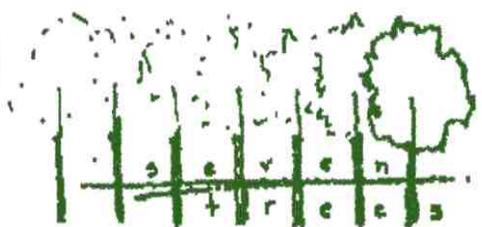




Seven Trees

neighborhood plan



seven trees neighborhood plan

Project Directors:
Dayana Salazar
Beth Wyman

Report Production:
David Roemer
Guillermo Salazar

San José State University
Urban and Regional Planning Department

This project was funded partly with a Community Action and Pride Grant from the City of San José Department of Parks,
Recreation and Neighborhood Services
January 2002

FOREWORD

In the Summer of 2000, my office approached San José State University's Urban and Regional Planning Department requesting to apply their Collaborative Neighborhood Planning (CNP) model in the Seven Trees community. I had seen the results of such work in planning projects the University conducted in previous years in local neighborhoods such as Horace Mann, Gardner and Olinder, and realized that it would be an effective vehicle to articulate a vision for Seven Trees.

In the Fall of 2000, a team of Urban Planning faculty and graduate students started working with my staff, and particularly with Queta Herrera, who was instrumental in assisting a small, but committed group of residents to establish the Seven Trees Neighborhood Group (STNG). Staff from the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, and Ms. Cheryl Bolin in particular, was also key for the development of the project.

As the budding neighborhood group (STNG) grew in strength and confidence, the collaborative planning process unfolded. A close partnership was established between the Seven Trees Neighborhood Group, the Council District 7 Office, the University and City Departments to explore the wishes and visions Seven Trees residents have for their community.

A series of conversations between all these participants, facilitated in public meetings and workshops, followed. Residents of all ages were invited to meet their neighbors, to talk about what they liked in their community, to discuss aspects they wanted to change and explore possible ways to improve and strengthen the neighborhood. The University team recorded all the information and generated a plan to respond to public input.

The results of this collective planning process are summarized in this report. It will be useful to our office and other City departments, as a blueprint to direct public resources to further strengthen the Seven Trees community. More importantly, it can be used by neighborhood residents to set direction in their community-building efforts.

I believe this partnership of Community, City and University represents the best of our combined efforts in action.

As of today, a number of recommendations presented in this report have already been addressed or are in progress. For instance, new stop signs have been installed in troublesome street intersections and a number of clean-up days have been organized throughout the neighborhood.

It is my wish that city representatives continue to support the Seven Trees Neighborhood Group in making the vision for Seven Trees a reality.

George Shirakawa Jr., Vice-Mayor
Council Member
City of San José Council District 7

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge the vital role of our partners' commitment to this effort. They include the many residents, City staff, San José State University students and faculty, and members of the community who made this project possible:

City of San José

Mayor's Office

The Honorable Mayor Ron Gonzalez
Olivia Nuñez, Mayor's Community Relations

Council District 7

Vice-Mayor George Shirakawa Jr., Council Member, Council District 7
Queta Herrera, Aide to Vice-Mayor Shirakawa, Council District 7

Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services

Mark Linder, Director
Terry Eberhardt, Deputy Director
Barbara Santos-George, Community Services Supervisor, East Region
Jose Villanueva, Anti-Graffiti Program

Planning Department

Mike Brilliot, Senior Planner

Police Department

William Landsdowne, City of San José Police Chief
Lt. Randall Cooper, Community Services
Sgt. Richard Fong, Bureau of Field Operations
Bill Gonzalez, Seven Trees Beat Officer
Tony Horink-Tran, Community Services Specialist
Alan Mishaga, Seven Trees Beat Officer

Seven Trees Neighborhood Group (STNG)

Laura Tovar, President
José Villarreal, Secretary
Rose Langan, Community Liaison
Aaron Morrow, Former Vice-President
Angie Barrera
Cheryl Bolin
Elizabeth Crivelo
Rosa Benton
Erica García
Maria García
Mario A. Gonzalez

Jerry Harris
Rose Herrera
Linda Hibbard
Gizelle Hurtado
Martha Hurtado
Maureen Kwok
Dan Lairon
Phil Lopez
Glorietta McKinnis
Aurora Muñoz
Carlos Muñoz

Doc Nguyen
Ron Orozco
Rocky Qualls
Hector Ramón
Alejo Ricardez
Pat Soles
Maria Soria
Alan Tibbitts
Selene Tibbitts
Cora Tomalinas
Ed Voss

Franklin-McKinley School District

Philip Rentería, Franklin-McKinley School Board Member
Carla Haakma, Principal, Los Arboles School
Pat Soles, Principal, Seven Trees School
Paul Gallardo, Custodian, Los Arboles School
Emma Guel, Secretary, Los Arboles School

Solari Community Center and Seven Trees Library

Cheryl Bolin, Director, Solari Community Center
Betty Gallegos, Office Specialist
Bob Greene, Program Specialist, SAGE
Tina Grijalva, Recreation Leader
Maureen Kwok, Librarian, Seven Trees Library Branch
Wendy Teshara, Program Specialist, Youth

San José State University

Students enrolled in the following Urban Planning Courses:

Planning Problems I (UrbP 201), Fall 2000. Instructor, Dayana Salazar.

Planning Problems II (UrbP 203), Spring 2001. Instructor, Beth Wyman.

Maria Alaniz, Associate Professor, Social Science Department

Earl Bossard, Professor, Urban and Regional Planning Department

Hein Duc Do, Professor, Social Science Department

Donald Rothblatt, Professor, Urban and Regional Planning Department

Community Supporters

Chris Baumann, Mac-Res-Q

Rhonda Berry, Our City Forest

Patricia Carrillo, Director, Catholic Charities Wellness Program

Meryl Curran, Small Business Loan Program, Lenders for Community Development

Erik Holland, San Jose Giants Baseball Club

Zoe Lofgren, Congresswoman

Bill Mustanich, Andrew Hill High School

Walt and Patti Phillips, residents of Horace Mann

Janice Rombeck, San José Mercury News

Cora Tomalinas, Santa Maria Goretti Church, PACT

Neighborhood Workshops Participants

Residents:

Jose Alanis

Rodney Barraza

Angie Barrera

Josh Barrera

Ann Barrett

Rose Benton

Antonita Calera

Patricia Carrillo

Teodora Delgado

Betty Gallegos

Miguel Garibay

Dulce Crystal Gomez

Mario A. Gonzalez

Le Han

Jerry Harris

Linda Hibbarad

Gizelle Hurtado

Martha Hurtado

Jackie Jones

Ana Karen

Dan Lairon

Cao Van Lanh

Rose Langan

Armando Limenec

Leticia Loera

Linda Lou

Rosa Linda Melero

Emilia Reyes de Monzon

Aaron Morrow

Carlos Muñoz

Carmen Muñoz

Alicia Murillo

Angela Murillo

Isabel Nannini

John Nannini

Doc Nguyen

Minh Tuan Nguyen

Rocio Ocana

Ron Orozco

To Uyen Pham

Leticia Piña

Veronica Rendón

Teresa Rivas

William Sanchez

Jaime Tinaj

Phung Thi

Laura Tovar

Phuong Tran

Cuc Truaig

Regina Zamora

Lupe Zuniga

Jose Villarreal

Ngoc Vo

Workshop Facilitators and Organizers:

Beth Wyman, Coordinator

Ahmed Arikat

Neil Brantley

Andy Chow

Sonia Delgado

Melinda Denis

Karoline Eschwey

Alison Gardner

Christopher Golden

Joanna Gomes

Shuichi Hisamura

Rosemary Kamei

Khaled Khalifa

Barbara Oldfield

Sean O'Rourke

Sylvia Ortiz

Phillip Rentería

Suparna Saha

Michael Smith

Carly Varney

Youth Workshop Designers and Facilitators:

Kentaro Kobayashi

Angeline McKenna

Christy Oosterhous

Sandy Russell

David Roemer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	i
Acknowledgements	iii
List of Figures	vii
Project Overview	1
Area Description	5
<i>Demographics and Housing</i>	6
<i>Community Life</i>	7
<i>Community Groups</i>	7
<i>Safety</i>	7
<i>Youth Perspective on Safety</i>	8
<i>Land Use</i>	8
<i>Districts</i>	9
<i>Building Conditions</i>	12
<i>Zoning and General Plan</i>	12
<i>Ownership</i>	13
<i>Public Facilities and Services</i>	13
<i>Schools</i>	13
<i>After-School Services</i>	14
<i>Solari Center & Public Library</i>	14
<i>Churches</i>	15
<i>Parks and Recreation</i>	15
<i>Local Parks</i>	15
<i>School Grounds</i>	16
<i>Private Open Space</i>	17
<i>Vacant or Unattended Land</i>	17
<i>Transportation</i>	17
<i>Vehicular Traffic</i>	17
<i>Public Transit</i>	18
<i>Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation</i>	19
<i>Parking</i>	20
Recommendations	21
<i>Housing</i>	21
<i>Improving Existing Housing Conditions</i>	21
<i>New Housing Opportunities</i>	22

<i>Senior Housing and Mixed-Use Opportunities</i>	22
<i>Code Enforcement</i>	24
<i>Regular Code Enforcement Procedure</i>	24
<i>Concentrated Code Enforcement Program</i>	24
<i>Project Blossom</i>	24
<i>Community Life</i>	24
<i>Strengthen Community Organizations</i>	24
<i>Youth Safety</i>	25
<i>Substance Abuse</i>	25
<i>Reporting and Preventing Crimes</i>	25
<i>Public Drinking and Excessive Noise</i>	25
<i>Existing Programs</i>	25
<i>Traffic</i>	26
<i>Pedestrian Safety</i>	26
<i>Parking</i>	26
<i>Noise Control</i>	28
<i>Public Transportation</i>	28
<i>Parks and Recreation</i>	28
<i>Solari Community Center</i>	28
<i>Seven Trees Elementary Sports Field</i>	29
<i>Pocket Parks</i>	29
<i>Community Garden</i>	30
<i>Beautification</i>	30
<i>Street Trees</i>	30
<i>Tree Trimming</i>	31
<i>Litter</i>	31
<i>Tagging and Graffiti</i>	31
<i>Gateways</i>	32

Action Plan..... 33

Community Resources 37

<i>Housing</i>	37
<i>Streets and Traffic</i>	39
<i>Code Enforcement</i>	39
<i>Crime Prevention</i>	40
<i>Neighborhood Programs</i>	40
<i>Non-Profit Organizations and Corporate Sponsors</i>	42

