

Junipero Serra Trail Feasibility Study

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City Council on May 21, 2019





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Executive Summary

The purpose of this study is to determine whether the Junipero Serra Trail is a feasible project for the City of Cupertino. The City anticipates the report will serve as a springboard for further detailed study and identification of project funding, if the trail is deemed feasible. The trail was first identified and approved in the City's *2016 Bicycle Transportation Plan* and further supplemented in the City's *2018 Pedestrian Transportation Plan*. The Junipero Serra Trail is envisioned to be one segment of a larger community wide "Loop" of on and off-street bicycle facilities.

Through an extensive public outreach process, it became clear the community has a variety of opinions on the merits of a trail at this location, with many supporting the trail and others not. In addition, community members indicated preferences for easy trail access, grade separated street crossings, neighbor privacy, and security. These and other factors discussed in this report are important considerations to carry forward in the development of this trail.

The resulting feasibility study provides a narrative and graphic road map to guide further detailed study of the trail's development. Based on community input, City goals for

trail development, and input from key agency stakeholders, trail alignment alternative #2 is the preferred alternative.

Alternative #2 converts the Junipero Serra Channel between the Don Burnett Bicycle-Pedestrian Bridge and Wolfe Road into a box culvert and allows the trail to be located over the top of the culvert. The Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) preliminarily agreed to alternative #2 under the condition the City accepts all right of way and maintenance of the channel as part of the City storm drain system prior to any construction improvements. Final approval would be subject to approval from SCVWD's Board of Directors.

Other trail development considerations are presented along the alignment and are discussed as to their feasibility and costs of implementation. The study also addresses community concerns surrounding safety and privacy by suggesting various measures including fence options, police patrols, security cameras and increasing the number of access points as much as possible. Detailed cost estimates are provided for each trail alternative, as well as costs for standalone items such as the grade-separated crossings at Stelling Road and De Anza Boulevard.



Top Image: Callander Associate's Staff talking to a community member at a community meeting

Middle Image: Santa Clara Valley Water District corridor existing conditions

Bottom Image: Visual Simulation of a Bridge Over-Crossing for De Anza Boulevard

This report summarizes the feasibility study process and contains the following sections:

Introduction

Provides a brief overview of the project purpose, background, goals and objectives, as well as project alignment with local and regional trail policies.

Planning Process

Provides an overview of the planning process including an assessment of existing site conditions along the alignment, ranging from typical corridor conditions, adjacent land uses, relationship to nearby facilities and existing roadway crossings; trail development opportunities and challenges; and the community outreach process with details from each event and input received.

Trail Alignments

Provides an in-depth evaluation of each alignment alternative; including design considerations, trail access points, roadway crossings, safety and security measures, and other site-specific challenges.

Summary Recommendations

Provides a summary of the recommended trail alternatives to further pursue.

Appendix

Includes meeting summaries, technical documents, outreach materials, input results, detailed cost estimates, and other supplemental project information for reference.



2

Introduction

Background & Project Purpose

This feasibility study evaluates the potential for development of the Junipero Serra Trail identified in the City of Cupertino's *2016 Bicycle Transportation Plan and 2018 Pedestrian Transportation Plan*. If implemented, the trail would create an important east west off-street trail across the heart of the City providing recreational opportunities, commuter options, safe routes to school, and an off-street alternative for bicycle trips.

This planning effort was commissioned by the City in the summer of 2017 with the purpose of developing a feasibility study for the trail. As part of the study, a comprehensive public outreach process was initiated to better understand community concerns and desires for the project. The study aims to identify challenges, opportunities, and estimated costs associated with implementation of the 2.91-mile trail.

This trail segment represents the northern reach of the "Cupertino Loop", identified in the 2016 Bicycle Transportation Plan. The Junipero Serra Trail is one of three trail

segments being studied as part of the Loop. The proposed alignment falls almost entirely within Santa Clara Valley Water District right-of-way and utilizes the existing maintenance road that follows the Junipero Serra Channel on the south side of Interstate 280 from Mary Avenue at the western extent to the intersection of Calabazas Creek and Vallco Parkway at the eastern extent. See *Figure 2-2*.

