

Support for Mayor Mahan and Councilmembers Davis and Torres: Preserve Our Progress - Guadalupe River Trail

Shani Kleinhaus [redacted] >

Mon 1/22/2024 3:00 PM

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

Cc: Dashiell Leeds <[redacted]>; Katia Irvin <[redacted]>; James Eggers

<[redacted]>; Mike Ferreira <[redacted]>; Matthew Dodder <[redacted]>

📎 1 attachments (194 KB)

1-24 Rules memo_Preserve Our Progress.docx.pdf;

[External Email]

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Dear Chair Cohen and Rules Committee members,

The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society (SCVAS) and the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter (SCLP) support the memo authored by Mayor Mahan and Councilmembers Davis and Torres titled, "Preserve Our Progress - Guadalupe River Trail." Please see our letter attached.

Respectfully,

Shani Kleinhaus, Ph.D.
Environmental Advocate
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society



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January 22, 2024

San Jose Rules and Open Government Committee
200 E. Santa Clara St.
San Jose, CA 95113
rulescommitteeagenda@sanjoseca.gov.

Re: Support for Mayor Mahan and Councilmembers Davis and Torres: Preserve Our Progress - Guadalupe River Trail

Dear Chair Cohen and Rules Committee members,

The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society (SCVAS) and the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter (SCLP) support the memo authored by Mayor Mahan and Councilmembers Davis and Torres titled, "Preserve Our Progress - Guadalupe River Trail."

The proliferation of encampments along San Jose's waterways have been a sore issue for a very long time. These encampments have degraded riparian corridors, impacted vegetation, wildlife and water quality, and created unsanitary conditions along creeks. In addition, the encampments impede public access and enjoyment of city parks and trails. Successful clean up efforts have often been only temporarily effective, with people promptly returning to resurrect makeshift dwellings at a great cost to the environment and the community.

SCVAS and SCLP thus support the "Preserve Our Progress" memo by Mayor Mahan and Council Members Davis and Torres, with the hope that the City Manager promptly implements a "no return zone" that prevents re-encampment along the Guadalupe River Trail. In addition, we hope the City prevents a subsequent expansion of encampments along the Guadalupe River south of Woz Way and north of Julian Street, and implements monitoring to quantify such potential impacts.

San Jose recently cleared encampments on Coyote Creek for the flood control project. We hope a "preserve our progress" policy can be implemented there as well, although we realize downtown is the priority. We hope that over time, implementing "no return zones" becomes an ongoing practice for the city of San Jose along all waterways in the City.

Respectfully,

Shani Kleinhaus, Ph.D.
Environmental Advocate
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

Katja Irvin, AICP
Guadalupe Group Conservation Chair
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter

FW: Preserving Our Progress memo January 24 Rules Committee

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Wed 1/24/2024 10:17 AM

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

 1 attachments (34 KB)

20240124 - Preserving Our Progress Letter.pdf;

From: Jason Su <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 10:01 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: Joe Salvato <[REDACTED]> Mossing, Mackenzie <Mackenzie.Mossing@sanjoseca.gov>; Alanis, Diana <Diana.Alanis@sanjoseca.gov>; Velazquez, Daniela <Daniela.Velazquez@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Preserving Our Progress memo - January 24 Rules Committee

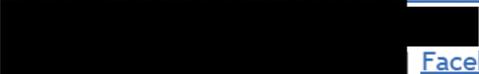
[External Email]

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Please find this letter in support of the Preserving Our Progress memo to be discussed on the January 24 Rules Committee. Thank you.