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1. Location of Seven Trees Neighborhood.....	1
Fig. 2. Youth Workshops.....	2
Fig. 3. Seven Trees in 1876.....	5
Fig. 4. Seven Trees in 1890.....	5
Fig. 5. Farming in the Seven Trees Area	6
Fig. 6. Ethnicity in 2000.....	6
Fig. 7. Growth in Hispanic Population between 1990 & 2000.....	6
Fig. 8. Racial Change between 1990 & 2000.....	6
Fig. 9. Persons per Occupied Housing Unit in 1990	7
Fig. 10. Persons per Room in 1990	7
Fig. 11. Crime Trends between 1999 & 2000	7
Fig. 12. Existing Land Use.....	8
Fig. 13. Seven Trees Districts.....	9
Fig. 14. Gas Station on North Gateway Commercial Node.....	9
Fig. 15. Sketch of Northern Multi-family Cluster District.....	9
Fig. 16. Typical Building in Northern Multi-family Cluster District.....	10
Fig. 17. Sketch of the Solari Community Center.....	10
Fig. 18. Seven Trees Public Library.....	10
Fig. 19. Open Recreation Building	10
Fig. 20. Sketch of the Single Family Residential District.....	10
Fig. 21. Sketch of the Common Building Type in the Southern Mult Family District	11
Fig. 22. Sketch of the Seven Trees Shopping Center.....	11
Fig. 23. Seven Trees Shopping Center.....	11
Fig. 24. Property Conditions	12
Fig. 25. Zoning Designations	12
Fig. 26. General Plan Designations	13
Fig. 27. Valley Christian School	14
Fig. 28. Solari Community Center.....	14
Fig. 29. Action at Solari Park	15
Fig. 30. Open Space in Seven Trees and Vicinity.....	16
Fig. 31. Solari Park	16
Fig. 32. Street Landscaping.....	17
Fig. 33. Open Land at the Baptist Church.....	17
Fig. 34. Open Land along Seven Trees Boulevard.....	17
Fig. 35. Traffic Volumes.....	18
Fig. 36. Informal Pedestrian Patterns	19

Fig. 37. Example of the Type of Mixed-Use Development that Could Potentially Replace Existing Seven Trees Shopping Center	23
Fig. 38. Examples of Speed Control Options for Seven Trees	27
Fig. 39. Sound Walls along Capitol Expressway	28
Fig. 40. Seven Trees School Field Improvements	29
Fig. 41. Potential Locations for Pocket Parks and Community Garden	29
Fig. 42. Sidewalk Improvements on Seven Trees Boulevard	30
Fig. 43. Roadside Improvements on Capitol Expressway	31
Fig. 44. Improvements to Residential Streetscape	31
Fig. 45. Mural on Solari Park	31
Fig. 46. Possible Entries on Seven Trees Boulevard	32
Fig. 47. Storefront Revitalization of Shopping Center on Seven Trees Boulevard	32
Fig. 48. Possible Pedestrian Arches on Solari Park	32

PROJECT OVERVIEW

During the 2000/2001 academic year, faculty and students from the Urban and Regional Planning Department at San José State University worked in collaboration with members of the community and City staff to study the Seven Trees neighborhood. Seven Trees is located five miles south of downtown San José, at the heart of Silicon Valley

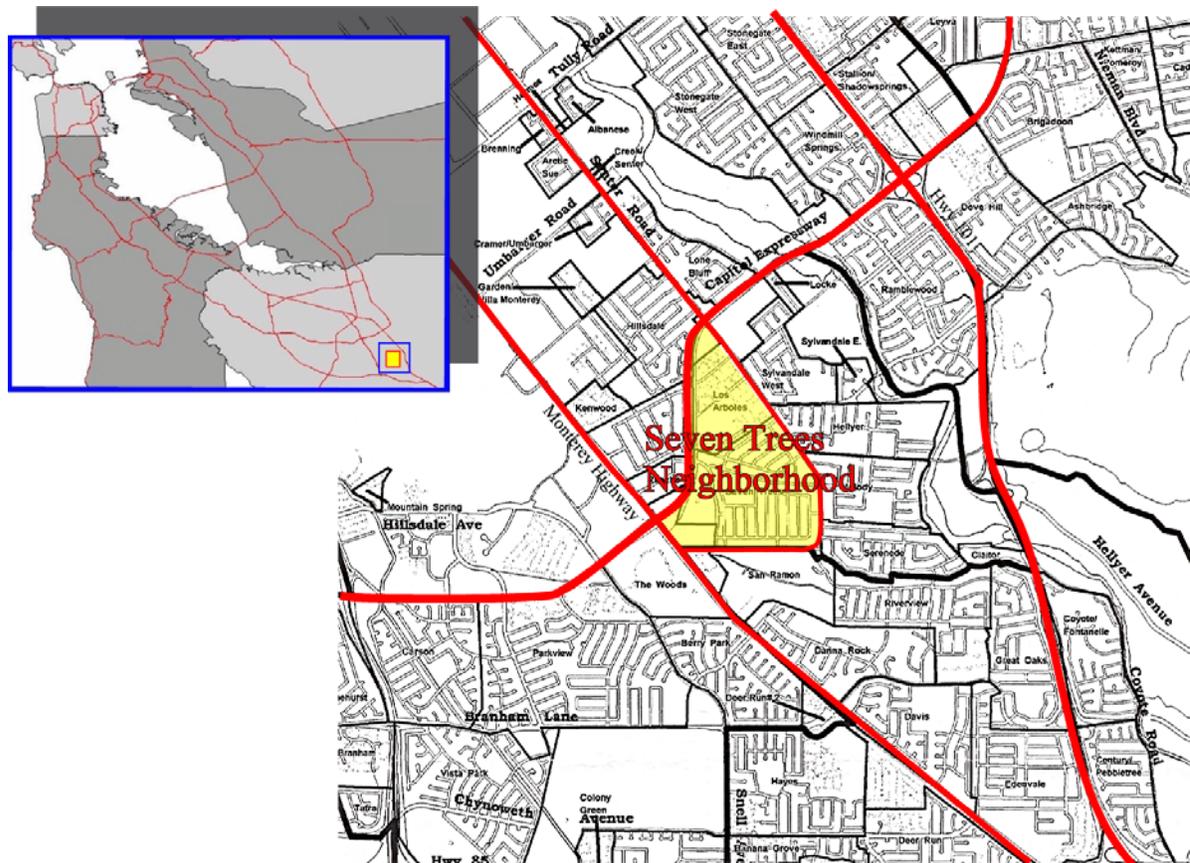


Figure 1. Location of Seven Trees Neighborhood

This report examines the existing conditions in the community and presents recommendations for specific areas of intervention within the neighborhoods. It includes information on past, present and projected conditions in the area, but also the views and concerns of its residents.

Residents and decision-makers concerned with the future of this area will find the information in this document useful in understanding of who lives, works and plays in the neighborhood, and what they envision. It also sets forth intervention strategies based on professional research and community recommendations to work towards this vision.

The assessment and recommendations for improvement presented in this report were developed through extensive consultation with

neighborhood residents, business owners, community organizations and service providers, city staff, youth and schoolchildren in a series of activities designed to document, classify and analyze the perceived problems and opportunities in the area, as well as visions for neighborhood improvement.

In addition to a great deal of informal interaction and individual interviews, formal activities such as

a Photographic Survey with neighborhood youth and Community Workshops were conducted.

The Photographic Survey was conducted by youth from the Solari Community Center. These images were classified and assembled in photographic collages, which represents a collective visual assessment of the positive and negative aspects of the community as perceived by its youth



Figure 2. Youth Workshops

Community workshops were held at Los Arboles Elementary School and Solari Community Center. The workshops were organized and conducted by the San José State University Urban Planning team; the Seven Trees Neighborhood Group (STNG); City Council District 7; and the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services. The workshops brought together residents of the neighborhood to share visions and ideas for strengthening their community.

This report, which documents the results of the interaction with the community, is structured around four sections: Area Description, Recommendations, Action Plan and Community Resources.

Area Description. This section presents a summary and analysis of existing and projected conditions in the study area including a brief overview of the neighborhood; demographic and housing data; community dynamics; land use; public facilities and services; open space and recreation facilities and transportation.

Recommendations: This section presents proposals for strengthening the housing, community life, streets, parks, public facilities and commercial areas in the neighborhood. The recommendations were derived mainly from the feedback and ideas of residents who participated in this community-driven planning process. These principles, which formed the basis for the report's recommendations, include:

Housing

- *Improvement of existing housing*, especially the multi-family housing, through maintenance and repairs such as painting, landscaping, and structural repairs.
- *Create new housing opportunities*, especially for seniors and low-income residents. Potential sites are: the vacant land next to the Seven Trees Baptist Church on Senter and Capitol Expressway and the redevelopment of the Seven Trees Shopping Center with a mixed-use project.

Code Enforcement

Improve Code Enforcement in the neighborhood to address issues of overcrowding, building code violations, blight on private properties, abandoned vehicles and lawn parking.

Community Life

- Strengthen the Seven Trees Neighborhood Group (STNG), primarily through promotion and outreach.
- Assist the community to address social problems such as youth safety and gangs, substance abuse, public drinking, excessive noise in residential areas, and the reluctance to report crimes. Specific actions to address these problems, in education, counseling and cooperation include:
 - Promote the use of the non-emergency 311 hotline.
 - Expand substance abuse education and counseling.
 - Provide adequate translation services to Spanish and Vietnamese.
 - Expand after school activities and care for youth.
 - Institute school uniforms.
 - Increase police presence and Community training by the police crime prevention unit.
 - Increase lighting levels in local parks, and Solari Park in particular.
 - Work with local merchants to stop selling alcohol to suspected individuals.

Traffic

- *Enhance pedestrian safety* and overall quality of life throughout the neighborhood streets with speed control (or traffic calming) measures, radar trailers and/or photographic control of speeding drivers. The following intersections need immediate improvement: Ezie and Cas, Santa Rosa and San Ramon, El Cajon and Seven Trees, Capitol and Senter, San Ramon and Senter, as well as in front of local schools.
- *Noise Control:* Add a sound wall along Capitol Expressway to reduce noise pollution, on the northern section of the neighborhood in particular.
- *Public Transit:* Ensure that the future Light Rail along Capitol Expressway has a station either at Seven Trees Boulevard and/or Senter Road near Seven Trees Shopping Center.

