



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Johnny Khamis

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF GREEN
STORMWATER
INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

DATE: September 10, 2019

Approved

Date

9/10/19

RECOMMENDATIONS

Accept memo dated September 6, 2019 from Mayor Liccardo and Councilmembers Peralez and Davis with the following additional recommendations:

1. Direct Staff to complete analysis of the use of the prospective Coyote Valley property acquisition as a means of satisfying the Consent Decree requirement;
2. Direct Staff to evaluate the pros/cons of connecting targeted storm water pipes into the sanitary system;
3. Direct Staff to develop a maintenance plan for potential projects, including condition standards and measurements, similar to the Park Conditions report, and seek Council approval prior to implementing any projects;
4. Direct Staff to evaluate and report how using parks for regional projects will impact our urban forest goals;
5. Direct Staff to determine if the project planned for Kelley Park Stables could be satisfactorily moved to one or more of the several parking lot projects planned for surrounding properties;

BACKGROUND

While catchment of storm water is an important effort to undertake in order to care for our environment, it is our responsibility as stewards of public funds to make sure we use those funds

to provide the best possible service to our residents, while preserving our parks, recreational facilities, and urban canopy.

1. The Consent Decree requires us to look into methods of water retention. Since the Coyote Valley property represents more than a thousand acres of potential water retention investment, we should evaluate how much of this potential project can be used to help us meet our retention and treatment requirements.
2. There are other cities throughout the world who treat both their sanitary and storm water within the same system. There may be areas where diverting our storm water into our sanitary system may be the least intrusive and most cost effective means of catching and cleaning storm water, and may reduce our maintenance burden.
3. The GSI Plan has several lovely photos of beautiful swales and street medians. However, the reality in San José is not like the photos. In some areas, our “swales” are nothing more than dirt troughs. These dirt-only swales are not only eyesores, they are also less effective.

Maintaining effective and beautiful swales is costly and very labor intensive. None of our departments are adequately staffed to take on this burden at this time. It would be irresponsible of us to embark on the implementation of a project of this magnitude without first having a solid maintenance plan in place.

4. The introduction of catchment systems into our parks, whether it be swales or underground storage vaults, has the potential to significantly reduce our ability to increase, or maintain, the number of trees in our parks. While every effort will be made to minimize this loss, the impact to our ability to plant new or replacement trees should be included in each project.
5. Kelley Park Stables is currently an underutilized part of Kelley Park. It is easy to dismiss it or write it off as unimportant. However, as we continue to talk about the densification of downtown, the few parks and open spaces we have for residents must be given serious consideration. That part of the park is potentially being considered by Valley Water as necessary for flood control measures. This work would reduce the amount of land in that area already. Further projects in the space would negatively impact the use of this currently used recreational facility, as well as limit future use of the space. There are significant projects being planned all around Kelley Park. Before embarking on this project, evaluation of the use of one or more of the parking lots in those project areas should be required.