

Young Ranch Digest
March 16th – March 31st
2016

PUBLIC MEETINGS

1. Open Space Authority
Santa Clara County Residents Invited to Provide Ideas for New Program to Expand Neighborhood Parks, Trails, Nature Education, And Community Gardens
San Jose, CA – March 10, 2016: The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority will hold a series of spring meetings to gain community ideas and input on its new Urban Open Space Program.
[click here for agenda](#)

2. San Jose City Council Meeting
March 22, 2016
Item 9.1: **MERGED AREA REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT TAXABLE SUBORDINATE HOUSING SET-ASIDE TAX ALLOCATION VARIABLE RATE BONDS, SERIES 2010C - EXTENSION OF MANDATORY PURCHASE DATE**
Summary: Adopt a resolution approving a City Council Policy for disposing of surplus property that includes provisions relating to affordable housing
[click here for agenda](#)

SUMMARY of MEDIA

1. Silicon Valley Business Journal
Exclusive: Irvine Company's Mission Town Center in Santa Clara is dead, for now
Mar 16, 2016, 6:16pm PDT
By Nathan Donato-Weinstein
[click here for article](#)

2. Morgan Hill Times
Community reacts to SEQ denial
By Michael Moore
Posted: Thursday, March 17, 2016 11:33 am
[Click here for article](#)

3. San Jose Mercury News
Roadshow: San Jose neighborhoods' parking woes mount
By Gary Richards
POSTED: 03/20/2016 12:00:00 AM PDT
[Click here for article](#)

4. San Jose Mercury News
Santa Clara Valley Open Space wants public's opinions for new urban open space
By Jasmine Leyva
POSTED: 03/22/2016 06:01:29 PM PDT
[Click here for article](#)

Young Ranch Digest
March 16th – March 31st
2016

5. San Jose Mercury News
Carl Guardino: In California and Silicon Valley, results trump rhetoric
By Carl Guardino
POSTED: 03/25/2016 10:30:57 AM PDT
[click here for article](#)

6. San Jose Mercury News
San Jose council approves 'grace period' for affordable housing law
By Ramona Giwargis
POSTED: 03/29/2016 11:30:25 AM PDT
[click here for article](#)

7. San Jose Mercury News
Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority seeks public's ideas for nature projects
By Jasmine Leyva
POSTED: 03/29/2016 06:02:32 PM PDT
[click here for article](#)

8. San Jose Inside
Leadership Group Releases Poll of San Jose Council Candidates
By Silicon Valley Newsroom / March 30, 2016
[click here for article](#)

9. Gilroy Dispatch
Half Cent for \$6 Billion Transit
By Rosanne Hernandez-Cattani
Posted: Thursday, March 31, 2016 3:23 pm
[click here for article](#)

FULL TEXT of MEDIA

1. Silicon Valley Business Journal
Exclusive: Irvine Company's Mission Town Center in Santa Clara is dead, for now
Mar 16, 2016, 6:16pm PDT
By Nathan Donato-Weinstein
[click here for article](#)

The Irvine Company was supposed to start construction this summer on Mission Town Center, the first urban-scale mixed-use project near Santa Clara's Caltrain station and a catalyst for building a "new downtown."

But the site now seems destined to remain what it is today -- self-storage -- for the foreseeable future.

Officials on Wednesday confirmed that a deal between Irvine and the site's longtime property owner has fallen through after the parties failed to renegotiate an earlier ground lease. The collapse comes

Young Ranch Digest March 16th – March 31st 2016

four weeks after the Santa Clara City Council unanimously approved the project but slashed the originally proposed size by 30 percent and tacked on beefier affordable-housing requirements. Those changes required the developer and property owner to tear up their contract and go back to the bargaining table, efforts that so far had not been fruitful, according to an email that an Irvine executive sent to city officials on Tuesday.

"You may have received feedback that the original contract between the Irvine Company and the landowners at Mission Town Center has terminated," Carlene Matchniff, vice president of entitlements and public affairs, said in the email, obtained by The Business Journal through a public records request. "This is correct, due to the reduced entitlement that was approved for the project, we have not been able to negotiate the economics of the original deal between the landowner and Irvine Company."

