

**NORTH SAN JOSE NEIGHBORHOODS PLANNING TASKFORCE  
GUIDING PRINCIPLES FINAL UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED  
MARCH 6, 2008**

This document sets forth the Guiding Principles as unanimously adopted by the North San Jose Neighborhoods Planning Taskforce at their final March 6, 2008 meeting.

**BACKGROUND**

The City Council directed purpose of the North San José Neighborhoods Planning Taskforce was to actively engage the North San José (NSJ) residential and business communities in a Taskforce to contribute to the preparation of an Implementation Strategy for the North San José Area Development Policy. The Taskforce was a forum for the residents and stakeholders of the Rincon de Los Esteros Redevelopment Project Area and surrounding neighborhoods to develop recommended Guiding Principles for the City Council and Redevelopment Agency Board consideration.

**VISION STATEMENT**

*The San Jose of the future is found in North San Jose. Connecting the historic downtown to the refuge afforded by the San Francisco bay and Alviso, North Jose forms a crucible of talent and innovation, and opportunity.*

*This new urban uptown responds to the changing nature of work, creating a place like no other in the City where home, work, and community can be integrated.*

- A world class network of parks and trails that connect to the natural rivers and creeks.*
- Schools that nurture students, preparing them all to lead in the future.*
- Vibrant, interesting and creative places to gather, shop, meet,*
- Opportunities to work outside of the confines of an office, or commute to the office next door on your bicycle.*
- Creative businesses that redefine our daily life with new products and services that we haven't even dreamed of,*
- Neighborhoods that residents are proud to call home.*

**CROSS CUTTING GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- A. Urban Form – Maintain an Urban design approach to realize the recommended densities and increase available land for economic and public open space uses*
- B. Secure public sites early – Prioritize purchase of Public use sites (Parks, Schools, Community Centers, and Library) in early phases of the plan*
- C. Creative financing – Apply creative financial strategies to ensure timely development of public use facilities consistent with growth in private sector development (e.g. create mechanisms for making funds available when needed)*
- D. Green Building – Emphasize (or encourage) the use of sustainable design principles in new and existing private and public developments.*
- E. Transit Oriented Development- Encourage transit oriented development including pedestrian and bicycle friendly design*
- F. Industrial Growth - Encourage industrial and job growth in North San Jose*

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**1. PARKS AND RECREATION**

*Higher Priority*

- 1.1. Provide a center park/plaza location to create a there – there for North San José**
- 1.2. Explore the opportunities for creating a larger central park/central place**
- 1.3. Provide trails and connections to trails**
- 1.4. Provide recreational facilities for area**

*Lower Priority*

- 1.5. Provide sport fields to serve area**
- 1.6. Provide for a mixture of park facilities**
- 1.7. Provide recreational facilities for employees**
- 1.8. Provide passive areas into park system**

**2. LIBRARIES**

*Higher Priority*

- 2.1. Combine library space with community space/rooms/places**
- 2.2. Library should be urban in form**
- 2.3. Identify priority sites now**
  - 2.3.1. Think like a retailer, look at opportunities related to larger retail centers
  - 2.3.2. Close to transit desirable (especially light rail)
  - 2.3.3. “main street” location with visibility and traffic (e.g. VTA, Motitozo, Agnews)
- 2.4. Think creatively about financing, i.e. look at multiples sources of funding for multiple uses of library site such as parks and community center funds.**

*Lower Priority*

- 2.5. The library should help create place - Consider Joint Use/synergy as park of Place Making**
- 2.6. Explore creating a “retail” library space with first floor location, integrated in with retail, and the ability to expand over time**
- 2.7. Should relate to high tech environment**

**3. SCHOOLS**

- 3.1. Schools should be multi-purpose facilities for school and community use**
  - 3.1.1. Parks and green space
  - 3.1.2. Community Center, homework center, after-school care
  - 3.1.3. Libraries
- 3.2. Schools in North San Jose should be Urban Schools**
  - 3.2.1. Multi level
  - 3.2.2. Smaller footprint
  - 3.2.3. Integrated into community
- 3.3. Take into consideration both existing and new residents**
  - 3.3.1. Avoid bussing
- 3.4. School design to be flexible to meet changing needs**

