



Memorandum

TO: Honorable Mayor &
City Council

FROM: Toni J. Taber, MMC
City Clerk

SUBJECT: The Public Record
September 25, 2025 – October 2, 2025

DATE: October 8, 2025

ITEMS FILED FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD

Letters from Boards, Commissions, and Committees

Letters from the Public Comment:

1. Letter from Jean Dresden, received October 1, 2025, regarding: Fw: General Plan Comments From Yes On San Jose Parks.

Toni J. Taber, MMC
City Clerk

TJT/tt



Fw: General Plan Comments From Yes On San Jose Parks

From Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Date Wed 10/1/2025 2:41 PM

To Rules and Open Government Committee Agendas <rulescommitteeagenda@sanjoseca.gov>

 1 attachment (383 KB)

General Plan Update 2025 09 28 letter from Yes On SJ Parks.pdf;

From: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, October 1, 2025 2:38 PM

To: Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: FW: General Plan Comments From Yes On San Jose Parks

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, October 1, 2025 2:29 PM

To: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; Planning Commission 7 <PlanningCom7@sanjoseca.gov>; Planning Commission 8 <PlanningCom8@sanjoseca.gov>; Planning Commission 6 <PlanningCom6@sanjoseca.gov>; PlanningCom4@sasnjoseca.gov; Planning Commission CW <PlanningComCW@sanjoseca.gov>; Planning Commission 5 <PlanningCom5@sanjoseca.gov>; Planning Commission 3 <PlanningCom3@sanjoseca.gov>; Planning Commission 9 <PlanningCom9@sanjoseca.gov>; Planning Commission 2 <PlanningCom2@sanjoseca.gov>; Planning Commission 10 <PlanningCom10@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: Maguire, Jennifer <jennifer.maguire@sanjoseca.gov>; Cicirelli, Jon <Jon.Cicirelli@sanjoseca.gov>; Burton, Chris <Christopher.Burton@sanjoseca.gov>; Sandhir, Manira <Manira.Sandhir@sanjoseca.gov>; Cueto, Ruth <ruth.cueto@sanjoseca.gov>; Ferguson, Jerad <Jerad.Ferguson@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: General Plan Comments From Yes On San Jose Parks

[External Email. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources. [Learn more](#)]

Please find attached a letter about the General Plan Update from Yes on San Jose Parks.

City Clerk, please include in the "Public Record" for Council and the Planning Commission.

Thank-you,

Jean Dresden



September 25, 2025

Honorable Mayor Mahan, Vice-Mayor Foley,
Councilmembers Kamei, Campos, Tordillos, Cohen, Ortiz, Mulcahy, Doan, Candelas, Casey
Planning Commissioner Chair Rosario and Vice-Chair Bickford,
Planning Commissioners Barocio, Bhandal, Cantrell, Cao, Casey, Nguyen, Oliverio, Young

RE: September Study Session on General Plan, four-year review

Yes on San José Parks congratulates the Planning Department on an excellent historical review of the General Plan from the 1990s to the present. We are dedicated to revitalizing our city parks, and to ensuring they are vibrant, safe, and welcoming spaces for all. Our members participated in development of Envision 2040, and monitored evolving policy changes subsequently. We are very aware of the challenges that face you in developing this next General Plan revision. We have some comments on the material¹ revealed in the Study Session:

1. We thank Planning for acknowledging that changes to fees and taxes did not “move the needle” for feasibility of residential construction. [Slide 53]. We believe this will continue to be true.

2. We suggest clarifying the chart on slide 12 by removing the word “public open space.” The City’s public park system is only about 3% of the city’s 179 sq mi. The remaining 37% comprises many kinds of land ownership, of which —only some is publicly accessible. Please revise showing 3% for City Chartered Parks and labeling remaining 37% with Open Hillside, Open Space Parklands and Habitat, Private Recreation and Open Space to more accurately reflect diversity of ownership and access:

San Francisco Bay Don Edwards Federal Wildlife Refuge

Santa Clara County/ State Parks/ Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority Valley Water District lands

Private Open Space Lands held by various land trusts

Private unbuildable properties (over 15% slope, unstable hillside, waterway setback)

Privately Owned Private Recreation and Open Space

3. Please clarify for all participants and the General Plan Update that San Jose’s park system is comprised of “Chartered” parks. San Jose parks have been part of the City Charter since 1896. Section 1700 of the current City Charter, adopted in 1965, ensures that designated parklands remain inalienable

¹ link to presentation <https://sanjose.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=14779547&GUID=964884EC-0354-463D-B908-B1B67FBB4C5E>

link to staff memo <https://sanjose.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=14779548&GUID=AACCF1DF-2AE8-4DAB-AF44-145A624638EB>

unless approved by a majority of voters. This provision and the inventory of current City parks was affirmed by San Jose Council in Spring 2025.

4. We urge acknowledging in the General Plan Update and the new Housing Element that parkland and open space properties are not available for housing development. In some cases, the City has partnered with other agencies on multiple large sites for flood control, habitat, and recreation such as trails. For example, the Penitencia Creek Chain extending from Alum Rock Park to King Road is a contractual partnership with mixed ownership amongst the County and the Water District. It is maintained with plants and terrain that maximizes the capture of flood water. These parks serve their purpose best when they are not mowed lawns but are kept in natural conditions that some might view as “blighted.” We do not see these dual purpose parks as blighted, as they do serve a purpose, however do believe our entire park system needs more maintenance dollars to better serve the public.

5. We urge coordination with Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) throughout the General Plan process as the planning staff develops suggestions on policies for higher density neighborhoods, i.e. Urban Villages, Neighborhood Villages and areas re-designated for the “Missing Middle”. Envision 2040 and Activate SJ established multiple council-approved goals for the park system. PRNS is developing a master plan that will determine their priorities for property acquisition and park enhancement. We look forward to presentations from PRNS staff during the General Plan Update meetings with the Planning Commission on how the PRNS master plan, prior Envision 2040 goals and this updated General Plan are being coordinated.

6. We agree with the Mayor’s suggestion that there should be some public outreach prior to the completion of the draft plan by June 2026. We appreciate Director Burton’s staffing constraints and his willingness to meet with groups of community leaders. We offer our experienced members who have served on City and County Park and Planning Commissions, the City’s Envision 2040 General Plan Task Force, the Coyote Valley Task force, the Park Fee Task Force as well as with their individual Council District’s leadership groups. They bring a wealth of knowledge about land use, zoning, urban villages, parks, and development. We look forward to a community meeting early in this General Plan process where we will be welcome for a thoughtful discussion that could shape staff thinking before a draft is finalized.

We look forward to continued discussion on the updated General and the importance of providing housing while maintaining a quality of life with an abundance of nature that is the essence of the original Envision 2040 General Plan.

Sincerely,
Jean Dresden
Executive Director

Cc. City Manager Maguire, PRNS Director Cicirelli
PBCE Director Burton, PBCE Staff Sandhir, Cueto, Ferguson
City Clerk for the Public Record