



Riparian Advocacy

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Balance

- ▶ Need a balance between Man and Nature:
a balance for development:
 - ▶ Without development, we wouldn't have a city to live in
 - ▶ Without proper development, we won't have a livable city to live in.
- ▶ We, the public, through our advocacy, help balance the pressure of development

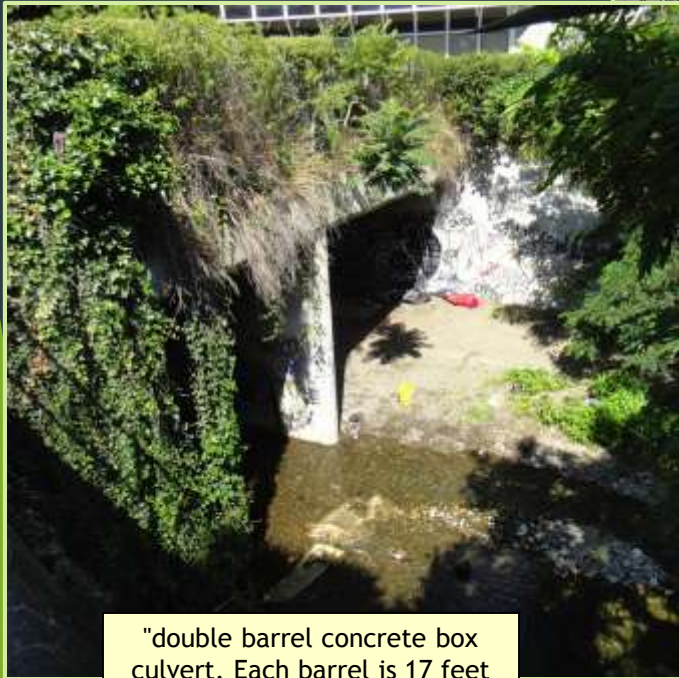
Channelized creeks

- ▶ Development allowed too close to creek.
- ▶ Channelized for flood protection
- ▶ No room for natural habitat