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- 3.4.1. Should serve multiple audiences and be able to grow and shrink as the population of children fluctuates
  - 3.4.2. School design should adapt and respond to the needs of current and future students and the surrounding neighborhood.
  - 3.4.3. Environmentally healthy and sustainable design standards
  - 3.4.4. Look at renovation/upgrade of existing sites
  - 3.4.5. Provide for college prep.
  - 3.5. ***Look at all methods for financing school construction***
    - 3.5.1. Resources must be spent on school construction (not on operations or programs)
    - 3.5.2. Have a funding plan in place
    - 3.5.3. Purchase sites prior to need/development
- 4. TRANSPORTATION**
- 4.1. ***Plan for retail and other land uses that minimize trips out of the area***
    - 4.1.1. Create a retail places to shop for daily needs
  - 4.2. ***Create multiple ways in and out of neighborhoods***
    - 4.2.1. For emergencies
    - 4.2.2. Design small walkable blocks
    - 4.2.3. Develop a grid system
  - 4.3. ***Create connection to trails in new and existing neighborhoods***
    - 4.3.1. Create connections
    - 4.3.2. Create a mix of streets and paseos that connect to public uses (such as trails and parks)
  - 4.4. ***Reconsider parking requirements on residential parking***
  - 4.5. ***Consider the impact on Alviso***
  - 4.6. ***Design flexible, aesthetically pleasing new streets***
  - 4.7. ***Ensure funding is in place before development begins***
- 5. WATER SUPPLY**
- 5.1. ***Find ways to increase the use of recycled water from the “purple pipe”, as required by the State water code.***
- 6. RETAIL**
- 6.1. ***Design Guidelines Criteria***
    - 6.1.1. Adopt specific Design Guidelines for Amenity, Neighborhood and Regional Retail Projects
    - 6.1.2. Encourage the use of design professionals with significant experience in retail development
    - 6.1.3. Adopted Design Guidelines should ensure flexible, multi-tenant space that can be refreshed and re-leased over time.
    - 6.1.4. Design Guidelines should incorporate retail industry standards related to height, configuration, trash enclosures, grease interceptors, loading zones, signage and other key elements necessary for successful retail spaces

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6.1.5. Encourage well designed, quality community gathering spots and outdoor spaces in conjunction with retail spaces

6.1.6. Encourage quality landscaping, site design and building materials

6.1.7. Encourage walkability and pedestrian activity

6.1.8. Promote range of retail offerings

6.1.9. Create a sense of place with retail design

***6.2. Retail Site Criteria***

6.2.1. Preserve Site Opportunities for Neighborhood and Regional Retail that promote market viability

6.2.2. Location – highly visible, prominent, gateway orientation, immediately adjacent to parking

6.2.3. Visibility - visible from pedestrian corridors and roadways when possible

6.2.4. Accessibility – ease of pedestrian and traffic movement in and out of the site

6.2.5. Accessible by public transit whenever possible

***6.3. Crosscutting Key Elements For All Retail Uses***

6.3.1. Encourage walkability and access to public transit

6.3.2. Encourage quality site design and landscaping solutions

6.3.3. Encourage well designed outdoor gathering spaces

6.3.4. Encourage quality architecture and material use

***6.4. Key Elements of Amenity Retail***

6.4.1. Encourage well integrated mixed use development

6.4.2. Encourage access to adequate parking within close proximity to retail

***6.5. Key Elements of Neighborhood Retail***

6.5.1. Encourage neighborhood retail according to main street retail concepts

6.5.2. Create parking solutions that provide adequate stalls and close proximity but discourages excessive parking near storefronts to promote a pedestrian friendly experience.

***6.6. Key Elements of Regional Retail***

6.6.1. Highway/Freeway Visibility and Access

6.6.2. Draws from surrounding communities

6.6.3. Healthy parking capacity

6.6.4. Multi-modal hub (public transit)

6.6.5. Minimal Site Opportunity in North San Jose due to size and location needs

***6.7. Promote small business programs to developers and prospective tenants that can assist in small business formulation and support the on-going health of the small business community.***

6.7.1. Encourage non-franchise and family owned businesses as well as national credit tenants

6.7.2. Small Business Ambassador Program

6.7.3. Financial Assistance Programs

6.7.4. Entrepreneur Center

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- 6.7.5. Retail Recruitment
- 6.7.6. Permit Assistance

**7. CENTRAL PLACE AND PLACE MAKING**

- 7.1. *Key sites should be explored as a central place for North San Jose.*
- 7.2. *The appropriate site should be centrally located and near existing/future residential neighborhoods*
- 7.3. *The City should explore creating incentives for the property owner to develop the site appropriately.*
- 7.4. *The site should have a mix of community and neighborhood serving retail stores.*
- 7.5. *Community uses could include an*
  - 7.5.1. elementary school,
  - 7.5.2. a park,
  - 7.5.3. a square,
  - 7.5.4. a community center and
  - 7.5.5. a library.
- 7.6. *Retail stores could include a mixture of shops, stores, cafes and restaurants.*
- 7.7. *The Moitozo site should be explored as one of the potential central places, but the Moitozo property should be allowed to remain agricultural as long as the property owners desire.*

**8. URBAN DESIGN GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

**8.1. General Guiding Principles**

- 8.1.1. **Walkability** – Strive to make North San Jose districts and neighborhoods walkable.
- 8.1.2. **Pedestrian-Friendly Environment** – Create an urban environment that is visually attractive, pedestrian- and bike-friendly and designed to the human scale.
- 8.1.3. **Connectivity** – Encourage design and development within North San Jose that increases connectivity of uses, transportation and public facilities.
- 8.1.4. **Mix of Uses** – Foster a mix of uses within developments and individual buildings (both horizontal and vertical mixed-use).
- 8.1.5. **Design Guidelines** – Develop a clear set of design guidelines for buildings that support the vision for North San Jose (e.g. building heights and buildings at street edges).
- 8.1.6. **Identity** – Ensure that public development in North San Jose contributes to the strengthening of its identity.