Parks and Recreation

- *Seven Trees Elementary Sports Field:* Repair and improve the sports field at Seven Trees Elementary School, and add a track field for community use.

- Convert some of the existing baseball fields to accommodate soccer.
- Improve the conditions of the existing Open Recreation Building and Teen Center at Solari (upgrade the floor to anti-slip, expand storage areas, upgrade weight room, and add computers).
- *Skate Park*: Incorporate a skate park as part of the renovations for Solari Park.
- *Small (Pocket) Parks*: Create small parks throughout the neighborhood. Potential locations for community pocket parks are: the barren strip of land alongside Seven Trees Boulevard and the common areas of the northern multi-family section of Seven Trees. These small parks should be landscaped, dilapidated play equipment replaced, and concrete areas adapted for skateboarding.
- *Community Gardens*: Create a community garden in one of the following potential locations: The vacant lot across Solari Community Center adjacent to the parking lot, next to the library, or next to the two elementary schools.

Neighborhood Beautification

- *Street Trees*: Plant trees along residential streets, on the barren strip of land along Seven Trees Boulevard and behind the Community Center along Capitol Expressway in order to help reduce noise pollution.
- *Tree Trimming*: Establish a program to regularly trim trees in the public right-of-way, particularly trees that block streetlights.
- *Litter*: Continue and expand clean-up days as an effective way to deal with littering. Encourage local retailers to maintain clean areas around their shops.
- *Anti-Graffiti Strategies*: Add vegetation, landscaping and murals directly in front of large blank walls to deter tagging.
- *Gateways*: Create pedestrian gateways throughout the community, thereby providing a sense of entrance and identity to Seven Trees: at Capitol Expressway and Seven Trees Boulevard, and along the pedestrian path leading to Solari Community Center.
- *Commercial Centers*: Revitalize the commercial centers in the community: Solari Center and Seven Trees Shopping Center.

Action Plan: This chapter describes the actions needed to implement the neighborhood improvement recommendations. Time frames,

responsible agencies, and potential funding sources are identified. Individual action items are listed according to their priority, as determined by the community.

Community Resources: The last section of the report contains a comprehensive list of local programs and potential funding sources for community-based plans and projects, such as those presented in this document.

AREA DESCRIPTION

Seven Trees is a multi-cultural, moderate-income, residential community located five miles south of downtown San Jose, in the heart of Silicon Valley. Capitol Expressway, Monterey Highway, and Senter Road bound the neighborhood.

The earliest records of the area locate it within the Pueblo Lands Tract I¹. An 1876 atlas showed that J. A. Buck and William A. Senter owned the majority of property in the neighborhood.²



Figure 3. Seven Trees in 1876

William A. Senter came to Santa Clara Valley from Maine to become an orchard farmer. Crops grown in the area included a variety of fruit trees, primarily apricot and pear, as well as vegetable row crops. An 1890 survey³ showed that the land had been subdivided into smaller parcels and sold to a number of owners.



Figure 4. Seven Trees in 1890

The land continued to be used as part of Santa Clara Valley’s thriving fruit industry. Chinese laborers, who had come to United States to construct the railroad system, provided much of the agricultural labor in the area. In addition to the Chinese, Japanese migrant workers were brought to the West Coast to work in the agricultural industry. Japanese workers tenant farmed in the area until the start of World War II. The Japanese farmers in the area were then moved to internment camps⁴. Although few Japanese-Americans returned to farm the area continued to be farmed after World War II.



Figure 5. Farming in the Seven Trees area

The current neighborhood was developed into a series of tracts from the 1950s through the 1970s, when the area was within the jurisdiction of the County of Santa Clara, prior to the City’s annexation of the area. It was built up with a mixture of single-family bungalows and multifamily apartment buildings. A few infill developments were constructed in the 1990s.⁵

DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING

During the last ten years Seven Trees has experienced an extraordinary rate of change in demographics⁶. Between 1990 and 2000 the population of Seven Trees grew from 7,906 to 9,729 people. This represents a growth rate of approximately 23 percent, nearly twice the average growth rate in Santa Clara County during the same period (12 percent). This growth occurred despite a negligible increase in the number of total housing units within the neighborhood.

The last decade also brought enormous changes in the ethnic makeup of Seven Trees. Census data shows the Hispanic population of Seven Trees increased at a very high rate. While the Hispanic population of Santa Clara County increased at an already high rate of 28 percent, Seven Trees experienced the staggering rate increase of 56 percent.

Figure 6. Ethnicity in 2000

Population	Seven Trees	Santa Clara County
Hispanic	66.43%	23.98 %
Non-Hispanic	33.57%	76.02%

During this same period, the non-Hispanic population of the neighborhood decreased by 13 percent, as the County’s population of non-Hispanic rose at above 8 percent (see figure 6).

Figure 7. Growth in Hispanic Population between 1990 & 2000

Population	Seven Trees	Santa Clara County
Hispanic	56.07%	28.24 %
Non-Hispanic	-13.25%	8.13%

White and African American populations dropped, both in Seven Trees and Santa Clara County, during the 1990s. The Asian population grew in Seven Trees, though at a slower rate than the County’s average.

Figure 8. Racial Change between 1990 & 2000

Population	Seven Trees	Santa Clara County
White alone	-18.59 %	-12.26 %
Black or African American Alone	-58.23 %	-16.06 %
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	39.47 %	22.45 %
Asian alone or Pacific Islander	28.96 %	66.70 %
Other race or two or more races	92.29 %	104.08 %

The 1990 demographic data for Seven Trees also show that even a decade earlier the average number of people per occupied housing unit was greater than the average for Santa Clara County.

More than ten percent of Seven Trees households had seven people or more. The average number of persons per occupied housing unit in Seven Trees was 4.11; nearly double the rate for the County (2.81).

Figure 9. Persons per Occupied Housing Unit in 1990

Number of Persons per Housing Unit	Seven Trees	Santa Clara County
1 person	17	23
2 persons	16	33
3 persons	16	17
4 persons	17	15
5 persons	13	6
6 persons	9	3
7 or more persons	12	3

The Census Bureau defines overcrowding to be more than 1.51 persons per habitable room. By this criteria more than 20 percent of Seven Trees households experienced overcrowding ten years ago before 1,800 additional people moved to the neighborhood at a time when very little new housing was built.

Figure 10. Persons per Room in 1990

Number of Persons per room	Seven Trees	Santa Clara County
0.5 or less	26%	58 %
.51 to 1.00	41%	31%
1.01 to 1.5	12 %	6 %
1.51 to 2.0	13 %	3 %
2.01 or more	8 %	2 %

In San Jose, affordable homeownership is generally not available. Between 1995 and 1999 housing prices in Silicon Valley jumped by 46.2 percent (compared with 34.2 percent across the Bay Area as a whole) pushing the median home price to over \$400,000 in the city of San Jose⁷.

In Seven Trees, as elsewhere in the city, low-income families are being priced out of the neighborhood. Two and three-bedroom homes built in the early 1960s, are selling for over \$300,000.⁸ Many families are now selling homes to cash in equity in the overheated housing market and moving to larger, more affordable housing outside of the Bay Area.

Rental prices, on the other hand, are approximately the same as rentals elsewhere in the city of San Jose. Rentals ranged from \$1,100 for studios of about 500 square feet to \$1,600 for 800 square feet units were.⁹

COMMUNITY LIFE

Community Groups

The Seven Trees Neighborhood Group was formed in October 2000 to represent the residents (homeowners, renters and business owners) in fostering a sense of community and pride while addressing the issues of concern in the neighborhood. The Neighborhood Group works closely with providers of social services and local government agencies in setting direction for the future of the community.

Community-based organizations collaborate with the local school district to serve the residents of Seven Trees. Some of these organizations are located outside the immediate neighborhood. One such organization is Catholic Charities, which provides community wellness services. They are presently conducting a community health-care need assessment in their “Wellness Village Project”, encompassing Seven Trees as well as nearby neighborhoods.

There are also a number of churches located within and immediately next to the neighborhood. These provide important social services to the community.

Safety

Community-wide Safety

Residents have repeatedly expressed their concern over issues of crime and safety in the neighborhood, particularly regarding substance abuse, gang activity, loitering and the fear of the residents to report crimes in their community.

The Seven Trees neighborhood lies within the Police Street Beat X2. Current crime report statistics¹⁰ show an increase in armed robbery, auto theft and narcotics felonies for the area.

Figure 11. Crime Trends between 1999 & 2000

Type of Crime	Number of incidents reported	
	1999	2000
Forcible Rape	3	4
Armed Robbery	7	14
Aggravated Assault	60	56
Residential Burglary	16	17
Auto Theft	42	56
Narcotics and Miscellaneous Felonies	63	84
Disturbing the Peace	83	57

The incidences of aggravated assault and residential burglary crimes and disturbing the peace incidents all show a decrease (see figure 11 above).

School Safety

Often, fears of the community as a whole are also reflected in the neighborhood schools, causing many students to be afraid to go to school.

The good news is that, according to Santa Clara County Board of Education statistics, overall crime rates for Elementary and High Schools in the county is lower than comparative state schools as a whole. On the whole, the county's rate of crime falls below the state average.

Youth Perspectives on Safety

Youth from the community also presented their views on issues of safety and crime in the neighborhood.

Participating youth, as well as adults, acknowledged the presence of tagging and graffiti in the community as an ongoing problem. The community has been actively combating this problem with some, but not total success.

There seems to be a mixed sentiment regarding the presence of gangs in the neighborhood and local schools. Some youth fear gangs, while others do not. They reported feeling harassed by school administrators and police patrolling the neighborhood who are aiming to deter gang activity. Even teens that are not involved in gangs are often broken up into groups of three or less by police patrolling the area. Moreover, school administrators strictly reprimand students for activity that is misunderstood to be gang related, such as wearing certain colors or writing on clothing.

However, participant youth felt gang activity increased the amount of crime in their neighborhood and had a negative effect on the well being of the community.

LAND USE

Eighty percent of the neighborhood is devoted to residential use. Most of the single-family bungalows were built in the 1960 and 1970s, and are located in the southern half of the neighborhood. Multi-family residences are either individually owned condominiums (located in the north of Ezie Street), or apartment complexes (located west of Seven Trees Boulevard).