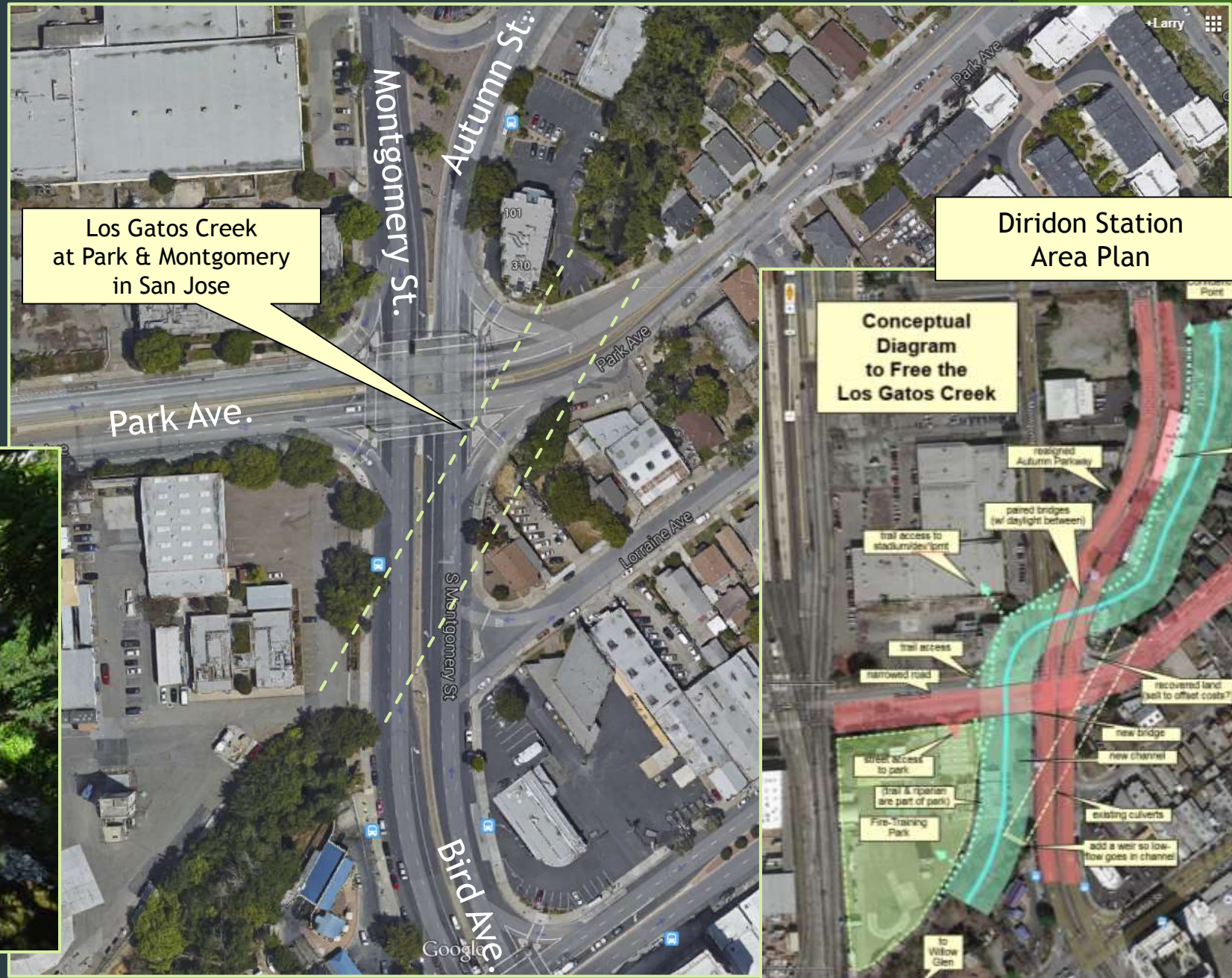


Culverts

- ▶ Creeks were sacrificed — “buried alive” — back when “Cars are King”
- ▶ “Out of sight, out of mind”



“double barrel concrete box culvert. Each barrel is 17 feet high and 22.6 feet wide.”



Los Gatos Creek at Park & Montgomery in San Jose

Diridon Station Area Plan

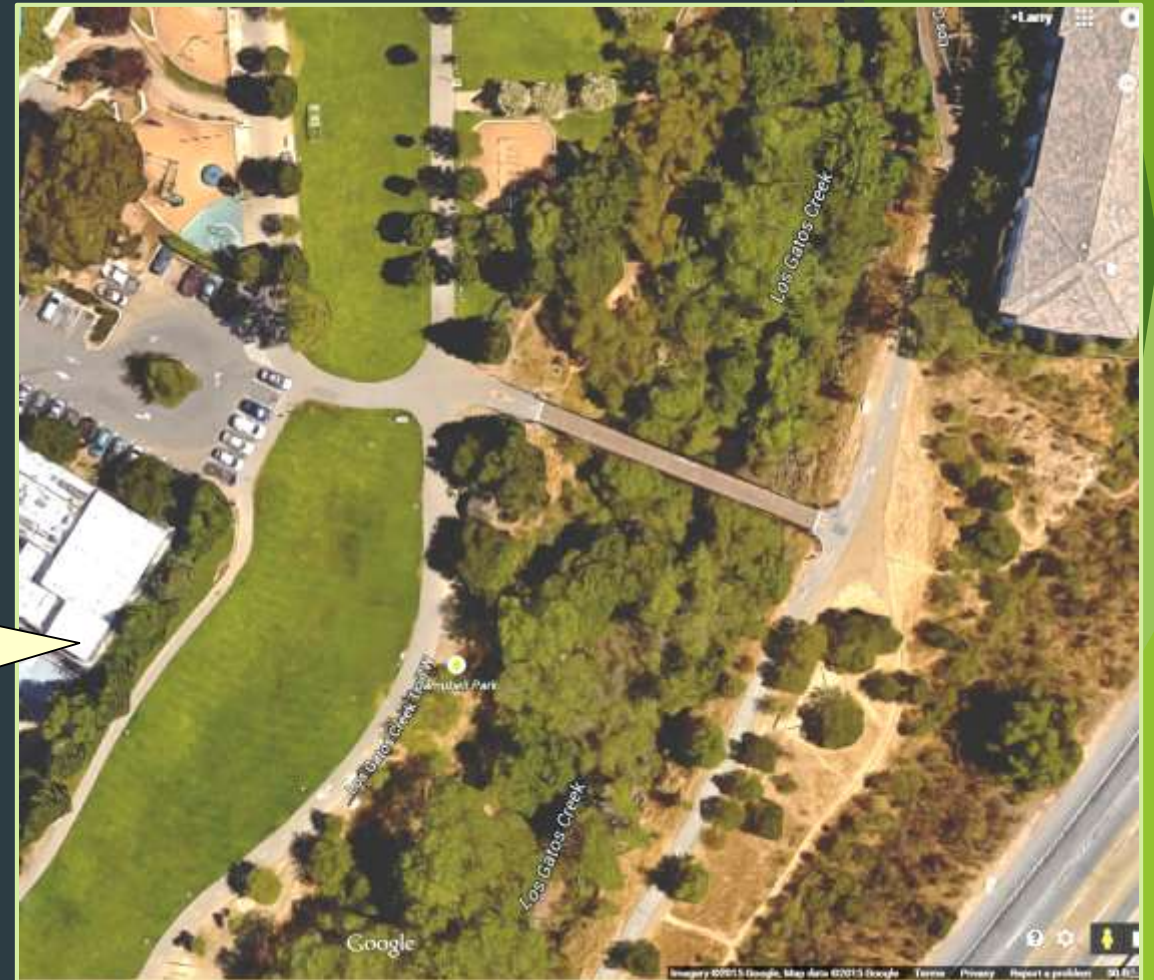
Conceptual Diagram to Free the Los Gatos Creek

We can “Dream big”



San Antonio Texas is famous for its “River Walk”:
2.5 mile long, lined with shops & restaurants;
almost like a Disneyland ride.