The twist exemplifies the tensions at play in Silicon Valley's boom-time real estate economy: As cities feel pressure (and confidence) to demand more out of development, builders also face pressure on their profit and loss statements. The debate about increased fees and so-called "community benefits" has been raging in cities from San Jose to Redwood City, with developers saying that eventually, they will be stretched to the breaking point and projects will simply not be economically feasible.

It's a rare setback for Irvine in Santa Clara, where the Newport Beach-based juggernaut has aggressively expanded both its multifamily and office platform. In the last couple of years Irvine has received approvals for millions of square feet of office and thousands of residential units in the city, dominating the market there. But recent changes in the city's elected leadership, and pushback against development in certain neighborhoods, has cooled the council's attitude toward go-go growth.

In the email, Matchniff said Irvine was continuing "to try to work out terms between both parties under the current conditions of the entitlement." An Irvine Company statement provided to the San Business Journal also said the firm was "hopeful that we can proceed with the Mission Town Center project in the future."

But prospects for the deal's resuscitation appear to be slim. That's because the existing land use -- self storage -- produces a higher net operating income than what Irvine would be able to pay under the revised project approvals, said Chad Viso, whose family owns the roughly six-acre site. He said he's preparing to start leasing out the nearly 800 units on the property once again, after winding down the business in preparation for the Irvine groundbreaking.

"As I'm sitting here, there are people going through these buildings, cleaning them up and getting them ready," he said. "My intent is to open them up for rent. I let people out once, and I can't do it to them twice."

Irvine originally proposed building 450 units and some ground-floor retail, but the size and scope of the project generated intense opposition in the neighborhood. Over the course of the year, the proposed unit count was reduced, and the planning commission ultimately signed off on 370 units.

Young Ranch Digest
March 16th – March 31st
2016

The council, though, would only approve a 318-unit project and also boosted the affordable requirement from zero to 10 percent of the units.

"Up to that point it was a pretty viable project, even when they were coming down to that point there (at the planning commission)," Viso said. "When they got forced to take it down to the 318, self storage became more lucrative monthly than what (Irvine) would have been able to pay."

"At that point there, it just didn't pan out," he said. He added that Irvine "is very honorable and there's no hard feelings," and that he harbors no ill will toward the council. "I think they tried for a compromise between all. They ended up with that, it was just unfortunate with the economics."

Mayor Lisa Gillmor on Wednesday did not express much sympathy. In an interview, she said that Irvine's mistake may have been negotiating an initial land deal based on unrealistic expectations of what the city would have approved. She noted that Irvine's original plan was far larger than the high end of the city's existing general plan.

"I think they misread the community and the council, and now they had to revise their deal based on a better understanding of what the community and council was going to approve," Gillmor said. "They're a capable developer, and highly rated, and they should be able to do that. The plans that were originally presented was not something that the community and council were going to tolerate."

Still, it's unclear to what extent Irvine's potentially walking away from Mission Town Center is a negotiating tactic with the city, or with the Viso family. In the email, Matchniff said that a statement "will be provided to interested parties" if Irvine and the Viso family couldn't reach terms. The statement was included in the email, and reads in part: "Unfortunately, the project's new economics—including loss of density, additional fees and other exactions—do not work for the landowner's long-term plans for the property. As a result, Irvine Company will not be building Mission Town Center at this time."

For her part, Gillmor said she had no apologies about implementing the additional requirements and did not sound interested in revisiting the approvals, though she noted that Irvine is welcome to ask. Gillmor, who has voted for many large development projects in her time on the council, said, "it's not the financier's pocketbook or the developer I'm concerned about, or the land owner for that matter; it's what type of development that's progressive that still fits in the community."

"If you want to get a project built in our community, you're going to build it to fit in," she said. "We need affordable housing, and I find 10 percent to be at a minimum. Those are things our community needs. If you want those giant projects approved in our city you're going to have to give something back."