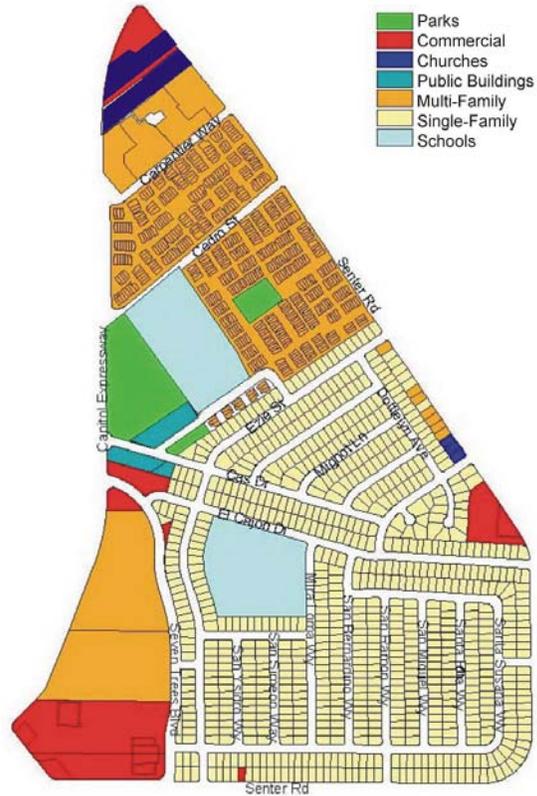


Figure 12. Existing Land Use

In addition to the residential areas, there are a number of public facilities such as two elementary schools, a Public Library, a Community Center, a Teen Center, and three Churches (please refer to following section on public facilities for further description).

Commercial nodes serve as gateways to the north, south, east and west of the neighborhood. They provide necessary goods and services to the community within walking distance

Districts

The overall existing land use distribution in the neighborhood may be best described in terms of districts according to their primary use: commercial, multi-family, single-family and institutional.

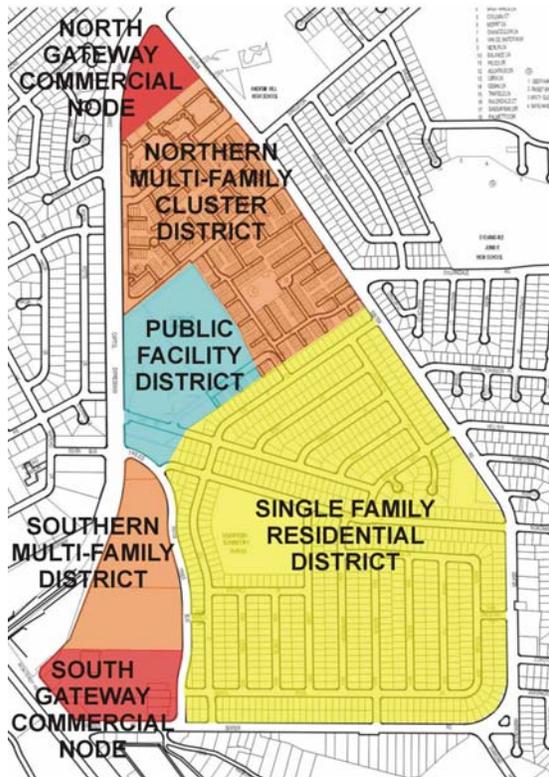


Figure 13. Seven Trees Districts

These six districts, or sub-regions are identifiable by their unique character.

North Gateway Commercial Node

The North commercial node at the corner of Senter and Capitol Expressway provides a gateway to the neighborhood at its busiest and most visible intersection. Commercial tenants including a gas station, food market, video rental store, dental office, laundry and an import store. In addition there are two churches adjacent to the commercial center. With large parking areas and poor landscaping surrounding the buildings, this area is oriented out rather than towards the neighborhood.



Figure 14. Gas station on North Gateway Commercial Node

Northern Multi-family Cluster District

The second district occupies one third of the community and it is composed of two-story multi-family structures. Only two streets in this district cross through the neighborhood (Carpenter Way and Cedro Street), and only Buckeye Drive provides access inside and outside of the district. This street pattern gives a sense of privacy and enclosure in this district, though it may also be confusing. It is hard to find an address if you don't know the area.

The typical building type in this district, with a parking garage attached to one of the long sides of very linear structures, promotes vehicular circulation. As a consequence, the initial intention of the clustering of buildings around a common space is lost because of a lack of use of the pedestrian access to the units. The clustered organization gives this an introspective atmosphere.

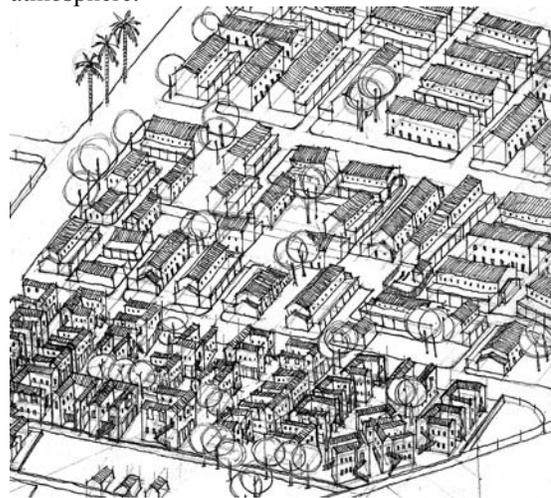


Figure 15. Sketch of Northern Multi-Family Cluster District



Figure 16. Typical Building in Northern Multi-Family Cluster District

Public Facility District

The third district, located at the heart of the neighborhood, is composed of the Seven Trees Library, the Teen Center, the Solari Community Center, the Solari Park and Los Arboles School. Even though this area does not have an entry from outside, it is clearly identifiable from within the neighborhood.

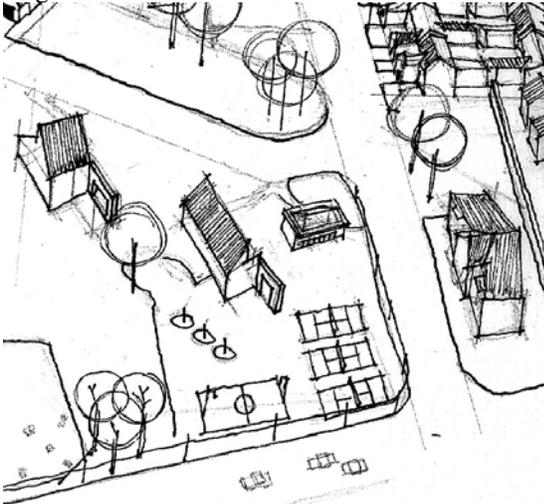


Figure 17. Sketch of the Solari Community Center



Figure 18. Seven Trees Public Library

Common building types, activities and purpose, give this district a thematic continuity. Single buildings surrounded by large open spaces together with the close spatial relation between all the community services give this area its special character. This district invites the people in the community to stay.



Figure 19. Open Recreation Building

Single-family Residential District

Senter Road, Seven Trees Boulevard and Ezie Street define the fourth district. It occupies almost two-thirds of the neighborhood.

The visual character of this district is directly reinforced by its single-family residential structures.

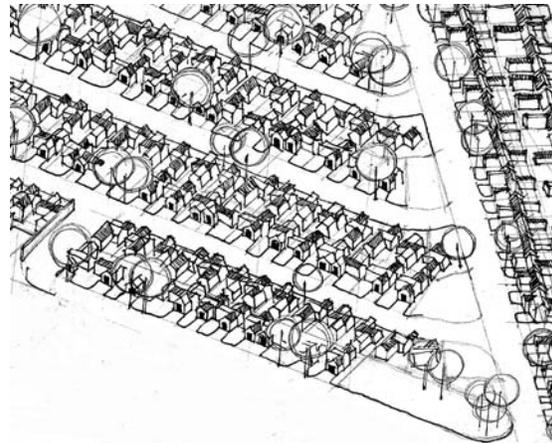


Figure 20. Sketch of the Single Family Residential District

Its housing type tends to be a one-story building with a relatively flat main façade and two main volumes: the garage and the living room with some variation on the details on the entry and windows.

The rectangular grid, with a lack of differentiation between heavily traveled and lightly traveled roads is the most common street pattern throughout the district –though a few cul-de-sacs can be found as well.

Southern Multi-family District

Two multi-family complexes compose the southern district, defined by Seven Trees Boulevard and Capitol Expressway. Even though

the single-family residential district is right across the street, there are no houses facing Seven Trees Boulevard, so this district seems to be isolated from the neighborhood.

There are some important differences between the two multi-family districts in the neighborhood. The northern one integrates the vehicles with the living spaces into one structure. The apartments in this district separates the cars from the dwelling units, thereby making the common spaces more used and the whole complex more pedestrian friendly. The dispersed organization of this district also differs from the clustered organization in the north.

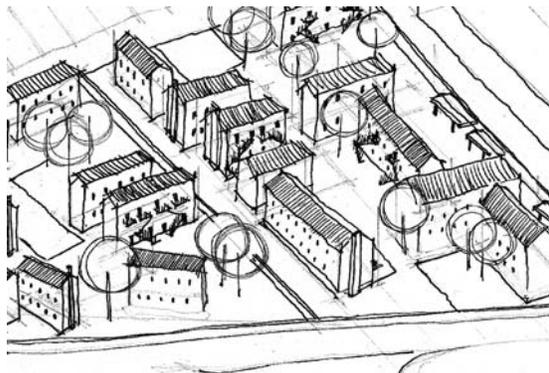


Figure 21. Sketch of the common building type in the Southern Multi-Family District

The building type in this district is a two-story building, hipped roof, with decks on the second floor facing the common areas.

Solari Plaza is located at the northern most tip of this district on either side of Seven Trees Boulevard at Capitol Expressway. Two buildings are located on the north section and two on the south. The buildings and stores located on the northern sections are newer and in far better condition than those on the south, creating a startling contrast. The businesses found here are laundry, beauty shops, clothing, ethnic groceries, check cashing, fast food, ethnic restaurants and a dental clinic.

South Gateway Commercial Node

The Seven Trees Shopping Center is located at the southwestern corner of the neighborhood, on the corner of Monterey Highway and Senter Road. It forms another extroverted commercial node, facing Monterey Highway with a closed boundary towards the neighborhood.

There are seven buildings housing a mix of businesses that includes: dry cleaners, night clubs, thrift stores, video rental, Mexican and Vietnamese ethnic restaurants, clothing stores, dental and

health clinics, alternative medicine clinics, a liquor store, beauty shops, a bank, fast food, automotive repair, a grocery store, and a vacant gas station. The center also houses educational tenants such as “The Independent Islamic Center for Studies and Publication” and a beauty college.