San José has the potential,
but we should do it “San José style”



We can “Dream big”



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2.5 mile long, lined with shops & restaurants;
almost like a Disneyland ride.

Note: habitat & the public can coexist:
the LG Crk Trail is used by hundreds daily
– with trail on both sides –
and the habitat has grown and thrived.

Not out of sight; not out of mind

San José has the potential,
but we should do it “San José style”
– wild and natural in the middle,
trails along the sides,
with amenities and attractions on the borders

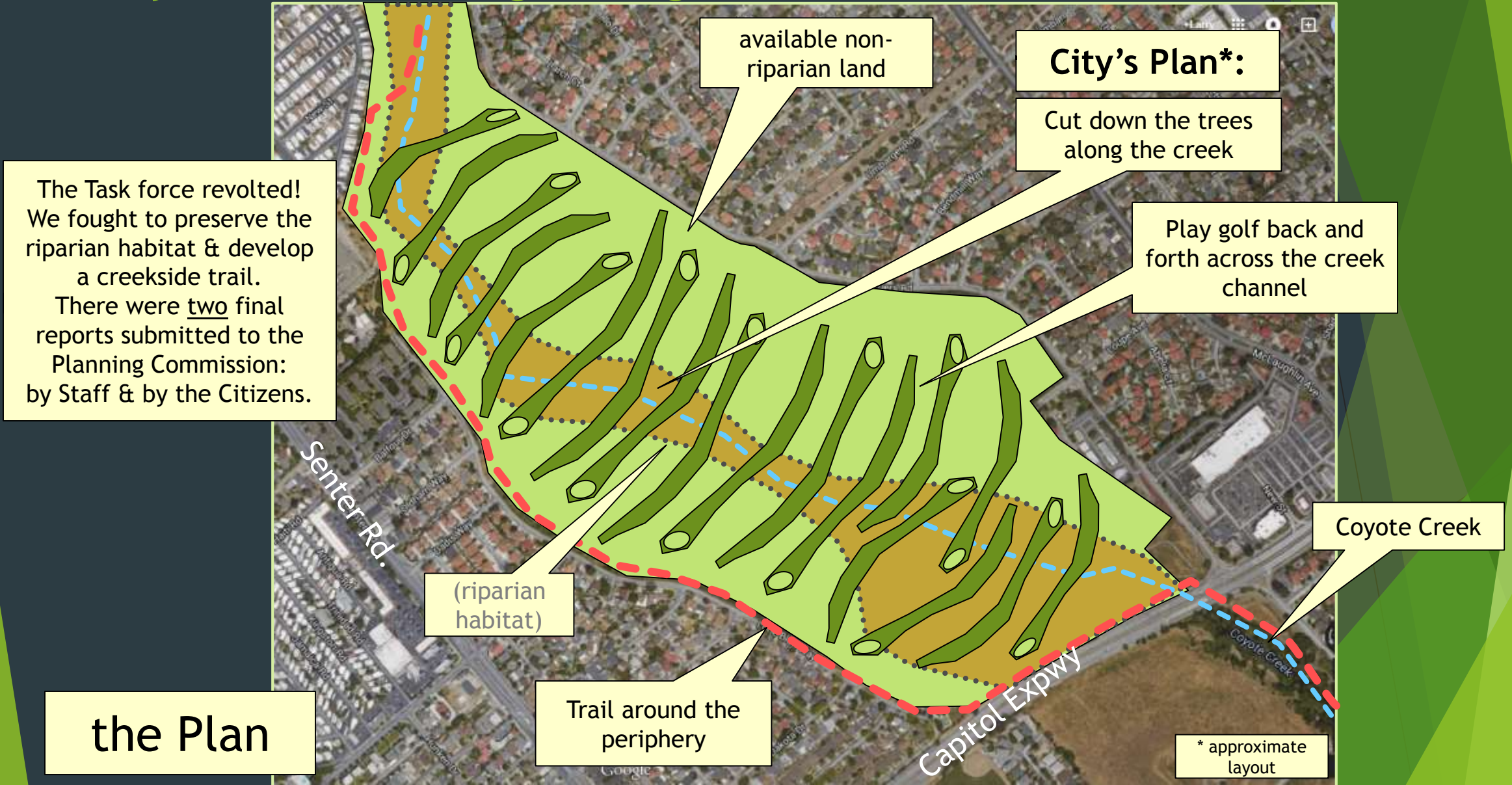
San José may have less water in the river,
but we have many more miles of trail
and many opportunities