Mission Town Center, which was to include ground-floor shop space, was to be an important milestone in Santa Clara. The city famously bulldozed its downtown district in the middle of the century -- a decision that is rued to this day. Efforts to build back up a village-style district have come and gone over the years, without much to show. The Irvine project was to be the kick-starter of a revival in the area. It was also seen as a key but underused transit node because of its proximity to Caltrain and the future terminus of Bay Area Rapid Transit's extension.

Young Ranch Digest
March 16th – March 31st
2016

Development activity near planned transit nodes is one of the things that the federal government wants to see when deciding where to dole out dollars, Carl Guardino, CEO of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, said last month. He urged the council to approve the project at the higher density, telling council members: "Part of bringing rapid rail (BART) to Santa Clara is building the appropriate homes and commercial development that will go hand in hand with that effort."

Viso said he thinks BART could be the match that lights the fuse on a project eventually getting built.

"I think when BART gets here, if it gets here, the city might re-look at it and figure they can bring the density to where storage doesn't make sense anymore," he said. But it's unclear when that could happen.

2. Morgan Hill Times

Community reacts to SEQ denial

By Michael Moore

Posted: Thursday, March 17, 2016 11:33 am

[Click here for article](#)

What will become of nearly 1,200 acres of prime farmland in the Southeast Quadrant now that the Santa Clara County Local Agency Formation Commission has denied the City of Morgan Hill's request to annex a portion of the property?

There are both long-term and short-term answers to that question. The city's plan was to expand its Urban Service Area around 229 acres and turn it into a Sports-Recreation-Leisure district, using developer fees and existing local open space funds to purchase permanent agricultural easements on other farmland elsewhere in the SEQ .

But LAFCO shot down that plan March 11.

County authorities, environmental nonprofits and the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority are working on a regional ag preservation framework, which is expected to be complete in 2017. At that time, the county can compete for a share of \$40 million available statewide through cap-and-trade funds, but that funding isn't guaranteed. This is the long-term goal.

The county recently received a \$100,000 "Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation" grant to draft this framework.

Committee For Green Foothills Environmental Advocate Julie Hutcheson said despite the anticipated fierce competition for the cap-and-trade funds, the fact that Santa Clara is one of only three counties in the state to receive the SALC grant is a good omen.

"This is what we've been saying for years: step back and take a look at this from another perspective," Hutcheson said of the city's and county's competing ag preservation proposals following the March 11 meeting. "The county is very serious about protecting the agricultural resources in this part of the county. Their involvement may help secure funding in purchasing agricultural easements. It's a very hopeful process."

Young Ranch Digest **March 16th – March 31st** **2016**

In the meantime, without any restrictions on the SEQ farmland, most of it can be developed into five- to ten-acre residential lots, under current county zoning. The most recent occurrence of this possibility is seen on Trail Drive, where five “McMansion” estates—in the parlance of some members of the public who spoke at the March 11 meeting—are under construction on roughly five-acre lots each.

“We feel good that we set the bar pretty high; we’re the only city in the county that has (an agricultural preservation) program,” said developer Gordon Jacoby, a longtime proponent of the city’s SEQ ag preservation plan and SRL district. However, he added that SEQ property owners might not wait for the county’s ag plan without any guarantees, since they are “getting older” and not as interested in farming as they used to be.

Jacoby sold a 22-acre agricultural parcel in the SEQ to the City of Morgan Hill last year for about \$5.3 million. The city intends to one day build baseball and softball fields on the site. The sales contract with the city allows Jacoby to retain a portion of the site for a future commercial development.

David Puliafico and his family own a 38-acre site on Tennant Avenue, which is also tagged in the city’s proposed SRL district for future sports fields. Puliafico said at the March 11 LAFCO meeting that his family has farmed the property in the past, but they don’t now and they never will.

“We could have sold this property for five McMansions years ago,” Puliafico told the commission. “We believe in the city’s plan, for thousands of children to come play on our land. This is prime spot for the kids to come.”

Angelo Grestoni of Top Flight Sports Academy said he left the March 11 meeting “really upset” about LAFCO’s decision. He owns a nearly four-acre parcel near the intersection of Tennant Avenue and Condit Road, where he hopes to one day build an indoor basketball facility.