A number of street crossings are required within the alignment, including Stelling Road, De Anza Boulevard, and Wolfe Road. If completed, the trail would provide connections to other on-street facilities, the Don Burnett Bicycle-Pedestrian Bridge, residential neighborhoods, schools, retail centers, and employment hubs.



Don Burnett Bike-Pedestrian Bridge

Figure 2-1

Local & Regional Policies

The Junipero Serra Trail project is consistent with a number of local and regional policies relative to trail development.

2016 Bicycle Transportation Plan, City of Cupertino

“The City of Cupertino envisions an exceptional bicycling environment that supports active living and healthy transportation choices, provides for safer bicycling, and enables people of all ages and abilities to access jobs, school, recreation, shopping, and transit on a bicycle as a part of daily life.” - Vision Statement from the 2016 Bicycle Transportation Plan

The 2016 Bicycle Transportation Plan recommends implementation of a loop trail around central Cupertino. The loop would be accomplished by implementing Class I trails along Regnart Creek, along the Interstate 280 Junipero Serra Channel (Junipero Serra Trail) and along the Union Pacific Railroad corridor. These trail segments would be connected to each other by on-street bikeways. See Figure 2-2.

2018 Pedestrian Transportation Plan, City of Cupertino

The 2018 Pedestrian Transportation Plan outlines goals to improve pedestrian safety, access, and connectivity within the City. The Junipero Serra Trail is identified as a Tier 1 project within the 2018 Pedestrian Plan. The trail will supplement the extensive pedestrian network the City is aiming for and supports all of the plan’s goals.

General Plan – Community Vision 2040, City of Cupertino

The City of Cupertino General Plan – Community Vision 2040 contains twelve guiding principles that encompass a broad range of community aspirations. The following guiding principles are consistent with the trail being considered along Interstate 280:

#3 Improve Connectivity: Create a well-connected and safe system of trails, pedestrian and bicycle paths and create access to interesting routes to different destinations.

#4 Enhance Mobility: Ensure the efficient and safe movement of pedestrians and bicyclists to fully accommodate Cupertino’s residents, workers, visitors and students of all ages and abilities. Pedestrian and bike paths should comprise of an integrated system of fully connected and interesting routes to all destinations.

Goal M-3 in the City’s General Plan says, “Support a safe pedestrian and bicycle street network for people of all ages and abilities”. Further policies within goal M-3 encourage adoption of bicycle and pedestrian master plans along with encouragement of pedestrian and bicycle crossings at physical barriers.

