



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Raul Peralez

SUBJECT: San José Downtown Design
Guidelines and Standards

DATE: April 19, 2019

Approved by:

Date:

4/19/19

RECOMMENDATION

Approve staff recommendation with the modification that 1(a)(i-iv) and the guidelines in Section 4.4.2.b be mandatory standards for *riparian projects*¹ in the guidelines boundary.

DISCUSSION

I am excited that after 15 years, we are finally updating the Downtown Design Guidelines to reflect our expectations for a modern, world-class urban core. Height and density are only as good as having thoughtful urban design standards that is part of our entitlement process to produce development that we all can be proud of. Thank you to our planning staff for their work on this update as well as the Knight Foundation for their support.

The Guadalupe River is a natural habitat to numerous bird species and I appreciate staff's supplemental memo as well as section 4.4.2.b of the guidelines speaking to bird friendly design principles that encourage architecture safe for our existing bird ecosystem. We have already seen current proposed projects such as the Boston Properties' Woz and Almaden project and Adobe Tower 4 project taken voluntary steps to incorporate bird safe features in their design. While we are fortunate that these two major projects along the riparian corridor have taken the initiative to promote conservation in their design, we may not be as fortunate in the future with other developments. Therefore, requiring riparian projects to comply with all bird safety design standards in the update would be in the best interest for our Guadalupe River wildlife habitat.

¹ City of San José (2016) *Council Policy 6-34: Riparian Corridor Protection and Bird-Safe Design*. Retrieved at: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/60393>