Coyote Crk Long-Range Land Utilization Task Force



Coyote Crk Long-Range Land Utilization Task Force



Coyote Crk Long-Range Land Utilization Task Force



available non-riparian land

Citizen's Plan:

preserve the trees along the creek

Play golf up one side of the creek and back down the other

Coyote Creek

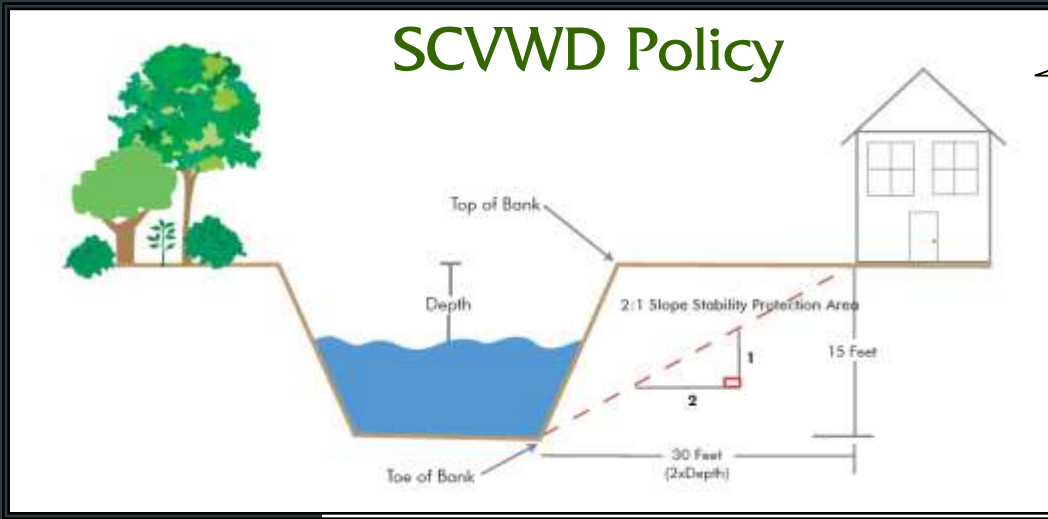
riparian habitat

Trail along the creek, outside the sensitive habitat

First definition of "riparian corridor" in San José, 1990. Lead to San José's "Riparian Corridor Setback Policy", 1994. (revised in 1999)