The Seven Trees Shopping Center provides many goods and services for the convenience of the residents in the area. It has a distinct ethnic flavor. However, residents have expressed their concern regarding the maintenance of the center at-large and some stores in particular.

The current anchor tenant in the Center is Marina Foods, a neighborhood grocery store that provides convenient shopping to the Seven Trees neighborhood. However, the store is a source of a number of concerns as raised by residents during the May 2001 neighborhood workshop. Loitering, litter, odors and unsanitary conditions were cited. The newly formed Seven Trees Neighborhood Group met with the store management in an effort to resolve these issues with the common goal of providing a safe, clean shopping environment

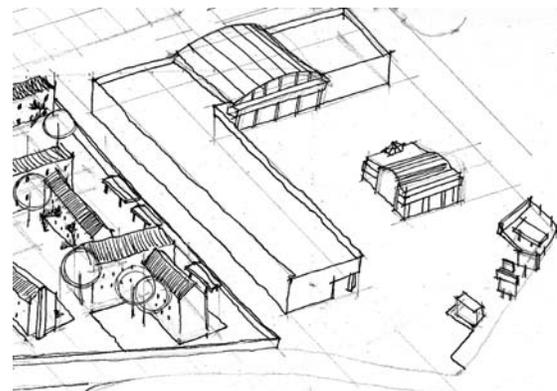


Figure 22. Sketch of Seven Trees Shopping Center



Figure 23. Seven Trees Shopping Center

The geometry of the shopping center’s parcel determines the form of the building. Its proximity

to a major road determines the large parking area and its car-orientated design. With scarce landscaping, this district gives the impression of needing human care. The main L-shaped building is a tall one-story structure. While flat lines dominate the roof profile, curved eaves provide architectural interest amidst the building’s overall massiveness and monotony.

Building Conditions

The Seven Trees neighborhood consists primarily of single-family homes, with a mix of apartments and condominiums. A field survey of the area revealed a range of conditions of these structures¹¹.

The single-family homes tend to be in good condition, with a small percentage in poor or severely deteriorated condition. The apartments in the southern multi-family district and the northern multi-family areas are in poor to severe condition.



Figure 24. Property Conditions

The average condition of the commercial structures ranged from good to poor.

Community buildings are in good condition, though some school buildings are presently under renovation given their poor condition.

Zoning & General Plan

Zoning is defined as the regulation of land in terms of use, and height and volume of buildings. The zoning regulations for the City of San José are described in the Zoning Ordinances of the City of San José¹².

The primary objective of the Zoning Ordinance is to ensure that proposed structures are compatible both architecturally, as well as functionally, with adjacent structures. In California, state law requires that zoning ordinances must be consistent with each City’s general plan. However, because San José is a “Charter City¹³,” it is allowed more flexibility in administering land use policy than “General Law” cities¹⁴.

The zoning and general plan designations for the Seven Trees largely reflect the current land use patterns.



- R-1 Residence District (one-family)
- R-1-B-6 Residence District (one-family)
- R-2 Residence District (two-family)
- A Agriculture District
- A (PD)
- C-1 Commercial District (neighborhood)
- C-3 Commercial District (general, three stories)
- M-1 Manufacturing District
- R-3 A (PD) Residence District (multiple family, two-stories)
- R-3 B (CL) Residence District (multiple family, two-stories)
- R-3 B (PD) Residence District (multiple family, two-stories)

Figure 25. Zoning Designations

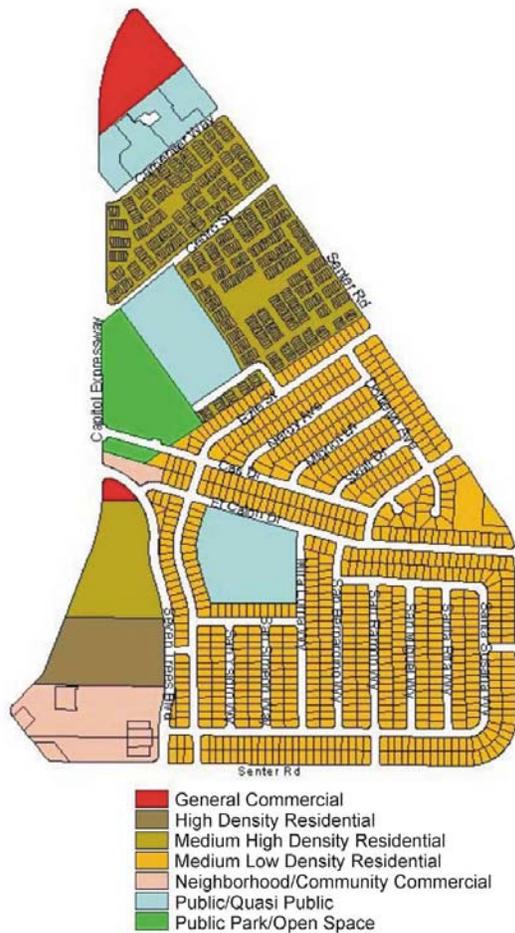


Figure 26. General Plan Designations

There are, however, a few locations where current land use differs from either zoning or general plan designations. In most cases these discrepant land parcels are facilities that provide services to the community and should be considered as assets (e.g. churches, a day care facility and a commercial plaza). None of these parcels generate a negative impact on the community or jeopardize its residents.

Ownership

Residential areas, including single-family residential and multi-family condominiums, are held in private ownership. Mid-Peninsula Inc. of Redwood City and LMO Investments own the apartment complexes between Capitol Expressway and Seven Trees Boulevard.

Gold Touch Investments of Los Altos has an important presence in the community. It owns many commercial parcels in Seven Trees: the entire West commercial node, Solari Plaza North and South, Seven Trees Shopping Center and an

unimproved easement along Seven Trees Boulevard.

Churches presently own most of the undeveloped property in the north of the neighborhood.

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

The City of San Jose, the Franklin-McKinley Unified School District, the County of Santa Clara and several non-profit organizations service the Seven Trees Neighborhood. The area lies within the jurisdiction of Council District 7. This office has been instrumental in directing funds and services to the neighborhood in recent years.

Schools

Elementary Schools

The neighborhood receives comprehensive elementary education from the Franklin-McKinley School District (FMSD). The FMSD oversees the two schools located within the neighborhood: Los Arboles Elementary School and Seven Trees Elementary School. Both schools have a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic student body population of 754 and 734 respectively. The population growth in the neighborhoods has impacted the school system, such that double sessions are common. Buildings for both Los Arboles and Seven Trees elementary schools are currently undergoing rehabilitation financed with Measure E funds.

The schools also provide open space opportunities for residents, who utilize the fields for sports and recreation.

Parents and school staff expressed their concern regarding the safety of children crossing the streets to access the schools, Cas Drive and El Cajon Drive in particular.

Andrew Hill High School

Andrew Hill belongs to the East Side Union High School District. It is located at the intersection of Senter Road and Capitol Expressway. Andrew Hill students interact with the Seven Trees community, either as residents, or by walking across the neighborhood on their way to bus stops along Capitol Expressway. Andrew Hill was built in 1956 and is the second oldest school in the East Side Union High School District.

There were approximately 2,000 students registered in Andrew Hill in October 2000. The ethnic breakdown of the school's population

reflects the community at large, with over half Latino and one-third Asian students¹⁵.

Sylvandale Middle School

Located on Sylvandale Avenue, three blocks east of Senter Road, Sylvandale belongs to the Franklin-McKinley School District. There are currently 898 students registered in the school¹⁶.

Valley Christian School

This private school sits atop a hill that rises abruptly on the southern edge of the neighborhood.

This school is interrelated with the Seven Trees and surrounding communities on various ways. First, the school building is massive, and is visible from many areas of the neighborhood.



Figure 27. Valley Christian School

Furthermore, a proposal to open a road entrance to the school off Senter Road on to Diamond Heights Drive will generate a significant impact on the traffic patterns within Seven Trees, particularly at an already congested and dangerous intersection.

The Diamond Heights Road project has brought up serious concerns regarding the impact the school already has on the community and how it will evolve in years to come.

After-School Services

The youth at Seven Trees have a variety of activities available to them, many offered through the Solari Community Center and the neighborhood schools.

The Community Center addresses the needs of working families with school age children by offering the School Age Growth and Enrichment (SAGE) program and drop-in recreation in the Teen Center and the open gym.

The Franklin McKinley School District collaborates with other community-based organizations to provide community services. Services such as Health Care, family education

programs such as: Head Start Preschool, Shea and EAK pre-kindergarten services, counseling, gang awareness, Si Se Puede, and homework services by Catholic Charities and Partners in Education. As well Seven Trees Elementary has an on-site homework club for children needing help with schoolwork or special tutoring.

Solari Community Center & Public Library

Solari Community Center, located roughly in the middle of the neighborhood, is comprised of three facilities: the main Community Center building (of approximately 10,000 square feet), the Open Recreation building, and the Teen Center. The grounds also include outdoor tennis and basketball courts.



Figure 28. Solari Community Center

The Seven Trees branch of the San Jose Public Library is located on Cas Drive, across from the Solari Community Center. The library, constructed in 1967, provides basic information and resources to the community. Together with the adjacent Solari Park, Public Library branch and Los Arboles Elementary School, the community center forms an important public facility node in the community.

Solari Community Center

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services administer the Solari Community Center. Through this department, the center provides arts and crafts, dance, early childhood recreation, music and drama, and self-defense classes, among other services.

The Community Center is also used by the neighborhood as a location for community meetings, such as with the most recent formation of the Seven Trees Neighborhood group.

Youth Perspective

In special interviews and workshops with the community's youth, designed to elicit their perspective on the current conditions in the neighborhood, it became clear that they are the main users of the Solari Park and Community Center. The youth of Seven Trees enjoy participating in sports leagues, skateboarding, bicycling, hanging out with friends and utilizing the facilities at Solari Park.



Figure 29. Action at Solari Park

Youth also reported that the nets on the basketball courts at Solari are stolen on a regular basis. The quality of the courts is a determining factor in whether or not the kids use them.

New Community Center and Library

The City of San Jose has earmarked \$13,500,000 for the development of a new community center and library. The new community center would be established as a multi-service district center servicing the needs of District 7. Council District 7 is one of the largest districts in San Jose, and is expected to add 20,000 residents by the year 2020, reaching a population of 110,404.