--

Jason Su (*he/him*)
Executive Director | [Guadalupe River Park Conservancy](#)


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January 24, 2024

San Jose City Hall
200 E Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

Re: Preserving Our Progress - Guadalupe River Trail

Dear Chair Cohen, Vice Chair Foley, Councilmember Davis, Vice Mayor Kamei, Councilmember Jimenez,

The Guadalupe River Park Conservancy (GRPC) provides community leadership for the active use and development of the Guadalupe River Park. We believe in and pursue the vision for the Guadalupe River Park and Gardens as identified in the San Jose Envision 2040 General Plan, Guadalupe River Park Master Plan, and Guadalupe Gardens Master Plan. It is with this lens that GRPC submits this letter in support of memorandum "Preserving Our Progress - Guadalupe River Trail" from Mayor Mahan, Councilmember Davis, and Councilmember Torres.

As a nonprofit partner with the City of San Jose and programming partner with the City's Safe Encampment Resolution grant, we are intimately familiar with the potential for civic connection along the Guadalupe River Trail, and the challenges that hinder broader access to our unique natural resource. We support the goals and outcomes of the Safe Encampment Resolution that couple rapid rehousing, outreach services, clean ups, and park programming, and appreciate the coordination by City staff to implement this work.

To ensure that the full scope of the project is successfully implemented, and there is sufficient time for the local ecology to recover and surrounding neighborhoods to reconnect with the Guadalupe River Trail, this memorandum would empower our City partners with directive and resources to ensure access to the trail and its network of parks and open spaces.

We thank Chair Cohen, Vice Chair Foley, Councilmember Davis, Vice Mayor Kamei, Councilmember Jimenez for your ongoing leadership, and we look forward to your support of the "Preserving Our Progress - Guadalupe River Trail" memorandum.

Regards,

Jason Su, Executive Director

Fw: Support for Preserving Guadalupe River Trail memo

Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Wed 1/24/2024 10:23 AM

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

📎 1 attachments (195 KB)

Preserving our Progress - Guadalupe River Trail.pdf;

Hello - Letter from the public for 1/24 Rules C3 for posting. Thanks

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

Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 10:05 AM

To: Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: FW: Support for Preserving Guadalupe River Trail memo

From: Christopher Russell <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 9:37 AM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; Mossing, Mackenzie <Mackenzie.Mossing@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: Davis, Dev <dev.davis@sanjoseca.gov>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: Support for Preserving Guadalupe River Trail memo

[External Email]

San Jose City Clerk and City Council,

Please share this email with all city council members and city staff.

I strongly support the memo authored by Mayor Mahan and others "Preserving Our Progress -- Guadalupe River Trail", attached.

I am a 20+ year resident of district 6 and years ago my family regularly used the Guadalupe River Trail for recreation. I have at times in the past used the trail to commute to work by bicycle. When my daughter was younger she was able to ride on the carousel at Arena Green and play in the playground there. The trail and the facilities over the years have fallen into a condition of disrepair, and the trail is either blocked, unpleasant or unsafe so we haven't gone there as a family in years. The environment in and around the river is being damaged.

I am sympathetic to the homeless community that has been residing along the trail. I think the humane thing to do is to offer them a more appropriate and safer place to reside with services, and keep the trail and surrounding parks clear for the residents and families of San Jose to use and enjoy. Letting encampments be re-established, that will then be abated at some point in the future is not a good solution for anybody.

Christohper Russell
[REDACTED]



RULES COMMITTEE: 1/24/2024
ITEM:

Memorandum

**TO: RULES AND OPEN
GOVERNMENT
COMMITTEE**

FROM: Mayor Matt Mahan
Councilmember Omar Torres
Councilmember Dev Davis

**SUBJECT: PRESERVING OUR
PROGRESS - GUADALUPE
RIVER TRAIL**

DATE: January 18, 2024

APPROVED:

RECOMMENDATION

Direct the City Manager to promptly implement a “no return zone” that prevents re-encampment along the Guadalupe River Trail between 280/87/Woz Way and 87/Julian St using existing resources available through the Encampment Resolution Fund (ERF) grant and the FY 23-24 Adopted Budget, including:

1. Deploying a rapid-response abatement team comprising the two therapeutic specialists funded in the FY 2023-2024 Adopted Budget, or other appropriate classification, to work in close concert with the BeautifySJ team and the San José Police Department (SJPD) to engage with unsheltered residents and advance abatement operations in a safe and humane way; and
2. Enforcing park rules set forth by the City’s Municipal Code and installing signage with posted park rules as required by law; and
3. Utilizing SJPD’s Guadalupe River Trail Bike Patrol Program; and
4. Coordinating with the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy (GRPC) to ensure frequent and robust activation along the river trail, leveraging the \$200,000 in City grant funding to GRPC from the ERF to sustain the revitalization project.