His gripes had as much to do with the procedural aspect of the meeting as the merits of the commission’s decision, which also nixed plans by the San Jose Diocese—at least temporarily—to build a new private Catholic high school in the SEQ.

“They didn’t take any time to understand the city’s position,” Grestoni said. “Here’s a perfect opportunity by the city to do something to enhance sports for the youth and bring in a Catholic high school. That has to be valuable for a community.”

Don Hordness, a longtime farmer and owner of Royal Oaks Mushrooms on Watsonville Road, was at the rejected end of a second annexation request, by a narrow 4-3 vote, at the March 11 LAFCO meeting. Hordness took exception to the idea that the OSA is going to run any future agricultural easements in the area, rather than experienced farmers.

“The Open Space Authority has no farmers on their board. This is within the City of Morgan Hill’s sphere of influence, and they need to be the ones that control this land,” Hordness said. “The future of ag in the county has got to be with the people who are working the land.”

3. San Jose Mercury News
Roadshow: San Jose neighborhoods' parking woes mount

Young Ranch Digest
March 16th – March 31st
2016

By Gary Richards

POSTED: 03/20/2016 12:00:00 AM PDT

[Click here for article](#)

Q Boy, did your column on overflow parking in residential areas hit a nerve. I live off Branham Lane and around the corner are several fourplexes, a low-income apartment complex and a townhouse development. And now the city wants to make our overflow parking situation worse by allowing five buildings of 25 three-story townhouses on a 1.3-acre lot where a preschool is being closed. Kelly Katsuyama, San Jose

A That column hit a very raw nerve. Dozens of messages roared in, including this from Leslye Corsiglia, the executive director of SV@Home, a policy and housing advocacy group working to tackle the affordable housing crisis in the South Bay.

I'm not surprised to hear that neighbors are finding more cars lining their streets. The reason is easy to pinpoint, but harder to solve. Sky-high housing prices and the lack of available and affordable housing have resulted in families doubling and tripling up. People are now renting rooms, garages, even cordoned-off parts of living rooms.

A housing report from RealtyTrak found San Jose's vacancy rate to be the tightest in the nation at 0.2 percent. According to the San Jose Housing Department, it takes a wage of \$54 an hour, or \$112,500 a year, to afford the average two-bedroom, two-bath apartment in San Jose.

As families try to stay here, they are faced with driving long distances, paying more of their salary toward housing and forgoing other needs, or overcrowding in order to afford to stay. Leslye Corsiglia

A And more people per unit equals more cars in the driveway and on streets. So, what's the solution? Or is there a solution?

Q We need to invest in affordable housing options to ensure that working households can continue to live here. They can't all move away. We need people to work in our service and retail sectors. We want manufacturing workers to live and work here. Not all of the people who add value to our community have incomes that match the cost of housing we now have. Leslye Corsiglia

A San Jose's general plan calls for 120,000 new units by 2040. They'll be needed as 120,000 new millennials are expected to move to the city by 2035. And less than a quarter of San Jose's workers can afford to rent or buy median-priced housing.

Q I live in a residential area on Harmony Lane and my next-door neighbor mentioned that another neighbor had asked to rent HIS garage. Mind you, this same neighbor is already renting out his garage. I've lived here for over 20 years and there has never been a parking problem like this. We are desperate to find a solution; if not, we will be forced to move from our home. Bianca Lucero, San Jose

4. San Jose Mercury News

Santa Clara Valley Open Space wants public's opinions for new urban open space

By Jasmine Leyva

POSTED: 03/22/2016 06:01:29 PM PDT

Young Ranch Digest
March 16th – March 31st
2016

[Click here for article](#)

The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority is looking to gather ideas from residents about nature projects within cities such as expanding trails, creating urban gardens and preserving wildlife.

During the month of April, the open space authority will host a series of community meetings in Campbell, San Jose, Morgan Hill and Milpitas to hear what residents would like to see in their cities with funding from the Urban Open Space Program.

The program was developed by the open space authority to help cities and schools maintain or create trails and parks while also creating access to healthy foods through urban gardens in Campbell and other cities within the open space authority's jurisdiction as well as unincorporated areas of the county.