The new community center and library will be approximately 40,000 square feet. Included in the community center will be a full gymnasium, expanded and increased classes, day care programs, a senior center and an assortment of other recreational and educational opportunities.

The new facilities will undoubtedly provide much needed services and space for community events. However, it will also bring increased traffic and visitors to the neighborhood. The project is scheduled to begin in July 2005. In the meantime, it is essential that community members take an active role in the development process for the new

community center to guarantee the neighborhoods needs are met.

Churches

There are three churches within the neighborhood:

- **The South Side Church of Christ of San Jose** is located on Senter Road just south of the commercial node on the northern-most tip of the neighborhood. There are large undeveloped areas in front and in back of the main building.
- **Seven Trees Baptist Church** is located on Senter Road immediately south from the South Side Church of Christ. It has several well-maintained buildings and a large parking lot facing Senter Road.
- **The Iglesia de Cristo of San Jose**, a Catholic church, is located on the corner of Cas Drive and Senter Road, easily accessible by pedestrians.

Some churches serving the community are located beyond its boundaries. For instance, **Santa Maria Goretti**, located on Senter Road, is a thriving catholic church with a multi-cultural membership of Anglo, Hispanic and Vietnamese parishioners.

PARKS & RECREATION

Open space lands located within the immediate area of the Seven Trees neighborhood includes the popular Solari Park, public school lands, private open space and vacant or unattended lots.

Local Parks

The area in the vicinity of Seven Trees contains several local parks that are accessible to residents on foot.

Hellyer County Park

Hellyer County Park, a part of the Santa Clara County parks system, is located off Hellyer Avenue near Highway 101, approximately 1.5 miles east of Seven Trees. Hellyer Park offers a wide array of unique recreational opportunities to the area, including walking trails, an outdoor velodrome (bicycling track) and horseshoe pits. Cottonwood Lake is one of the main features of the park where fishing is allowed. Hellyer Park adds 223 acres of open space to the area.



Figure 30. Open Space in Seven Trees and its Vicinity

Coyote Creek Chain of Parks

Hellyer Park connects to the Coyote Creek Chain of Parks, encompassing a total of 337 acres of walking trails bordering Coyote Creek, a natural riparian corridor that provides for a tranquil walk under tree canopy.

A reach of the Coyote Creek Chain of Parks extending from Capitol Expressway to Yerba Buena Road and within walking distance to Seven Trees is currently undergoing improvements through the Public Works Department. The scope of work for the trail project includes the construction of an asphalt trail, retaining wall and erosion control measures, and the restoration and re-vegetation of the area. In the long term, the City plans to extend the trail from Capitol Expressway north towards Kelly Park. This will also function as a thoroughfare for commuters on bicycles¹⁷.

Melody Park

Melody Park, located outside the boundaries of Seven Trees a few blocks east of Senter Road, is still within reasonable walking distance. This 5.83-acre park is in excellent condition with well-maintained landscaping, a modern playground facility and picnic facilities. The City of San Jose

has budgeted \$600,000 to renovate Melody Park between the years 2010 and 2020¹⁸.

Solari Park

Solari Park is located at the heart of the Seven Trees neighborhood, next to the Solari Community Center and Los Arboles School. This well maintained 8.8-acre park is heavily utilized by residents, due to the varied recreational facilities it offers. It includes tennis, basketball, volleyball and tetherball courts, a tot lot and playground, picnic tables and grills, a large sports field and a recreational center (Figure 31).



Figure 31. Solari Park

The City has committed \$1,620,000 to conduct renovations at Solari Park in 2003, to include a much needed skateboard park, new play structures, improved fields and increased recreational facilities.¹⁹

School Grounds

The vast majority of available open space land located in the neighborhood is owned and maintained by the local public school districts.

Beyond Senter Road, Andrew Hill High School and Sylvandale Middle School include 30 acres of accessible open space. Los Arboles and Seven Trees Elementary Schools together provide more than 10 acres of open space land, not including structures.

A close examination of patterns of use of Solari Park and Los Arboles School grounds²⁰ revealed that even though a dividing chain link fence between the two areas does not impede free passage, it still provides a symbolic barrier that discourages local residents from using the playground and sports field.

Since the majority of the open space is located on public school property, it is particularly important that the school districts, cities and local

communities cooperate to make school facilities fully accessible for after-school recreational use.

Private Open Space

Seven Trees includes large multi-family complexes that further contribute to the available open space in the area. These properties are privately owned and maintained, designed to serve the residents of each complex. Most of the private open space land includes pedestrian walkways that connect buildings to streets and driveways. Larger common areas are found mainly in the center of the complexes or between clusters of buildings. Many of these spaces are heavily used by the residents and are typically well maintained.

Another significant source of open space is part of the commercial node located along Senter Road between Cas Drive and El Cajon Drive. This site serves as highly visible street frontage landscaping and it is notably as the only large swath of well-maintained green space found along the neighborhood's boundary (Figure 32).



Figure 32. Street Landscaping

Vacant or Unattended Land

There are a few lots with the potential for either contributing to the available open space or for the development of needed facilities in the neighborhood. These sites are void of structures and not maintained. The Baptist Church and the Church of Christ, to the north of the neighborhood, own the most significant vacant lands.



Figure 33. Open Land at The Baptist Church

In addition there is a long, undeveloped strip of land running along Seven Trees Boulevard.



Figure 34. Open Land along Seven Trees Boulevard

This easement is owned by Gold Touch Investments, of Los Altos. Gold Touch also owns the apartment complex across the street (Figure 34).

TRANSPORTATION

The Seven Trees Neighborhood is well serviced by public transit and easily accessible for private autos, and pedestrians. Close to major freeway systems and richly served by public transportation, the neighborhood location allows residents easy and convenient access to work, shopping and recreation in and around San Jose.

Vehicular Traffic

Capitol Expressway, Senter Road and Monterey Highway, which bound Seven Trees, account for the vast majority of traffic volume and issues in the neighborhood.



Figure 35. Traffic Volumes

The neighborhood’s smaller internal streets link its homes, schools and business, although it is interesting to note that they do not directly link the northern and southern halves of the community.

Capitol Expressway, the busiest street in the area, serves as the main connector to highways 101 and 87, as well as to major work centers, shopping, and recreational destinations. Capitol Expressway accounts for most of the traffic related issues in the neighborhood, including speeding, pedestrian and auto safety, and parking concerns.

Senter Road, the second most traveled road throughout the neighborhood, also serves as the entrance to Seven Trees.

Monterey Highway at the southwestern corner of the neighborhood serves as a connector to downtown San Jose to the north, and shopping and employment centers to the south. The intersection of Capitol Expressway and Monterey Highway presents a very high traffic volume.

Pedestrian Safety

Some of the internal streets also pose safety concerns to the community. Cedro Street, Ezie Street, El Cajon Drive and Seven Trees Boulevard are the most frequently used streets, and have been identified as hazardous to pedestrians, as they lack stop signs, crosswalks and other safety measures.

Residents have indicated their concern with the intersection of Seven Trees Boulevard and El Cajon Drive. Vehicles entering the neighborhood from Capitol onto Seven Trees Boulevard continue driving at high speeds through the intersection. There are two busy neighborhood-shopping areas on this intersection.

Neighbors worry about the safety of pedestrians, and particularly school children, at the intersection of Ezie and Cas Drive, where drivers often speed through its two-way stop.

Residents also expressed their concern with the intersection of Santa Rosa and San Ramon, where cars often speed through at two-way intersection as they turn from Senter Road.

In addition, residents report that parked vehicles block the view from San Ramon towards Senter road, posing a safety concern.

Finally, residents reported their concern with the potential danger that street vendors (such as ice-cream trucks) may pose, as they attract children onto the street.

Public Transit

The Seven Trees neighborhood is served by ten bus routes of the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), by a nearby Caltrain Station and by easy transit access to nearby Light Rail (LRT). All transit travel is along the neighborhood’s perimeter roads.

Busses

The routes that provide the greatest access to the neighborhood travel are on Senter Road, providing frequent, easy and direct access to downtown, Eastridge Shopping Center, Capitol Light Rail station and many other destinations throughout San Jose.

The Monterey Highway and Senter Road intersection is a key transit hub for VTA. Two of VTA’s most heavily used bus routes (the 66 and 68) provide frequent service to Seven Trees residents to downtown, Milpitas, South San Jose and Gilroy. Also serving Monterey/Senter are two Light Rail stops serving buses (37 and 38) that connect residents to West San Jose, Campbell and Los Gatos. A total of eight buses serve Monterey/Senter. Unfortunately, the locations of the bus stops are not accessible to all riders because of the difficulty some have crossing Monterey Highway. In addition, five separate bus stops placed relatively close together can be confusing to first time riders.

While Capitol Expressway provides the greatest traffic volume, it yields little in the way of public transit, with only the 122 Express bus.

Light Rail Transit

Four bus lines provide frequent, quick and direct service to the Capitol, Guadalupe and Santa Teresa Light Rail Stations.

Seven Trees stands to benefit from VTA's public transit investment with four major transit projects in the area, of which two will directly benefit the neighborhood. These projects include LRT connecting Eastridge Mall, Capitol Light Rail station and Bus Rapid Transit, or enhanced bus service, along Monterey Highway²¹. Both improvements will greatly benefit transit access for Seven Trees residents.

Caltrain Service

The Capitol Caltrain station is located in the Rancho neighborhood just west of Seven Trees. Residents may reach the station via 4 bus lines (66, 68, 304 and 305). This station provides a Park and Ride Lot and secure bike lockers. The Capitol stop is part of the Gilroy Limited Service with four northbound morning trains and four southbound evening trains.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

Within the Seven Trees neighborhood, pedestrian and non-motorized vehicle travel is primarily safe and comfortable. The distance from Senter Road to Capitol Expressway, the width of the neighborhood, is one half mile, about a ten-minute walk. While vehicle movement between the northern and southern halves is confusing and discouraged by the subdivision layout, pedestrian and non-motorized vehicles do have convenient, though informal, access. However, there are several locations within the neighborhood that present unsafe conditions for pedestrian movement (Figure 36).

The four schools in the area (Los Arboles, Seven Trees, Andrew Hill and Sylvandale), local neighborhood businesses, Seven Trees Shopping Center in particular, and the Solari Community Center and Library are the main pedestrian destinations. A study of circulation patterns in the community²² reveals the main formal and informal routes preferred by pedestrians.