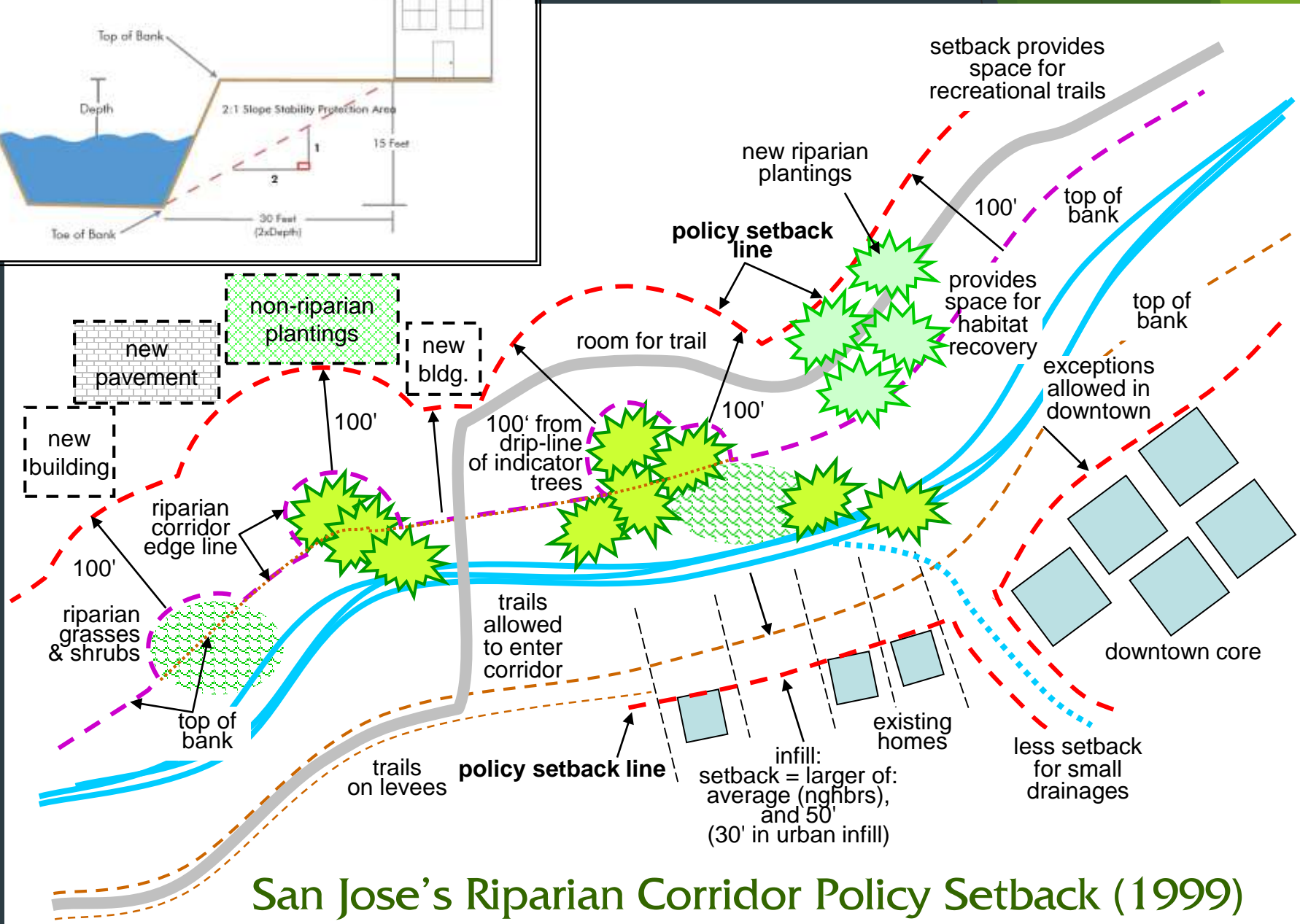
2015

SCVWD Policy



Water District policy: mainly for bank stability

- ▶ SJ Riparian Policy defines the setback: distance from creek to nearest building, pavement, landscaping, ...
- ▶ Leaves room for wildlife & allows room for trails in less sensitive area
- ▶ If it's not paved over, the land can be restored...



San Jose's Riparian Corridor Policy Setback (1999)



barren landscape



erosion



emptiness

“Before”

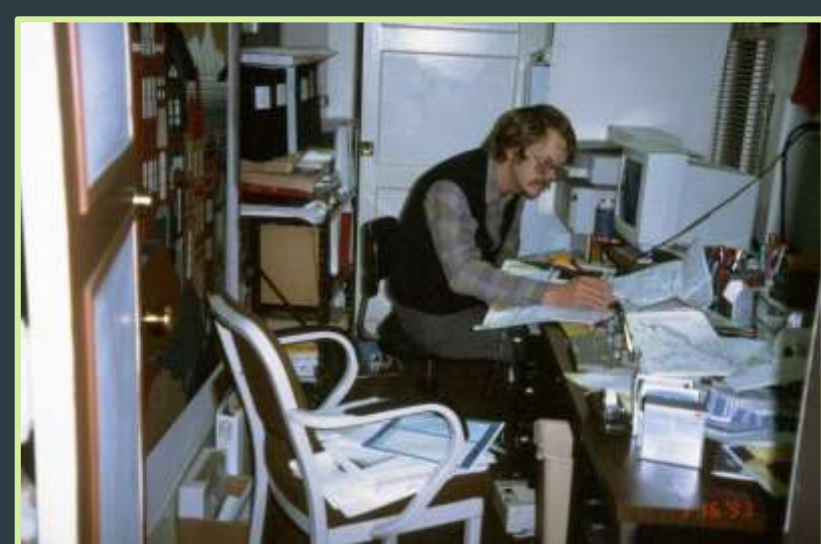


piles of gravel



trash





at the County Board of Supervisors



making plans



at the LG Creek Streamside Park Cmte.

“Planning”



Los Gatos Creek Urban Stream Restoration Project:

Dept. of Water Resources:

- Earle Cummings
- Sara Denzler

Santa Clara Valley Water District:

- Kay Whitlock
- Sue Tippetts
- Larry Wilson

Willow Glen Neighborhood Assoc.:


- Tiralisa Kaplow
- Madeleine Randal

Santa Clara County:

- Lisa Killough

(see www.WGBackfence.net/arcata.htm)



WILLOW GLEN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  P. O. Box 7706, San Jose CA 95150 / (408) 294-WGNA

“Groundbreaking”



Rod Diridon & Zoe Lofgren





irrigation pipe



the "Muddy Hands" Club

"Planting"



Jim Sugai



“After”



Examples of Developments along Riparian Corridors

- ▶ San José’s “Riparian Corridor Setback Policy” is technically just a set of “guidelines” rather than actual enforceable code.
- ▶ “Development” is not “bad” — we wouldn’t have a city without it! — but developers are often under pressure to maximize profits and sometimes hire lobbyists to “push the limits” in the attempt to squeeze more units on the parcel.
- ▶ Lobbyists sometimes cite prior cases: “you let that project be approved with those setbacks, why should we have to do better?”
- ▶ Let’s look at a couple of them...