Patty Eaton, spokeswoman for the open space authority, said while the program is still in its preliminary stages community feedback could help to structure the program.

"These meetings are designed for community members to provide input on the program design and discuss projects they would like to see in their own neighborhoods," Eaton said.

Funding for program projects will come from a parcel tax that voters approved in 2014. The parcel tax of \$24 per parcel for 15 years will be used to improve parks, prevent pollution of water and create open space and trails within cities. The parcel tax is expected to bring in approximately \$7.9 million annually. Thus far the parcel tax has generated \$4,386,256 since it went into effect July 2015.

Projects ideas can be submitted to the open space authority beginning in the summer.

"More information will be forthcoming in June or July," Eaton said.

Eaton said that a competitive grant application process will also launch when the program kicks off this summer. Cities and organizations will have the chance to apply for funding projects such as preserving natural resources and establishing community gardens and urban farms.

In previous years the open space authority provided funding to urban space projects in Campbell. In 2007, the city received \$109,000 for a trail project around the percolation ponds between Sunnyoaks and Hacienda avenues. In 2001, \$173,000 was given to the city for improvements to Edith Morley Park, a 5.5 acre site near the percolation ponds at the Campbell Technology Parkway.

Campbell meeting

The community meeting in Campbell will be held April 11 from 6 to 8 p.m at the Campbell Community Center, 1 W. Campbell Ave. Residents who cannot attend can take an online survey to submit their ideas.

5. San Jose Mercury News

Carl Guardino: In California and Silicon Valley, results trump rhetoric

By Carl Guardino

POSTED: 03/25/2016 10:30:57 AM PDT

Young Ranch Digest March 16th – March 31st 2016

[click here for article](#)

In Silicon Valley, results trump rhetoric.

Annually, the Silicon Valley Leadership Group and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation produce the "Silicon Valley Competitiveness Project," evaluating our strengths and shortcomings. We assess Silicon Valley against five top technology regions in the United States: Austin, Boston, New York City, Seattle and Southern California.

Driven by data, a dozen top venture capitalists, CEOs, startup executives and economists select 22 indicators by which we measure ourselves against our competitors.

The results: Silicon Valley and the Bay Area remain the epicenter of the earth's innovation. But we know success is best tempered by a healthy dose of humility. To paraphrase Silicon Valley icon Andy Grove, whom we mourn this month -- it's OK to be "paranoid" when it comes to global competition.

This is especially true as politicians regularly visit our Valley dangling a shiny hook to try to lure companies to their states and nations.

So we celebrate our strengths while steadfastly working on our weaknesses. First, some of our strengths:

Startups. Compass' "2015 Global Startup Ecosystem Ranking" places Silicon Valley as the world's leading innovation economy based on venture capital investments, startup company exit valuations, talent pool, entrepreneurial support and networks. Austin, a great city, isn't among the top 10.

Employment. Silicon Valley is home to 443,000 innovation industry jobs, by far the strongest region for technology jobs per capita. Seattle is second per capita. Austin has the fewest innovation industry jobs of the innovation regions, at 95,000, and is a distant fourth per capita..

Venture capital. In 2015, Silicon Valley attracted more than \$27 billion. The entire state of Texas got less than \$1.2 billion.

Early stage investing. In this, Silicon Valley outpaces Austin even more, with \$4 billion invested through the third quarter of 2015, versus \$317 million in Austin.

Value for investors. In 2015, Silicon Valley IPOs generated \$3.2 billion for investors. Austin generated \$300 million.

Patents. In 2014, Silicon Valley was home to 17,600 patents filed; Austin, about 2,700.

Productivity. Our workers are not only highly educated and motivated, but they are the earth's most productive.

Worker productivity here, measured as annual output per worker, was \$225,000. Austin's was \$160,000.

But in Silicon Valley, we wisely build rather than boast, as we assess and address our weaknesses

Traffic. Our roads and the capacity of our transportation systems need immediate attention.

Young Ranch Digest
March 16th – March 31st
2016

The Leadership Group plans to help lead a countywide transportation funding measure this November for smart road and transit improvements.