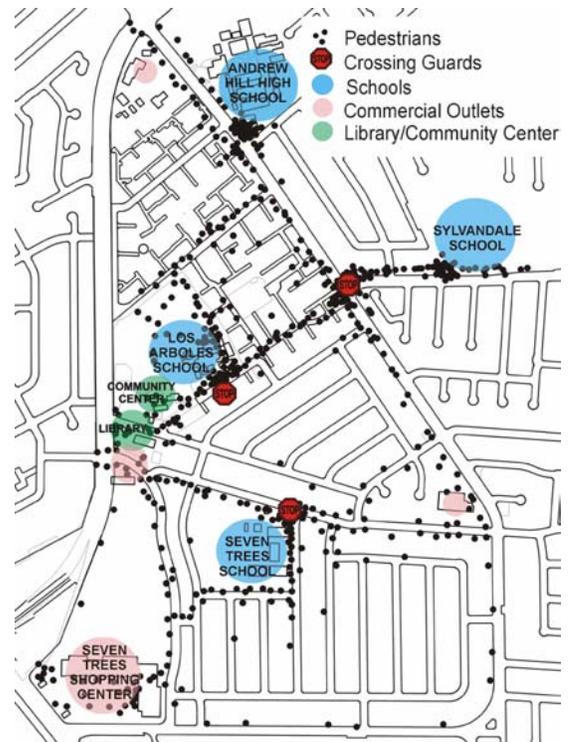


Figure 36. Informal Pedestrian Patterns

Walking is the primary mode of transportation to all four schools in the area. The elementary schools provide student-crossing guards at the crosswalk in front of the school on Los Arboles Street and Mira Loma Way and El Cajon Drive.

Students from Sylvandale Middle School and Andrew Hill High School walk across the neighborhood to and from their homes in the Seven Trees neighborhood and the Rancho neighborhood across Capitol (about a 15-minute walk). The intersection at Seven Trees Boulevard and Capitol is an important pedestrian link with the Rancho neighborhood to the west.

A city-provided crossing guard assists the students at the Senter and Sylvandale intersection both in the morning and in the afternoon. The intersection has a signal. The crossing guard mentioned that Sylvandale to Senter becomes an alternative commuter route in the morning, when US 101 is backed up, increasing the danger for pedestrians crossing Senter Road.

Neighborhood businesses are another pedestrian destination in the neighborhood. Of the four outlets, it appears the Seven Trees Shopping Center and Marina Foods attract the most pedestrians. A number of residents were observed entering the mall through a breezeway facing Seven Trees Boulevard that connects the rear of the mall and its interior.

The Seven Trees Branch Library and Solari are also important pedestrian destinations. To reach the library, many pedestrians cross diagonally at Los Arboles Street and Cas Drive without the benefit of a crosswalk.

A number of informal pedestrian pathways are evident in the neighborhood. For instance, there is a shortcut that connects the library parking lot and the edge of the Solari Shopping Center. This is also a pedestrian gateway into the neighborhood. Another pathway is located along the eastern border of the Los Arboles field.

Several informal pathways connect the northern and southern portions of the neighborhood, including an opening in the masonry wall along Richdale Avenue, opening in the chain link fence between the field and Ginkgo Court into the condominium complex, and openings in the chain link fence at the northern and western points of Los Arboles School's field.

Residents, as well as students from Andrew Hill and Sylvandale Schools, utilize these connections to reach public transit on Capitol or Senter, the Community Center, the library or the local neighborhood businesses.

Bicycle paths exist along Capitol Expressway and a portion of Senter Road, although the majority of bike riders prefer to use the sidewalks. This preference is also true within the neighborhood.

Parking

Parking is a highly visible issue in the neighborhood. Multiple vehicles are parked both in driveways and along neighborhood streets. While the 1990 census data indicated that residents owned 1.7 vehicles per occupied housing data, field observations contradict these numbers.

On a Sunday afternoon, homes had two cars parked on their site. Many homes, however, had up to five vehicles parked on site. In some cases the front yard had been paved to accommodate all the vehicles.

Excessive neighborhood parking raises several concerns. Vehicle overcrowding on the streets and in the yards creates safety problems such as the ability of emergency vehicles to negotiate the streets.

Safety issues arise for residents of the apartment complexes along Seven Trees Boulevard. Vehicles travel this road in excess of the posted speed limit. Many residents cross all along the road to reach their parked cars, often putting themselves in danger.

All neighborhood businesses in the Seven Trees Neighborhood are frequented by customers arriving in their vehicles. The busy Seven Trees Shopping Center and Marina Foods parking lot is often filled, and parking spaces are poorly marked.

¹ This map is located at the San Jose Historical Society archives.

² Survey prepared by Thompson & West.

³ Survey prepared by Herrmann Brothers.

⁴ San José Historical Society's archives.

⁵ City of San José Department of Public Works.

⁶ Unless noted otherwise, the statistics presented in this section are based on the 1990 and 2000 US Census of Population and Housing.

⁷ City of San Jose, 2000. *Consolidated Housing Plan, 2001-2005*. San Jose, CA: City of San Jose, Housing Department.

⁸ Comparisons derived from data in Yahoo's Real Estate home page: realestate.yahoo.com.

⁹ Rental prices were obtained from telephone interviews with the managers of apartment complexes in Seven Trees, October 2000.

¹⁰ City of San Jose Police Department, 2000 Crime Statistics. These statistics correspond to the incidents reported by Street Beat Patrollers.

¹¹ The parcel-by-parcel field survey of building conditions was conducted in October 2000.

¹² Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, 1997, *Title 20 of the San José Municipal Code, Zoning Ordinances*, City of San José, California

¹³ Most larger, and some smaller, older cities in California are considered "charter" cities. This gives greater local discretion for establishing land-use processes to these cities. Therefore, they do not need to adhere to state law as closely as "general law" cities (non-chartered cities).

¹⁴ Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, 1994, *Focus on the future San José 2020, General Plan*, San José, California.

¹⁵ From Andrew Hill High School's web site: www.sccoe.k12.ca.us.

¹⁶ From the Franklin-McKinley's School District website: www.fmsd.k12.ca.us/district_schools.htm.

¹⁷ From *Greenprint for Parks, Community Facilities and Programs: A Draft 20-Year Strategic Plan*, City of San Jose, 2000.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ San Jose State University graduate students conducted the use pattern study on a weekday afternoon in October 2000.

²¹ *Downtown/East Valley Major Investment Study*, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, 2000.

²² Pedestrian pattern observations were obtained on field surveys conducted during October 2000.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Seven Trees community envisions a safe and attractive neighborhood where residents have quality, affordable housing, streets and parks where children can play and neighbors meet. This defined vision should guide short and long-range interventions in the area.

The wide range of complex factors interacting in Seven Trees requires a comprehensive strategy to guide the plan. This strategy stems from a vision for the future of the community that was developed through the participation of area residents, property and business owners, and other interested citizens. A special effort was made to incorporate the youth perspective.

The following section outlines a number of recommendations that were developed based on the input from residents during a one year planning process. Community members interacted with each other, with city representatives and the San José State University planning team.

The recommendations presented in this section of the report are categorized according to the following main areas of interest that emerged in conversations among community members: housing, code enforcement, community life, traffic, parks and recreation, and beautification.

HOUSING

At community meetings the Seven Trees residents identified housing as one of their top priorities. Residents' concerns regarding housing were primarily related to the overcrowded conditions of the neighborhood and its effect on the quality of life. They voiced their concern over illegal garage conversions and the renting of beds in private homes, similar to boarding houses. Other concerns directly related to overcrowding include excessive numbers of vehicles parked at residences, parking on lawns and sidewalks, noise, loss of privacy and borrowing garbage cans.

While acknowledging the high cost of living and the housing crisis in Silicon Valley as the cause of the overcrowding, residents also expressed feelings of frustration and powerlessness as to how to retain their quality of life.

This section provides recommendations available to residents to improve their homes and opportunities for additional housing in the neighborhood in an effort to maintain and increase the quality of life.

Improving Existing Housing Conditions

The Seven Trees neighborhood consists primarily of single-family homes, with a mix of apartments and condominiums. A field survey of the area revealed a range of conditions of these dwellings.

Many of the properties in fair condition could be greatly enhanced by minimal exterior improvements. By simply adding new paint, basic repairs to roof and siding, and maintaining simple, clean landscaping, many homes could raise from fair to very good condition. The City's Housing Department has a paint grant program which pays for a portion of the cost to paint a dwelling's exterior (please refer to the Community Resources of this report, pages. 37-38, for further information and contact numbers for City programs and assistance introduced here).

Residential structures in deteriorated condition require more substantial repair and enhancement, and indicate the need for improved maintenance procedures to prevent further deterioration.

The City of San José offers financial assistance to both lower income homeowners and owners of rental units with lower income tenants. The City provides several types of loans for emergency repairs or repairs to correct health or safety violations. These loans are available at 0 to 3 percent interest rates. These funds can assist homeowners with repairs to their roofs, plumbing and/or electrical systems, floor covering replacement, and handicap accessibility, plus other repairs to bring the home to safe and sanitary conditions.

In addition to meeting citywide health and safety standards, owners of multi-family residential properties are strongly encouraged to make simple, low cost improvements to their properties. Such improvements elevate the quality of living for tenants, increase the value of the property, and enhance the visual appearance of the larger community. Recommendations listed below can generally be applied to all multi-family housing types. Many of these recommendations may also be applied to single-family units:

- Repairing and painting buildings with deteriorated surfaces and/or peeling paint; colors should be selected to take maximum advantage of the building's architectural features.
- Adding or embellishing trim bordering windows, doorways and rooflines; installing window planter boxes.
- Adding overhangs, awnings or trellises over windows and/or doorways.
- Maintaining and improving landscaped areas
- Using landscaping as separations between functional areas (e.g. between parking and open space and walkways).

- Clearly defining parking areas to separate them from residential areas.
- Providing trash enclosures for large bins and recycling containers.

New Housing Opportunities

Increasing the availability of housing in the study area, especially affordable housing, is an important issue to the Seven Trees community. The availability of quality, affordable housing for all residents in the study area would directly increase the quality of life in Seven Trees. The development of new housing should be encouraged on vacant and underutilized parcels that are appropriate for residential use.

Affordable housing projects tend to be higher density and require lots larger than most of those available in Seven Trees. Instead, non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity that use "Sweat Equity" to build single-family homes should be recommended to provide affordable housing on the areas small parcels (for further information on Habitat for Humanity, please refer to the Community Resources section, page 43).

