



October 4, 2012

City of San Jose Mayor and City Council
City of San Jose
200 East Santa Clara Street, San Jose, CA 95113

Re: October 9, 2012 Special Study Session, Please Prioritize Riparian Corridor Ordinance

Dear Mayor Reed and Council Members,

The signed environmental organizations – Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club, Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, Committee for Green Foothills, and Greenbelt Alliance work to improve streams and their aquatic, riparian and upland habitats, biodiversity and open space through conservation, restoration and comprehensive management of runoff in a watershed context. On behalf of the thousands of San Jose residents we represent, we ask Council to assign high priority to the development of a Riparian Corridor Ordinance in the coming year.

Some of us worked with the city to develop its Envision 2040 General Plan, and we all appreciate the Plan's environmental aspects. We think that it is important for the City of San Jose to take the next step and develop a Riparian Corridor Ordinance in conformance with the General Plan (Policies EC-5.1, ER-2.1 and ER 2.2) and Santa Clara Valley Water District's Water Resources Protection Collaborative. Such ordinance would impose setback requirements and conditions of approval to protect streams, riparian corridors and flood planes in ways that enhance our natural ecosystems and create opportunities for recreation.

With climate change increasing the likelihood of more frequent and intense storm events, the risk due to development in riparian corridors also increases. It's time to comprehensively address the environmental impacts and resilience issues related to development near streams, and protect our riparian corridors in a watershed context. Watershed impacts are important – encroachment upstream often results in a need for increased reinforcement downstream at great cost and adverse impact to natural resources, recreation, and quality of life.

Please assign high priority to the development of a sound and beneficial Riparian Corridor Ordinance in 2013.

Thank you for your consideration.


Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Katja Irvin in cursive.

Katja Irvin, AICP
Chair, Water Committee
Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter

Handwritten signature of Shani Kleinhaus in cursive.

Shani Kleinhaus, PhD.
Environmental Advocate
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

Handwritten signature of Michele Beasley in cursive.

Michele Beasley
Senior Field Representative, South Bay
Greenbelt Alliance

Handwritten signature of Alice Kaufman in cursive.

Alice Kaufman
Legislative Advocate
Committee for Green Foothills