At the state level, Gov. Jerry Brown is working to pass a mix of necessary reforms and needed revenue. It merits strong support.

Housing. The cost of buying or renting a home is unreachable for too many families.

The Leadership Group cocreated the Silicon Valley Housing Trust, which has helped 15,000 families secure homes, and we're working with county leaders on a potential housing bond. The governor continues to work on CEQA reforms to help build more affordable, appropriately placed housing throughout our state.

Silicon Valley's success is not a birthright. Rather, we must earn it every day. Yet today, and for the foreseeable future, we remain the envy of the earth's innovation economy. To retain our leadership, we will continue to measure ourselves to competitors around the world.

Austin is a great city, which is why a couple dozen of our Silicon Valley-based companies have facilities there.

But there are many reasons why thousands of employers -- from iconic brands to groundbreaking startups -- know why cutting-edge innovation happens here.

Carl Guardino is CEO of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group. (For more on the "Silicon Valley Competitiveness and Innovation Project," visit svcip.com.)

6. San Jose Mercury News

San Jose council approves 'grace period' for affordable housing law

By Ramona Giwargis

POSTED: 03/29/2016 11:30:25 AM PDT

[click here for article](#)

SAN JOSE -- With the city falling dramatically behind its goal to build nearly 2,400 homes for the poor each year until 2022, San Jose's landmark law that requires some developers to reserve units for affordable housing is ready to be enacted -- after surviving more than two years of legal challenges.

But elected leaders Tuesday approved a "grace period" for housing projects approved before June 30 to allow developers and city staff time to plan for the changes, which were on hold while the merits of the law were debated in court. The City Council voted 10-1 to implement the plan at a council meeting Tuesday. Councilman Manh Nguyen opposed.

San Jose is severely behind its goal to build 20,849 affordable housing units by 2022. (Dan Honda/Bay Area News Group)

"With the crisis we face in our housing markets, I only regret that it required a Supreme Court ruling to uphold the ordinance," Mayor Sam Liccardo, who championed the policy against opposition from his loyalists in the building community, wrote in a memo Monday. Liccardo said the city could have had the benefit of several years of the new law.

Young Ranch Digest March 16th – March 31st 2016

Developers who have projects approved before June 30 must still apply for an exemption and turn in a compliance plan, said Jacky Morales-Ferrand, the city's housing director.

The city's policy, which was adopted in 2010 and paved the way for dozens of other cities to craft similar legislation, requires developers of market-rate, for-sale developments of 20 or more units to set aside 15 percent of the units for moderate-income people. It does not apply to rental units and mostly targets for-sale units such as condos, single-family homes and townhouses.

Housing is considered "affordable" when a resident isn't paying more than 30 percent of his or her income for housing. In San Jose, "moderate-income housing," which is what the policy seeks to create, targets individuals who earn \$74,000 to \$89,000 a year -- higher in larger households. Although the law went into effect in January 2013, it was blocked by a legal challenge from the California Building Industry Association. The Santa Clara County Superior Court issued an injunction, which was later overturned by the 6th District Court of Appeal.

The building industry appealed the decision to the California Supreme Court. The high court in June unanimously issued a decision in favor of the city. The building group in September filed a petition with the U.S. Supreme Court seeking review of the California Supreme Court's unanimous ruling, but it declined to hear that petition.

The new policy will begin just as San Jose struggles to build affordable housing amid soaring rents and a staggering housing shortage. The city from 2007 to 2013 built only 2,956 affordable units -- a mere 15 percent of its 19,271-unit goal, Morales-Ferrand said.

San Jose's new goal is to build 20,849 affordable housing units by 2022, and it's already severely behind. The city in the past two years began construction on 576 affordable units. It needs to build roughly 2,400 units annually to meet that goal.

"There is a significant shortage of housing affordable to low and moderate income households, which will only increase as the finite number of residentially zoned lots within the city are purchased and developed for market rate residential developments," Morales-Ferrand wrote in a staff report.

Developers who do not want to comply with the new law have a few other options, including paying an "in-lieu" fee or building affordable housing somewhere else in the city.