DISCUSSION

A vibrant downtown fosters a sense of community and belonging among residents and a hub where they come together to live, work, and engage. Investing in our Downtown not only enhances the quality of life for residents, but also creates a flywheel effect for economic and cultural development, generating returns to our general fund and fostering prosperity across our entire city. However, we won’t sustain progress revitalizing the downtown if we ignore core infrastructure and amenities like the Guadalupe River Trail. As a main downtown artery and commute route, the Guadalupe River Trail connects neighborhoods and businesses, from

historically underserved communities like Washington Guadalupe to companies like Adobe and Zoom that are integral to our economy.

Last fall, the City implemented a \$2 million grant from the State’s ERF program to move people living along the Guadalupe River Trail between 280/87/Woz Way and 87/Julian Street into housing and restore public access to the trail. Outreach teams helped move many of the residents into interim and permanent housing, including the newly converted Arena Hotel. Subsequently, Caltrans and BeautifySJ teams worked tirelessly for nearly three weeks to close the encampment. These efforts led to an outpouring of support and gratitude from downtown residents and employees who are gradually reclaiming the trail for recreation and commuting. We demonstrated that we can responsibly balance the needs of homeless residents and our duty to maintain clean, welcoming parks and trails for all residents to enjoy.

Pic. 1: Before relocation of unsheltered residents and encampment closure



Pic. 2: After relocation of unsheltered residents and encampment closure



However, we risk backsliding if we don’t quickly deploy existing resources to preserve our progress and prevent the area from becoming re-encamped. We also risk undermining the millions of taxpayer dollars and significant staff time expended to clear one of the largest

encampments in the downtown area, sending a discouraging message to our state legislators and the community who entrust us with their resources.

In fact, the ERF program's primary objectives include *“support[ing] sustained restoration of encampment sites to their intended or original state”*, as described in the [Request for Applications \(RFA\)](#). The Housing Department also referenced this goal in their [October 3, 2022 memo](#), stating the two core outcomes are *“restoring this section of the trail to its intended design and promoting increased use of the walking path through outreach, housing placement, abatement, beautification, and activation; and designing a program model using the ERF State grant framework that could be scaled and used in other impacted areas within the community or adopted by other jurisdictions throughout the state.”*

To fulfill this core objective and preserve our progress revitalizing Guadalupe River Trail, the City Manager should quickly work across departments to immediately implement a “no return zone” between 280/87/Woz and 87/Julian Street using existing resources. While we understand city staff is developing a cross-departmental framework for shared public spaces, we recognize the need to protect the city's investments now. Prioritizing small, focused investments today will help us avoid having to dedicate additional resources and staff time in the future if the area becomes re-encamped, and strike a balance with additional cross-departmental efforts that require longer deliberative processes.

Subject: Memo in Support of Implementing a "No Return Zone" along Guadalupe River Trail

Date: 1/24/24

To: City Council's Rules and Open Government Committee

To introduce ourselves, we are Scott Hakeem and Mary Robertson. We both are downtown San Jose Residents in District 3 and volunteer as Guadalupe River Park Trail Ambassadors. Mary is also part of the Guadalupe River Park Working Group.

We are writing to express our strong support for the recommendation outlined in the note regarding the implementation of a "no return zone" along the Guadalupe River Trail between 280/87/Woz Way and 87/Julian St. The proposed measures, utilizing existing resources from the Encampment Resolution Fund (ERF) grant and the FY 23-24 Adopted Budget, are crucial to maintaining the progress made in relocating unsheltered residents and closing encampments in this area.

