zones B & C, between Park Avenue and Santa Clara Street, also retain the west vertical concrete wall but incorporate a fountain feature at the box culvert outlet. The east wall is proposed to become undulating concrete terraces and planted gabions which accommodate steps down to the river, places to sit, and a river walk. The park plans for Zone D incorporate a meadow on the expanded high flow channel. The park plans for Zone E create undulating and arced planted gabion terraces with steps down to the river and a river walk. In Zone F, the park plans call for softening the west bank by creating a series of flowing mounds and paths to create a large area of pastoral park environment.

THE RIVER WALK

By providing the above refinements to the Corps of Engineers' Flood Control Project, the park can have a continuous river walk system. The river walks are at or near the river where the banks are man-made due to flood control channel work, and are at the top of bank where native banks are remaining. The top of bank walks will have benches along them. Mid bank walks will be lit as they pass under bridges, and seating is provided on adjacent terraces where they occur. The river walk system passes under all street bridges, thereby avoiding street crossings.



ZONE D
VIEW OF
THE FLOOD
MEADOW
FROM THE
PEDESTRIAN
BRIDGE
LOOKING
SOUTH

ACCESS POINTS

Access to the river walks and the river occurs at the intersections of the river and each roadway bridge. It is here that people arrive at the river via the street system, and the park celebrates that arrival by providing pleasant places to sit and spend time at the rivers' edge. Terraced plazas step down to the river and river walk, connecting the urban fabric to the river. The access points take advantage of the fact that clearing for the Flood Control Project will occur at the bridges, and at these points the plan provides gathering spots for lunch-time users and others arriving at the river park from downtown.

HABITAT

The river park plan proposes leaving all natural banks intact except where they are removed by the Corps of Engineers' Flood Control Project and/or bridge construction or modification. The plan also proposes reinstitution of native habitat within the gabion walls and landscape terraces that are proposed to take the place of the Corps' proposed U-shaped concrete channels and trapezoidal rip-rap channels. This technique will augment the formal mitigation and revegetation areas planned between Coleman Avenue and Interstate 880.

WATER

The river park plan proposes a large water feature in Zone B adjacent to the Park Avenue Bridge designed to complement the river and emphasize its presence while not directly interacting with it.

The fountain is envisioned as an interactive water feature giving people the opportunity to participate in water jets, sprays and splashing water pools. Its form is taken from the directional flow of water through the box culvert over which the fountain is built, thus creating a series of sliding planes of land, concrete and quartzite with water spilling out from crevices culminating in a horizontal plane of water feeding the waterfall. The waterfall obscures the open end of the box culvert and masks the noise from Route 87 and overhead planes. As a gateway to downtown San Jose, the fountain invites public use and articulates the dynamics of the flood control project.

The park may ultimately include a system of river mist to reinforce the river's presence and help mitigate the visual impact of vertical concrete walls. This system is proposed in Zones B, C, and part of D where the park occurs in the heart of downtown. The gentle mist rising from the river's edge would enhance the park's character, provide an element of mystery, and emphasize the natural environment that exists there.

ZONE D
VIEW OF
CONFLUENCE
POINT AND
RIVER ACCESS
LOOKING
SOUTH

UNDERLAY AND OVERLAY

The refined Guadalupe River Park Master Plan can be best described in two parts: an underlay and an overlay. The underlay refers to the channel improvements and the flood control project which widen the river. This is the backbone or spine of the park. One third of the underlay design is built or under construction; it is anticipated that the remaining underlay construction will be complete by the late1990's.

The overlay is the park that will grow over time around this spine. The overlay includes such elements as the overlook plaza near the Children's Discovery Museum. This feature will provide a catalyst for interaction between the use of the museum as a place of learning and experience and the enjoyment of the river. The overlay also includes the fountain near Park Avenue Bridge that will mask the box culvert outlet. The underpinnings of this fountain will be built as a part of the underlay, or flood control project. A significant portion of the overlay park will be constructed by the mid-1990's, including the river access points in Zone B; Confluence West Park, Phase I; and Confluence Point. Confluence Park will provide a venue for festivals and will provide a significant open space adjacent to the San Jose Arena. Confluence Point celebrates the confluence of the river and Los Gatos Creek as a place for interpretation of the river system and a quiet respite on the river banks. In addition, the overlay park design includes the guidance for building development along the river so that the park is expanded rather than diminished by adjacent development. Substantial acreage of park along the river, not just in the river channel, will greatly enhance the parks significance as a major open space in downtown. The overlay design encompasses this ultimate park development.

The concept of the underlay design is to mitigate the U-shaped concrete channels and trapezoidal rip-rap channels, proposed by the Corps of Engineers by creating terraces of stone, concrete, or gabions which incorporate a river walk, planting, and access to water. The concept of the overlay design is to bring the city to the river to create open spaces along the river which are unique to the special qualities of the Guadalupe River, to create development along the river which is designed to address the river park as its setting, and to provide basic amenities which will enhance the park's use.

ZONE E
VIEW OF
ARCING
RIVER WALK
LOOKING
SOUTH

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR THE RIVER PARK

New development along the Guadalupe River Park should be designed to be a part of the park. The orientation and massing of buildings, the location of buildings and their entries, the treatment of parking areas and open spaces, and the setback and treatment along the river's edge are all critical to the effect of each development on the park.

Building massing should create corridors of open space which link the surrounding city to the river. Buildings should orient to the river so that they do not appear to have turned their backs to the river. Pedestrian entrances to buildings should face the river, capitalizing on the river setting.

Open spaces which are part of individual developments should be adjacent to the river and designed to be a part of the overall river park. Plazas, fountains, and soft landscape areas should be developed to expand the river park and bring it to the doorstep of the buildings which front the park.

Large blocks of parking, either surface or structured, should not impede movement between the river park and downtown. Parking should be visually buffered and provide through-pedestrian corridors as links between the city and the river.

Buildings and parking should be set back from the top of the river banks a minimum of 50' to 100'. This minimum dimension varies per zone depending upon the character of the zone, amount of space available, and intended character of the river park in each area. These setbacks will insure the river's strong presence within the surrounding development and help to maintain the top of bank river walks within a continuous greenbelt.

ZONE E
VIEW OF WAVE
BERMS AND
MITIGATION
PLANTING
LOOKING
SOUTH