**8.2. Public Realm - Blocks**

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- 8.2.1. Establish an interconnected system of streets, in a modified grid pattern, that generates small, walkable and bike able blocks, particularly in residential areas.
- 8.2.2. Implement the current street plan developed for the Core Area, and continue development of the same street plan throughout North San Jose.

**8.3. Public Realm - Streets**

- 8.3.1. Develop a set of street typologies that reflects a distinct character for each typology, and that balances vehicular and pedestrian needs.
- 8.3.2. For each typology determine the elements of streetscapes, such as sidewalk width, bike lanes, travel lanes, public transit, planting strips, tree species, easements, setbacks and build-to lines.
- 8.3.3. Develop guidelines for streetscape elements such as trees, street furniture (bus shelters, bike racks, lights, benches, etc.), pavement materials, signage and public art.

**8.4. Public Realm - Parks**

- 8.4.1. Ensure that new parks are part of a larger system, and when possible are connected to plazas and trails being developed in North San Jose.
- 8.4.2. Create new parks in new housing opportunity areas that are at least three acres in size.
- 8.4.3. Place parks within walking distance of new and existing residences.
- 8.4.4. In housing areas, encourage park facilities such as children's playgrounds, game courts, and picnic facilities.

**8.5. Public Realm - Plazas**

- 8.5.1. Develop a system of central gathering places and plazas.
- 8.5.2. Integrate plazas into the urban fabric.
- 8.5.3. Ensure that plazas are highly visible and accessible.

**8.6. Public Realm - Trails**

- 8.6.1. Connect trails to the existing trail system, including, but not limited to, Coyote Creek Trail, Guadalupe River Trail, Highway 237 Bikeway, and the River Oaks Trail.
- 8.6.2. Wherever possible, trails and public spaces should relate to access points along the two rivers: Guadalupe River and Coyote Creek.
- 8.6.3. Create design guidelines for proposed "Greenways" (street and trail combinations).

**8.7. Private Realm – Connectivity and Block Size**

- 8.7.1. Connect new developments to the existing and planned public realm.

**8.8. Private Realm – Block Layout and Mix of Uses**

- 8.8.1. Encourage mixed-use development.

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8.8.2. Allow for flexibility in site configurations and in building use over time.

**8.9. Private Realm – Building Placement**

8.9.1. Concentrate higher buildings along North First Street and require build-to lines to emphasize North First Street's role as the signature boulevard for the area and to make use of existing public transit.

8.9.2. Locate the tallest buildings at intersections to create a memorable sequence along the street and to take advantage of pedestrian activity at corners.

8.9.3. Orient buildings to the street to encourage and support pedestrian activity.

**8.10. Private Realm – Transitions**

8.10.1. Carefully design transitions between different heights, scales, and uses of buildings and developments.

8.10.2. In places where a park is adjacent to buildings, orient buildings towards the park and separate the two with a street or public pathway.

**8.11. Private Realm – Sustainability**

8.11.1. Encourage sustainable design practices

**8.12. Encourage Significant Design in Architecture**

**9. HEALTH CARE**

**9.1. Health Care – Develop plans for health care needs and facilities in North San Jose**

9.1.1. Include the provision of health care services and facilities in North San Jose in the Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan Update

9.1.2. Recommend the establishment of a Joint City-County Taskforce (including all major health care providers) to work collaboratively on health care facilities and hospital services issues that relate to North San Jose and Downtown

**10. PUBLIC ART**

*Higher Priority*

**10.1. Create landmarks**

**10.2. Public art should foster community interaction**

**10.3. Showcase the highest level of artistic excellence and creative energy**

**10.4. Explore the creation of a North San Jose Art Trail/Iconic System, that would use public art to help create a North San Jose identity (Great Idea)**

*Lower Priority*

**10.5. Define and enhance the public realm**

**10.6. Respond to North San Jose's broad geographic diversity**

**10.7. Priority Locations**

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- 10.7.1. Edges and Transitions
- 10.7.2. Connecting Places
- 10.7.3. Gathering Places
- 10.7.4. Places where different Uses and activities overlap

- 10.8.**     *Create artwork at a variety of scales and sizes*
- 10.9.**     *Exist in a range of timeframes (art that changes over time)*
- 10.10.**    *Encourage dynamic large scale art in the core*
- 10.11.**    *Art should reinforce and create identity in North San Jose*
- 10.12.**    *Encourage architecture that is public art*

**11. RINCON SOUTH/ROSEMARY GARDENS**

- 11.1.**     *Develop and implement a strategy to build out parks in Rincon South  
(As envisioned in the Specific Plan)*
- 11.2.**     *Engage the Rincon South/Rosemary Garden's neighborhood in the  
development of an Action Agenda to address key issues and concerns.*