The implementation of a "no return zone" is essential for several reasons:

1. **Preserving Progress:** The City has invested significant resources in relocating residents, closing encampments, and restoring public access to the trail. Implementing a "no return zone" will preserve this progress and prevent the area from being re-encamped, ensuring that taxpayer dollars and staff efforts are not undermined.
2. **Community Well-being:** A vibrant downtown is integral to fostering a sense of community and belonging. The Guadalupe River Trail serves as a vital downtown artery and commute route, connecting neighborhoods and businesses. By preventing re-encampment, we contribute to the well-being of both residents and businesses, creating a clean and welcoming environment.
3. **Compliance with ERF Program Objectives:** The ERF program's primary objectives include supporting the sustained restoration of encampment sites. The proposed measures align with these objectives, fulfilling the core goal of restoring the trail to its intended design and promoting increased use through outreach, housing placement, abatement, beautification, and activation.

To implement the "no return zone," we agree with recommending to direct the City Manager to promptly deploy existing resources, including:

- Deploying a rapid-response abatement team, as funded in the FY 2023-2024 Adopted Budget, to work collaboratively with the BeautifySJ team and the San José Police Department for safe and humane abatement operations.
- Enforcing park rules set forth by the City's Municipal Code and installing signage with posted park rules.

- Utilizing SJPD's Guadalupe River Trail Bike Patrol Program.
- Coordinating with the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy to ensure frequent and robust activation along the river trail, leveraging the grant funding from the ERF.

This proactive approach will not only protect the City's investments but also contribute to the sustained revitalization of the Guadalupe River Trail. We urge prompt action to implement these measures to prevent any potential backsliding and to send a positive message to the community and state legislators.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Scott Hakeem and Mary Robertson, Downtown San Jose Residents

FW: Advocacy for 1/18 Memorandum Preserving Guadalupe

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Mon 2/5/2024 7:31 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Carl Salas <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, February 03, 2024 3:56 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Advocacy for 1/18 Memorandum Preserving Guadalupe

[External Email]

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As a long time resident of this City I wanted to voice my enthusiastic support for the Memorandum Issued 1/18/24 and signed by the Mayor, and councilpersons Dev Davis and Omar Torres, entitled” PRESERVING OUR PROGRESS – GUADALUPE RIVER TRAIL

Not only is the current situation untenable, even for the unhoused campers living there and for the amazing wildlife in and around the river, but THAT RIVER IS A \$1billion asset that could be THE focal point of the entire downtown.

Thank you.

Energetically yours,

Carl Salas, P.E.
Founding Principal
SALAS O'BRIEN | expect a difference |
[REDACTED]

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Public Comments from Haoun Li

TEPublicComment <TEPublicComment@sanjoseca.gov>

Mon 2/5/2024 8:24 AM

To: Haojun Li [REDACTED] Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Good morning, Haojun Li –

Thank you for your email.

Since you've stated below that your comment does not reference any item in our February 5th T&E agenda, then we are forwarding your email over to the Clerk's Office for handling.

The Clerk's Office will determine if your comment is council-related or for Rules' public records.

Thank you and have a wonderful day.

@ Agenda Desk –

Please see *general* public comment from Haojun Li.

Thank you

From: Haojun Li [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 2:08 AM
To: TEPublicComment <TEPublicComment@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Public Comments for T&E Meeting on Feb 5th

[External Email]

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Thank you Chair and member of the committee.

My name is Haojun Li and I reside in district 6 of San Jose. I would like to raise the following concerns that are not on the agenda.

