

Arena Green Guiding Principles Evaluation

December 2020

Summary of Guiding Principles (as developed based on the information below)

Preference should be given to activities, improvements and projects that:

- Promote nature based and ecological education
- Encourage art
- Increase social cohesion and community health
- Advance the identity of San José
- Enhance the connectivity / accessibility to the park from all neighborhoods

PRNS Vision: Healthy Communities that Inspire Belonging

PRNS Mission: Connecting People through Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services for An Active San José.

2002 Guadalupe River Park Master Plan:

"Vision for the park is focused on providing open space that would be maintained for passive uses – walking, bicycling, playing, contemplating nature, educational pursuits and similar activities." (Page 3)

Seven Objectives of the Park Design (Page 13):

1. The provision of open space along the river for passive and active recreation in the urban environment.
2. The enhancement of the Guadalupe River as both a valuable riparian habitat and a natural resource to be enjoyed by the greater San Jose community and visitors alike.
3. The construction of a linear urban park that provides opportunities for park-enhanced development of private and public facilities.
4. Protection from 100-year flood events.
5. The creation of a safe, connected trail system that offers an alternative to motorized transportation.
6. A balance between human access to the river and maximum protection of the riparian habitat.
7. Citizen education about hydrology, flood control, and the natural habitat and cultural resources of the river.

Confluence Point – confluence of rivers; confluence of ecology and technology.

Confluence East – one of largest event spaces; capable of hosting events of all sizes.

Policies to Guide Future Development (Page 31)

Facility and Open-space Development: To preserve the open-space character of the Guadalupe River Park, new buildings in the park are discouraged. New specific-use facilities such as museums or recreation centers are not part of the vision or mission of the Guadalupe River Park and should be sited elsewhere. Construction of new restrooms, concession stands, and kiosks will follow the architectural vernacular established in Arena Green and McEnery Park.

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Environmental Preservation: The riparian areas of the park are vital to the preservation of aquatic habitat and no proposals that alter those areas will be considered unless they result in habitat enhancement or expansion.

Public Art: All public art should be designed to complement the vision of the park. Proposals should be related to the river or the immediate surrounding area—it's history, environment, and the role they play in the city.

Lighting: Existing light levels should be maintained, and adequate lighting should be provided to ensure visitor safety. Trails should be lighted at night to allow for use by commuters, but lighting of the riparian areas should be kept to a minimum

General: Visitors to the park should have access to educational information through literature, programs, tours, and exhibits. The process of designing and implementing the new elements of the Guadalupe River Park will continue to offer citizens many opportunities to be involved in helping to shape the future of the river, the park, and downtown.

GRPC Vision: Make the park a vessel for broader neighborhood uplift and development. The health and accessibility of the River is key to the success of the park. GRP is a Grand Park, physically connected to the surrounding neighborhood and civically connected to San Jose's identity. GRPC is the community partner for engagement, investment, and stewardship of the River Park

GRPC Values

- Environment
 - A healthy river is key to a vibrant park
 - Natural oasis in the urban core
 - Our environment is key to our City's history and identity
- Equity
 - Inclusion and social cohesion
 - Neighborhood uplift through parks
 - Environmental and health equity
 - Advocate / express the complete value of parks
- Public Life
 - A space for all public life
 - A park for our city
 - Connected, accessible, and welcoming
- Connection
 - Partnership-based civic ownership
 - Education, engagement, civic ownership, stewardship
 - Blend neighborhoods to river park and back
- Identity
 - Positions the park as place for people the find, connect and express themselves
 - Connect the city to natural environment on which it was founded
 - Experimentation around activation, governance and development

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GRPC Key Priorities (2020):

- Urban activations (art, commercial activity, events, gatherings, community-based)
- Key space for recreation, exercise, connection/education to ecology, and positive public health
- The river, and all park areas are open, accessible, and highlighted
- Blending into the SAP Center, Downtown West, Downtown, Little Italy, and across St. John Street
- Arena Green as a centralized connector to different trails, transit, and “main streets”

ActivateSJ (2019) Excerpted Aspirations and Benchmarks Applicable to Arena Green

Stewardship

S10. Seek sustainable funding mechanisms for our parks and recreation system;	S10a. Build on the success of recent donor funded projects to develop and implement a sponsorship program for parks, facilities and programs including scholarships; S10b. Establish a grants team responsible for identifying and preparing grant opportunities; S10c. Evaluate and seek the implementation of additional funding sources to augment general fund resources; (needs diversified stakeholder group reflecting community) S10d. Complete the parks nexus study to refine fees on residential development; and S10e. Evaluate the implementation of a park fee program on commercial development.
S11. Continue to strengthen relationships with our nonprofit partners.	S11a. Develop guidelines to serve community members and nonprofit groups in their work with the City; and S11b. Assign and train staff to work with and serve as liaisons to key nonprofit partners.

Nature

N1. Increase participation in nature-based programs.	N1a. Develop an inventory of current nature-based programs offered by the City and nonprofit partners to identify gaps in program offerings and participation; N1b. Use the combined services of City staff and nonprofit partners to create and implement a nature-focused, interpretive education program with service offerings at community centers and neighborhood and regional parks; and N1c. Use existing nature play areas at Happy Hollow Park & Zoo as a model to identify and implement locations for “nature play” features within the park system.
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Equity and Access

Equitable access to education programs (free and available)

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Identity

ID1. Embrace the city's regional parks as iconic destinations.	ID1a. Establish a unified, high-quality signage (wayfinding) guide for regional parks and propose funding mechanisms for implementing it; and ID1b. Coordinate with our partner agencies across Santa Clara County to create "seamless experiences" and accommodate longer hikes and more trail access points.
ID5. Support the World Health Organization (WHO) Age-Friendly San José designation through programming and facilities.	ID5a. Lead and coordinate the citywide Age-Friendly Initiative by promoting policies and programs to support the eight domains of livability (including outdoor spaces and buildings, social participation, and respect and social inclusion) as defined by the WHO; ID5b. Evaluate programming for consistency with the WHO Age-Friendly designation and modify or update as needed; and ID5c. Support our nonprofit partners in their delivery of programs that support the WHO Age-Friendly San José efforts.

Public Life

PL2. Promote arts and culture in our parks and community centers that reflect local neighborhoods; and	PL2a. Collaborate with our community partners to cultivate self-sustaining neighborhood-centric art and artist engagement that builds community pride through a sense of place.
PL4. Create programs that encourage physical activity, community building and better health for all residents; and	PL4a. Inventory and evaluate departmental programs and community group offerings against demographic data to identify gaps in programming and make recommendations for enhancements or expansion to fill gaps and increase intergenerational programming.
PL6. Create a built environment that sparks imagination, encourages physical activity and community interaction; and	PL6a. Identify opportunities for the installation of smaller play features throughout our civic spaces to encourage play for all residents.
PL7. Ensure that people feel welcomed into our parks and facilities.	PL7a. Strengthen relationships with our partners to support everyday life and activations in our parks and community centers.