Approved Riparian Setbacks in San Jose

Project File Number	Location	Riparian Setback
PDC01-097	West Ct./Silver Creek	20 feet*
PDC96-010	Sharon Drive/Calabazas Creek	25 feet
PDC00-125	Hampton Falls/Guadalupe River	25 feet*
PDC04-064	Almaden Exp./Guadalupe Creek	30 feet*
PDC03-094	S. 12 th Street/Coyote Creek	30 – 100 feet
PDC03-064	Minnesota Rd./Guadalupe River	30 feet
PDC04-028	Malone Rd./Guadalupe River	40 feet
PDC03-071	Auzerais Ave./Los Gatos Creek	40 feet
PDC02-104	Mabury/King Rd./Penitencia Creek	<50 feet
PDC00-022	King Rd./Penitencia Creek	50 feet
PDC99-005	San Felipe Rd./Thompson Creek	50 feet
PDC02-046	Santa Clara St./Los Gatos Creek	50 feet
PDC04-112	Hervey Lane/Guadalupe River	62 feet*
PDC98-005	Pfeiffer Ranch Rd./Alamitos Creek	75 feet
PDC02-025	Foxworthy Ave./Guadalupe River	75 – 100 feet

* Discretionary Alternate-Use Policy used for GP Conformance

PDC03-064 - 586 Minnesota



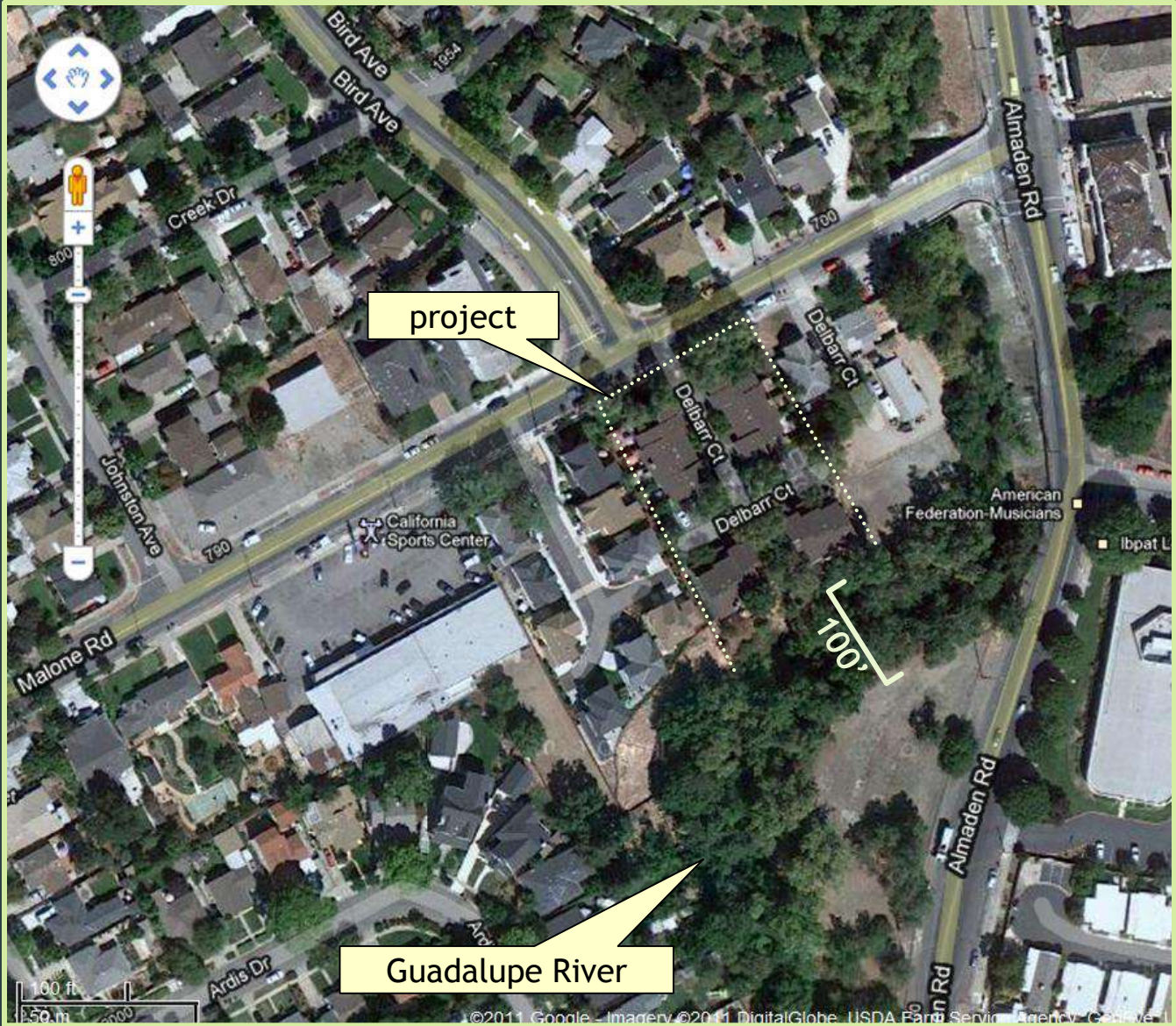
PDC03-064 - 586 Minnesota

- ▶ In-fill on existing single-family lot
- ▶ Maintains same 30' setback as adjacent parcels
- ▶ Nothing special
- ▶ Does 30' in-fill setback apply only downtown, or in any urban in-fill?
(What in SJ is not “urban in-fill”?)



