



SPUR

San Francisco | San Jose | Oakland

February 7, 2022

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

Re: 2/8/2022 Council Item 3.6 Guadalupe Gardens Fencing & Activation Alternatives

Dear Honorable Mayor Liccardo, Members of the City Council, and City Clerk,

SPUR understands the complexities involved in planning a viable future for Guadalupe River Park. For city officials and others responsible for managing and designing public space, it can be hard to account for all of the unique perspectives for a public space that serves such a wide variety of people. This challenge emerges quite clearly in the context of determining the implementation of site designs or programming. Urban parks such as Guadalupe River Park are often a visible reflection of the dynamics and larger challenges occurring within a city.

To revitalize Guadalupe River Park and create a signature public space of which all communities can be proud, the City of San Jose and partners should continue to build capacity, secure necessary resources, and pursue effective collaborations.

We submit this letter in support of staff's recommendation on the Prototype Park Concept, Vehicle Prevention Project, and long-term programming and stewardship planning with the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy. Additionally, we support the memorandum submitted by Mayor Liccardo and Councilmembers Peralez, Cohen, and Mahan to ensure the \$1.5 million identified in staff's memorandum will be used to supplement the proposed activations, rather than for a perimeter chain-link fence.

The Guadalupe Gardens Activation Alternatives are a viable first step to re-imagine the use of this space as a public amenity and reconnects current efforts to plans and visions held for the greater Guadalupe River Park in the City of San Jose and region. It also begins to help redefine the narrative about the park and present a new perspective for how it can operate over time with the implementation of the Prototype Park Concept Plan and ongoing support for the operating, programming, and stewardship needs of the project.

We acknowledge the current activation proposals reflect the necessity to address the FAA compliance deadline with the rehousing and self parking needs of current unhoused residents in the Guadalupe Gardens and Trails areas. We ask that additional support is provided to staff to

ensure the public outreach, stakeholder engagement, and long-term implementation planning required for the full development of Guadalupe River Park and Gardens, as well as the adjacent land uses along Coleman Avenue.

We also recognize the challenges unhoused residents face to secure safer housing options and acknowledge the hard work by staff in addressing rehousing, illegal dumping, site security, park activation, and other priorities. It is imperative for the Guadalupe River Park and Gardens' future that additional resources are identified to provide housing, relocation, and other services to the unsheltered residents in the park by the June 30, 2022 compliance deadline, and hope that the City Council and staff come to a recommendation centered on accelerated rehousing. As long as the city and county do not provide housing and relocation services for all who need it, our neighborhoods and park spaces will continue to face the challenge of how housed and unhoused users can access and enjoy safe, secure public spaces.

We are grateful for the work done by the City Council, staff, and community partners to address these complex issues and are in support of solutions in the re-envisioning of Guadalupe River Park and Gardens as a signature open space benefiting all users.

Sincerely,



Fred Buzo
San José Director



Erika Pinto
San José Planning
Policy Manager