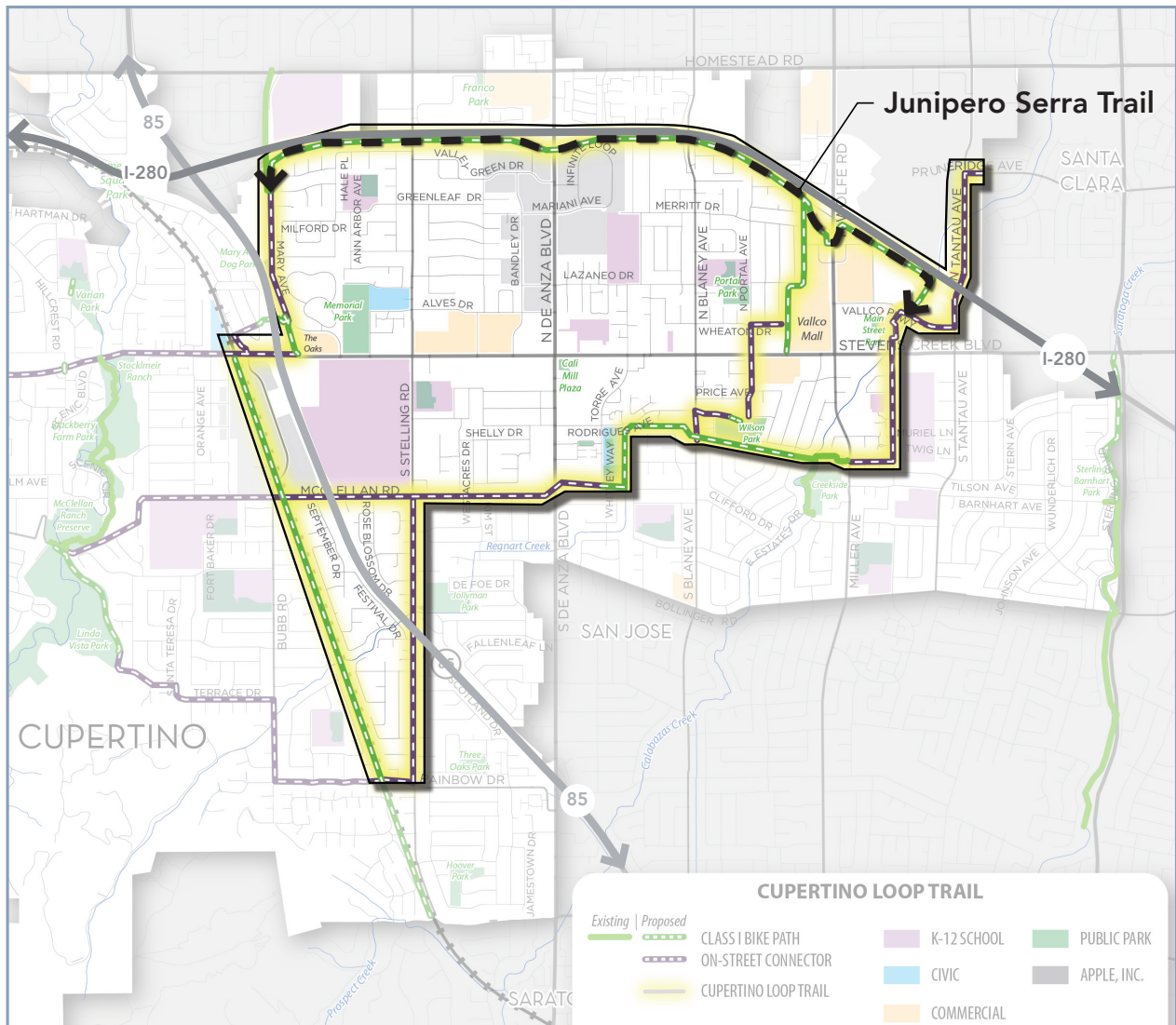
Policy LU-2.1: Gateways identifies the De Anza Boulevard and Interstate 280 on/off ramp intersection as a potential gateway location into the City of Cupertino. Future design for the trail crossing at this intersection may consider incorporating a “gateway” design feature.

Countywide Bicycle Plan, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

The Countywide Bicycle Plan identifies the Junipero Serra Trail as a Cross-County Bicycle Corridor (CCBC).

District 4 Bike Plan, Caltrans

The District 4 Bike Plan identifies policies, strategies and actions for Caltrans and partner agencies to improve the safety and comfort of pedestrians and bicyclists. The Junipero Serra Trail is identified as a “**Top Tier**” priority project for Santa Clara County.



Cupertino Loop Trail

Figure 2-2

Project Goals & Objectives

1. Form a clear understanding of the project area, including adjoining neighborhoods, businesses, and community services; and align with other City plans that impact the study area.
2. Have an inclusive community outreach process and encourage participation and input throughout all phases of the study.
3. Identify if the trail is feasible (in entirety or in segments) and provide reasoning for these findings to support future City of Cupertino trail projects.