1. Many of our trails such as the Guadalupe River Trail are essential commuting class 1 bike paths that are part of our essential transportation network. However, they have been flooded with debris blocking the underpasses for weeks on end. In contrast, when a roadway is blocked by downed trees as we have seen the past weekend, the city almost always reacts immediately to clear up the road for drivers within hours. **I request the committee to devise a plan to reopen trails as fast as you reopen roadways, OR build overpasses where current underpasses are flooding seasonally.**
2. Many of the large black waste management trash bins are put into the bike lane, forcing cyclists to merge into the road which is incredibly dangerous, especially at night. In contrast, if a trash can is left in the road way, SJPD would react instantly to move it away since it is considered a "road hazard". **I request the committee to put reflective stripes on trash cans with "KEEP OUT OF BIKE LANE" written on them.**
3. I applaud the US 101/De La Cruz Blvd/Trimble Rd Interchange Project and US 101/Blossom Hill Road Interchange Improvement Project's inclusion of Class 1 bike and ped facilities and separated bike/ped crossings, and I can't wait to use them! However, **the same Class 1 bike and ped paths and crossings should be planned for I-280/Winchester Boulevard Interchange Project and US 101/Zanker Road Overcrossing Project instead of a giant 8 lane intersection currently planned.**

Thank you for all of your hard work on providing the community with safe, secure, and efficient surface and air transportation systems. Your work has not gone unnoticed by our community.

- Haojun Li

FW: upcoming Council meeting

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Mon 2/5/2024 3:39 PM

To: Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: robert sippel [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 05, 2024 3:37 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: upcoming Council meeting

[External Email]

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Dear City Clerks Office.

Regretfully I cannot attend the council meeting tomorrow. I was made aware of the the idea to close off part of the Guadalupe River trail to encampments and clean up what is there. In addition forbid any future encampments. I let The Mayors Staff and Devs staff know I am in support but I was told I need to also let you know. I also made comments to the Rules committee prior to it going to council .

Please Cast my vote for this new proposal as I am in full support. In all actuality so is many of the citizens of San Jose that I represent on various levels.

Again I am sorry I cannot attend unless its earlier in the day.

Regards

Bob Sippel

President of the Rose Garden Neighborhood Association
Member of the D6 Group (many yrs)
Manager of the Guadalupe Community garden (14 yrs)
Member of the Safety committee for the Guadalupe Conservancy
Member of the CAC of the Santa Clara Open Space authority
Member of the Guadalupe River Task force 3 yrs now.
Member of the SJPD Citizens Advisory Board.

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Public Comment - City Council 2/6 - Item 3.6 "Preserving Our Progress - Guadalupe River Trail."

Jordan Moldow [REDACTED]

Tue 2/6/2024 10:04 AM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@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>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; Torres, Omar <Omar.Torres@sanjoseca.gov>

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Public Comment from Jordan Moldow (speaking on behalf of himself) regarding Item 3.6 "Preserving Our Progress - Guadalupe River Trail." - City Council 2/6/2024:

Regarding "(b) Enforcing park rules set forth by the City's Municipal Code and installing signage with posted park rules as required by law":

San Jose parks tend to close at sunset and open at sunrise, so enforcing these rules would be harmful for commuters who rely on the GRT to get home in the evenings, or get to work in the early morning. It would also be disrespectful to everyone who simply wants to get some exercise in the morning or evening.

But selective enforcement of rules is also greatly unjust. Do not post park hours, if SJPD and PRNS have the intention of only using them for pretextual policing against the unhoused and other minority populations.

It would be best if the posted park rules did not have time-of-day restrictions, nor other regulations that are only going to be enforced selectively.

Regarding "(c) Utilizing SJPD's Guadalupe River Trail Bike Patrol Program":

How is the River Trail Bike Patrol currently being utilized? What would this change? What previous duties would this take them away from?

Regarding the overall memorandum: how does the city intend to enforce this? Proponents have said this will not criminalize homelessness, but how do you plan on enforcing park rules on unhoused people who have nowhere else to go? How will the abatements be done in a "safe and humane way", when many people have reported at past City Council meetings that a great many abatements have not been happening in a humane way? How will you engage with the unsheltered residents if there are no services available to them that currently have openings?

Thank you,

Jordan Moldow (speaking on behalf of himself)

San Jose, CA, 95112

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