Requiring developers to put aside price-restricted units isn't a new idea in San Jose. The city in 1988 adopted a similar policy, but it applied only to Redevelopment Agency properties. The new law applies citywide except Communications Hill and replaces the old policy.

To address the housing shortage of apartments, the city charges developers \$17 per square foot to help build new affordable apartments. That program excludes downtown residential projects for five years.

7. San Jose Mercury News

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority seeks public's ideas for nature projects

By Jasmine Leyva

POSTED: 03/29/2016 06:02:32 PM PDT

[click here for article](#)

Young Ranch Digest **March 16th – March 31st** **2016**

The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority is welcoming residents' ideas and suggestions for nature projects they'd like to see in their cities.

To get residents' ideas on potential projects such as expanding trails or creating urban gardens with funds from the Urban Open Space Program, the agency this month will host a series of community meetings in San Jose, Campbell, Morgan Hill and Milpitas.

The open space authority developed the program to help cities and schools create or maintain trails and parks and provide healthy foods through urban gardens.

Patty Eaton, spokeswoman for the authority, said the program is still in its preliminary stages so community feedback could help to structure it.

"These meetings are designed for community members to provide input on the program design and discuss projects they would like to see in their own neighborhoods," Eaton said.

Funding for program projects will come from a \$24 parcel tax that Santa Clara County voters approved in 2014 for the next 15 years. The tax is supposed to improve parks, prevent water pollution and create open spaces in the county's cities and unincorporated areas. It is expected to generate approximately \$7.9 million a year and has raised \$4,386,256 since it went into effect July 2015.

Project ideas can be submitted to the open space authority beginning this summer.

"More information will be forthcoming in June or July," Eaton said.

Eaton said a competitive grant application process will launch when the program kicks off in summer.

Three community meetings are scheduled in San Jose.

On April 13, 7-9 p.m., a meeting will be conducted in English and Spanish at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, 2020 E. San Antonio St.

Another meeting is set for April 19, 6-8 p.m., at the Berryessa Community Center, 3050 Berryessa Road.

On May 2, 6-8 p.m., a meeting will be conducted in English and Vietnamese at the Tully Branch Library, 880 Tully Road.

Residents who cannot attend a meeting can take an online survey to submit their ideas.

8. San Jose Inside

Leadership Group Releases Poll of San Jose Council Candidates

By Silicon Valley Newsroom / March 30, 2016

[click here for article](#)

In a new survey, all but one of the candidates for San Jose City Council approved of increasing the regional sales tax to fix potholes and improve public transit.

Young Ranch Digest
March 16th – March 31st
2016

On Wednesday, the Silicon Valley Leadership Group released a poll it conducted with 19 candidates running in five council districts. The poll asked prospective council members to weigh in on four issues: transportation, housing, education and the environment.

Unlike many candidate questionnaires, which remain confidential, this one was posted online in its entirety for voters to review.

SVLG started each candidate off with a question about a 30-year half-cent transportation sales tax that may be placed on the November ballot by the Valley Transportation Authority or Santa Clara County. The measure would finish the BART line to downtown San Jose and Santa Clara, repair streets in 15 local cities, improve bike routes and walkways, increase Caltrain capacity and add lanes to expressways.

Only Myron Von Raesfeld, who's running in District 6, objects to the tax hike. Three decades is too long for a "temporary" tax, he replied. He also opposes high-speed rail, a parcel tax to restore local waterways and a \$2 billion statewide bond to pay for services for mentally ill and homeless people.

Helen Chapman, who's also running for the D6 seat opening up when Councilman Pierluigi Oliverio terms out, said the region needs to invest in transportation but should exercise caution.

"I support the intent, but need the full details," she answered. "With the proposed sales tax increases, San Jose may be reaching its state imposed local tax limit which puts us in a precarious position."

While candidates were nearly unanimous on transportation, they split down the middle on whether the city needs more charter schools.

Many of the candidates endorsed a proposed nine-county, \$12-a-year parcel tax that would raise \$25 million over 20 years to prepare for floods and restore natural habitats for fish, birds and wildlife.