C+

PDC04-028 Malone Rd



PDC04-028 Malone Rd



fence-line within
riparian drip-line!

invasive exotics
(English Ivy)

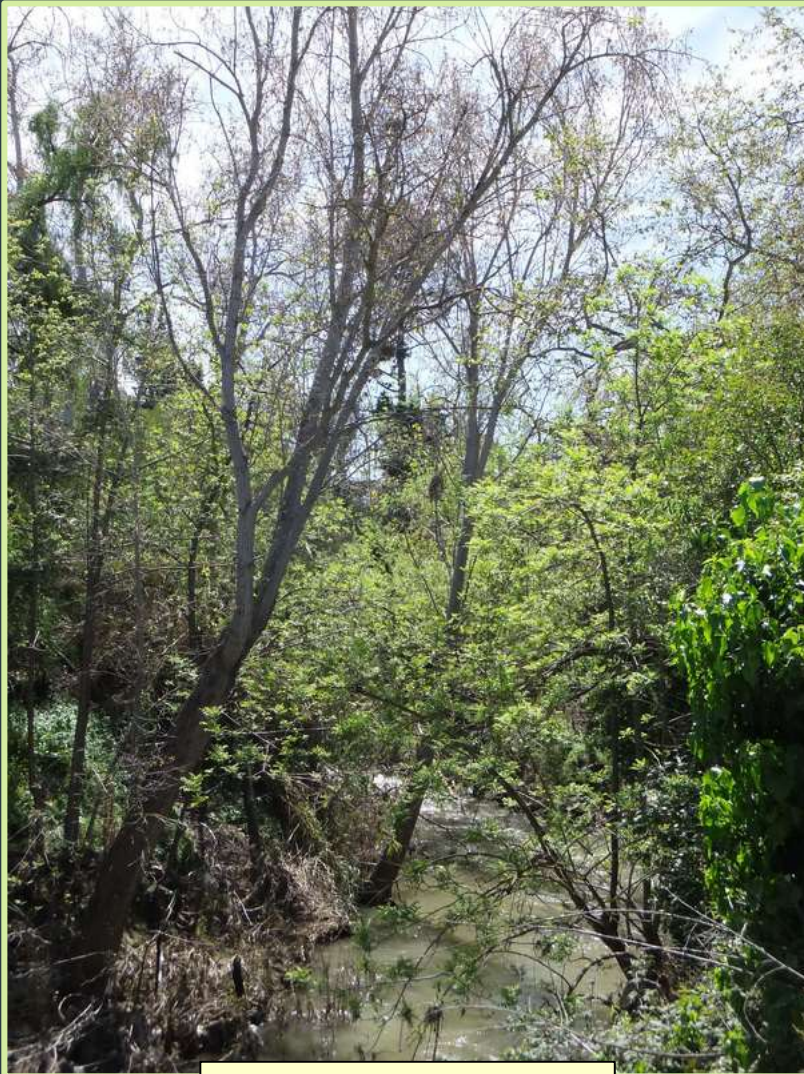
PDC04-028 Malone Rd



project

view from next
door, with setback

PDC04-028 Malone Rd



view of creek:
habitat worth saving



view from other side of
creek: riparian habitat

PDC04-028 Malone Rd

- ▶ At least they didn't put the creek in a pipe.
- ▶ Virtually no setback
- ▶ Invasive Exotics
- ▶ No room for creek bank erosion
- ▶ Doesn't accommodate planned flood-control channel modifications
- ▶ Damages a viable riparian habitat



F+

PDC03-071 - Auzerais



PDC03-071 - Auzerais



PDC03-071 - Auzeirais

- ▶ Developer removed existing hardscape
- ▶ Planted native riparian landscaping
- ▶ Developed Recreational Trail
- ▶ Preserved Historic Structure (water tower)
- ▶ Rustic fence defines setback
- ▶ Nearly 100' in places, even in urban core
- ▶ Less than 100' setback over much of the length
- ▶ Used as “precedence” for exemptions from policy