"Sea level rise is a reality and investing now to protect existing public and private parcels subject to flooding should be a priority," District 2 candidate Joe Lopez wrote.

To read all of the candidates' answers, [click here](#).

9. Gilroy Dispatch

Half Cent for \$6 Billion Transit

By Rosanne Hernandez-Cattani

Posted: Thursday, March 31, 2016 3:23 pm

[click here for article](#)

Santa Clara County residents will pay a half-cent sales tax to improve roads, trains, bike and pedestrian paths to the tune of \$6 billion, if a major group representing the top businesses in Silicon Valley has its way.

"We heard a rumor that traffic is back and our roads are pockmarked with potholes," said Carl Guardino, CEO of Silicon Valley Leadership Group (SVLG), a public policy trade association that is currently lobbying for a transportation funding measure for the region.

Young Ranch Digest March 16th – March 31st 2016

For more than 3½ years, the group, which represents nearly 400 companies in Silicon Valley, has been working on a comprehensive transportation plan they say relieves traffic, fixes local streets and roads and increases transit options for county commuters.

The group hopes the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) board will consider its plan at an April 22 board workshop, where it will discuss a number of transportation proposals, including results of a two-year public/private process called Envision Silicon Valley that sought input on identifying potential transportation projects that could be funded through a ballot initiative.

While SVLG did participate in the Envision Silicon Valley process, it created its own parallel plan after consulting with transportation professionals, and relevant staff at VTA and the 16 county jurisdictions.

SVLG believes it has crafted a consensus plan for the valley that is equitable to all and addresses major transportation issues.

Including big projects like the completion of the BART extension to San Jose, the proposal also includes up to \$135 million worth of upgrades to the Santa Teresa and Hale corridor, and improvements to U.S. 101 and the 101-Hwy. 25 interchange in Gilroy.

The proposal also earmarks \$1.2 billion for street maintenance and pothole repair across the 16 county jurisdictions. Gilroy's allocation of that total is nearly \$30 million.

SVLG's draft expenditure plan also includes \$600 million for Caltrain safety improvements and grade separations as well as another \$314 million in Caltrain modernization and capacity improvements. These allocations would be made over a 30-year period.

This will benefit Gilroy and South County residents by improving the safety, capacity and efficiency of Caltrain throughout the corridor, said Chris O'Connor, SVLG senior associate in transportation and housing.

"It is estimated that the improvements funded in this measure, along with Caltrain electrification, will more than double the capacity of Caltrain," he added.

Identified projects would be funded by a half-cent sales tax in Santa Clara County that would run for 30 years, generating nearly \$6 billion.

If the VTA board moves forward with placing a transportation funding initiative on the November ballot and it passes, sales tax would start being collected in July 2017.

Guardino said there is voter support for such a sales tax measure. According to four polls conducted since August 2015, 64 to 68 percent of county voters said they were in favor of a transportation-only sales tax measure.

A 2014 study showed that people in the Bay Area spend 64 hours a year in excess traffic—above and beyond the normal commute, said Guardino, almost two work weeks stuck in traffic. Only New York and Los Angeles have worse traffic.

Up to 80 percent of Gilroy workers commute to jobs, primarily north of the city.

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Greg Becker, CEO of Silicon Valley Bank, which has 2,100 employees internationally and 750 in the Bay Area, says the “noise” of people complaining about traffic, both in his company and among his clients, is getting louder.

“Housing costs and congestion are two of the big factors that come into play,” he says, in keeping companies and employees here.

“How much time you are spending in your car getting from Point A to Point B? The Bay Area will always be expensive but you have to create the opportunity for people to live in lower cost areas. If that’s taken away, you force people to think about other alternatives.”

His bank, which represents cutting edge technology companies, has opened a branch in Arizona, in part to handle the pressure of business in Silicon Valley. “People are wanting to move down there. It’s just too expensive here.”

The funding proposal provides a mix of improvements that benefit both those who drive to work and those who ride mass transit.

“People can sit on trains and get work done,” said Becker. “For the most part, sitting in traffic is dead time. That’s why mass transportation is one of the key parts—fixing BART, getting higher capacity on Caltrain. Not just fixing the roads.”