B

PDC04-112 - Falcon Place

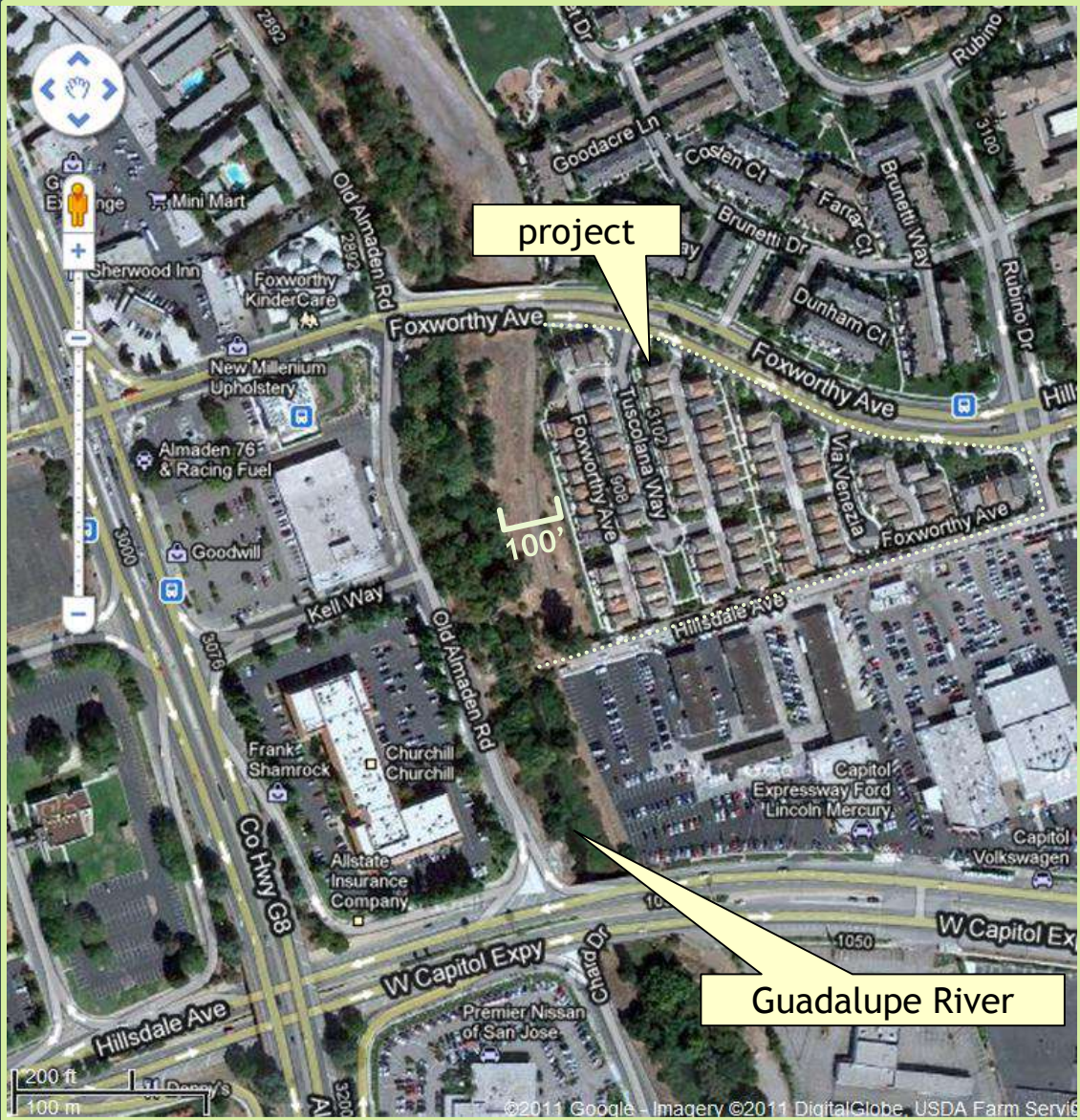


PDC04-112 - Falcon Place

- ▶ Provides 100' setback from hardscape, in urban core
- ▶ Provides trail connection
- ▶ Non-riparian landscaping (tot-lot playground) within 100' setback

A-

PDC02-025 - Foxworthy



PDC02-025 - Foxworthy



PDC02-025 - Foxworthy



PDC02-025 - Foxworthy

- ▶ Undisturbed riparian habitat
 - ▶ Protected from residents by fence
 - ▶ Wide expanse separates development from habitat
 - ▶ Remarkable improvement from the upstream neighbor (a car dealership)
- ▶ Why was this cited as an exemption?
Was perhaps one lone tree within 100' of the development?



A

Next steps

- ▶ San José has reaffirmed and reinforced the Riparian Corridor Setback Policy in the recent General Plan Update (“Envision 2040”).
- ▶ The Policy still needs to be “codified” – converted into enforceable ordinance language.
 - ▶ “Rules Committee” has scheduled Staff to take the first steps starting in June
 - ▶ Likely to be long process, and will require constant public participation and oversight – “the Devil is in the details”.
- ▶ Meanwhile, each new project has to be evaluated to assure it shows proper respect for the creekside habitat.

- ▶ Get involved!
Groups.Yahoo.com
& search on “riparian”
- ▶ Respect & Enjoy
our creeks & streams!