Even though local government does not directly build housing, it has a primary responsibility to create a climate that fosters the development of housing, and affordable housing in particular. The City should review the existing zoning and General Plan designations on commercial and R-1 zoning districts, and evaluate potential changes that would create opportunities for the development of housing and other compatible land uses.

New housing developments should avoid adverse impacts to the existing community by meeting all applicable city standards for private open space and on-site parking. Future housing projects should be offered first to existing residents –this could be achieved by requiring developers to notify the Seven Trees Neighborhood Group when new housing projects are approved.

Senior Housing & Mixed-Use Opportunities

One of the characteristics of livable communities is the presence of a balance of housing options in terms of type, size, style and price. Following is a discussion of two types of housing options that are currently not present in the Seven Trees neighborhood: senior housing and mixed-use sites.

Compared to other areas in the City of San Jose and Silicon Valley, Seven Trees is an affordable neighborhood. Currently, its residents are typically young families. As the neighborhood population

matures there will be a corresponding increase in housing demand for an aging population that will face limited local rental availability on fixed incomes.

There are two parcels on Senter Road presently occupied by the Seven Trees Baptist Church and the South Side Church of Christ. They have been identified as potential future sites for development of senior housing. Both parcels are designated as public and quasi-public land uses in the City's General Plan.

The site currently occupied by the Seven Trees Shopping Center has also been identified as having redevelopment potential for a future mixed-use commercial/residential development, replacing the current strip mall. Mixed-use projects that involve residential units atop commercial properties provide another option for housing. The "living over the store" concept is both old and new. Mixed-use projects can produce flexible,

innovative solutions that bring vitality and security to neighborhoods and businesses. They reduce traffic, enhance the pedestrian environment, and provide a strong sense of community.

The current anchor tenant in the Center is Marina Foods, a neighborhood grocery store that provides convenient shopping to persons living and working in the Seven Trees neighborhood. However, the store is a source of a number of concerns raised by residents during the neighborhood workshops. Loitering, litter, odors and unsanitary conditions were cited. The Seven Trees Neighborhood Group is working with the store management in an effort to resolve these issues with the common goal of providing a safe, clean shopping environment.

The redevelopment of the property into a mixed-use project would help in addressing the issues of loitering and property maintenance, as well as providing an improved level of vitality and security on this site.

*Photo Simulation Courtesy of Silicon Valley Joint Venture
http://www.jointventure.org/resources/photosims/sim_index.html*



Figure 37. Example of the type of Mixed-Use Development that could replace existing Seven Trees Shopping Center

CODE ENFORCEMENT

The City of San José's Code Enforcement Division is available to assist residents of Seven Trees with regulation enforcement to promote and maintain a safe and desirable neighborhood. With respect to concerns regarding overcrowding and parking, the Code Enforcement Division can work with residents on issues of:

- Building Code violations (building, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, disabled access) including construction or change of occupancy without permit.
- Blight on private properties such as old furniture, car parts or appliances.
- Inoperable and abandoned vehicles on public streets and private property
- Lawn parking

The following Code Enforcement Division and other City Departments programs may benefit the Seven Trees neighborhood:

Regular Code Enforcement Procedure

Residents may file an anonymous complaint with the Code Enforcement Division by calling 408 277-4528. A warning letter is sent concerning the alleged violation and an inspector may be assigned to the case. The owner is given an opportunity to voluntarily comply with the law and correct the violation. If the owner fails to comply, there are a number of possible consequences including and administrative citation, civil penalties, abatement, judicial remedies or mediation.

Concentrated Code Enforcement Program

The Concentrated Code Enforcement Program (CCEP) provides residents and the Neighborhood Association with the tools necessary to improve their community by reducing blight, improving its appearance, increasing safety and livability, and developing the neighborhood's relationship with the City.

CCEP is a six-month program for neighborhoods with low- to moderate-income families. The program begins with a community day sponsored by the division and introduces the community to their elected officials and representatives from various City departments including police fire, housing, streets and traffic, and recycling. Community-based organizations that can aid the community are also invited. The purpose of the community day is to demystify city services.

During the program, Code Enforcement provides residential inspections to assist neighbors in bringing their homes up to health and safety standards. The division supplies residents with items to assist in improvements, such as smoke detectors and water heater straps. Additionally, the division sponsors a neighborhood clean up by providing 20 to 26 dumpsters both at the beginning of the six months and at the end.

Project Blossom

This program of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services is a resource for owners of multiple housing units. The program provides classes for landlords, educating them about their rights and responsibilities. It also encourages landlords to form an association and assists them in connecting with city resources. The program works with neighborhoods to empower property owners to improve housing conditions in the community

COMMUNITY LIFE

Residents of Seven Trees expressed their concerns regarding crime and safety in three main areas. The first dealt with the prevalence of substance abuse among all levels and ages of residents in the community. The second regarded the residents' fear of gangs and loitering groups in and around the community. The final concern was the inability, or fear on part of residents, to report crimes, since they were concerned about confidentiality.

For each of these categories a number of solutions were discussed and suggested by residents in the community workshop. Possible responses are presented in this section, along with information regarding City programs and social service providers that may assist residents in addressing the problems.

In all cases, community involvement is crucial for the success of any of the proposed strategies. In addition, the Solari Community and Teen Center, an invaluable resource in the neighborhood, should be directly involved in organizing these programs.

Strengthen Community Organizations

The recently established Seven Trees Neighborhood Group (STNG) needs to be made increasingly visible in order to receive full support from the residents and city departments. The group has and will continue to be instrumental in implementing the recommendations presented in this report.

The following strategies will promote STNG:

- Mail news about meetings and neighborhood issues through the Penny Saver leaflet.
- Include regular reports of STNG and neighborhood activities in the newsletters for Los Arboles and Seven Trees Schools.
- Give presentations at Los Arboles and Seven Trees Schools PTA and staff meetings.

Youth Safety

In order to deal with youth safety and gangs, that the following suggestions were made:

- Impose school uniforms. Many school districts have already made uniforms an important part of an overall strategy to improve school safety and discipline. For example, a school district in Long Beach, California found that after students started wearing uniforms, there was a substantial decrease in student drug cases, sex offenses, assault and battery cases, and fights.
- Adopt the D.A.R.E program through local schools. This program, sponsored by the Police Department, has proven to be a successful way of teaching school-age children decision making when dealing with peer pressure (for more information, refer to the Community Resources section of this report, page 40).
- Increase lighting levels in the parks.
- Provide more after school activities and care. Options for after-school care for young children and recreational or other structured activities for older children –like those sponsored by the Police Athletic League (PAL)– are extremely important (for more information, refer to the Community Resources section of this report, page 40).

Substance Abuse

The following solutions to address this issue were presented:

- Improved surveillance in neighborhood streets and schools.
- Tougher punishment placed on drug dealers.
- Study the *Community Restorative Justice* program of Santa Clara County as a model to rehabilitate juvenile offenders through community service.
- Provide drug education for parents and adults
- Assist parents in educating their children about drug abuse.

Reporting and Preventing Crimes

The San José Police Department has expressed a great interest in working in partnership with the community to implement measures that may reduce the fear and concerns of residents through the following:

- Promote the use of the 311 non-emergency line throughout the neighborhood (for more information regarding the use of 311, please consult the Community Resources section, page 40).
- Conduct regular meetings between law enforcement officials, the community and local schools.
- Set-up meetings to know and track the types of crimes taking place in the community.
- Community training with the crime prevention unit.
- Translate the content of meetings to Spanish and Vietnamese.

Public Drinking and Excessive Noise

Residents have expressed concerns and emphasized their willingness to work with the authorities and the Seven Trees Neighborhood Group to reduce and prevent public drinking and “disturbing the peace” incidents, typically in the form of loud and continued noise throughout neighborhood streets. Police officers and residents offered the following responses to these issues:

- Vigorously promote the use of the non-emergency 311 hotline to report public drinking and “disturbing the peace” incidents.
- Work with current merchants to stop selling alcoholic beverages to intoxicated individuals.
- Educate teens and the general public on the dangers of heavy drinking and its effects on society.
- Provide increased counseling to residents who seek help for addiction.
- Increase police presence in the community.

Existing Programs

The Seven Trees neighborhood will be able to alleviate many of the concerns of residents if it works in partnership to implement the recommendations presented above. The City and community-based providers of social services are poised to assist the community in creating a safer community for adults and children.

The City of San José provides assistance to address local issues programs such as Turn It

Around, Project Crackdown, Parent Educational and Resource Link Services (PEARLS), San José Youth Commission, the Gang Hotline and Crime Stoppers Hotline (for further information and contact numbers, refer to the Community Resources section, pages 40-41).

In addition, Catholic Charities' Wellness Village, housed in Andrew Hill High School, is also available to assist the Seven Trees community in addressing their concerns regarding social issues (for further information on the Wellness Village, please refer to the Community Resources section, page 42).

TRAFFIC

Pedestrian Safety

The following proposals address the community's concerns with pedestrian safety on all neighborhood streets, particularly on the following intersections: Ezie St. and Cas St., Santa Rosa Rd. and San Ramon St., El Cajon Dr. and Seven Trees Blvd., Capitol Expwy. and Senter Rd., San Ramon Wy. and Senter Rd., as well as in front of local schools (see figure 38).

- Install means to reduce speed, especially along the interior residential streets. These may be in the form of raised crosswalks, speed tables, neighborhood traffic circles, speed humps, or chokers (see figure 38 for details on each of these speed control devices).
- Add stop signs and/or raised crosswalks to the intersections near the schools.
- Increase police presence to enforce the speed limits and parking laws in the neighborhood.
- Ensure local schools have regular crossing guards at hours of highest pedestrian activity.
- Create a drop-off area at Los Arboles School's entrance on Mira Loma Street in order to increase pedestrian safety, while making vehicular traffic more efficient and orderly.

The Department of Transportation's "Safe Routes to Schools" program may assist in improving parking and circulation at Los Arboles School (please refer to the Community Resources section, page 38-39, for DOT contact information).

Before implementing any of these proposed solutions, the Department of Transportation (DOT) will assess the situation and try preliminary measures as follows:

- Neighborhood Automated Speed Compliance Program (NASCO), may provide a minivan equipped with a digital camera to photograph and cite speeding drivers (please refer to the Community Resources section, page 39, for contact information).
- A Radar Trailer, or a vehicle equipped with radar and a large screen showing the speed of incoming vehicles, may be placed in neighborhood streets.
- Warning signs may be placed to caution drivers to slow down through neighborhood streets.

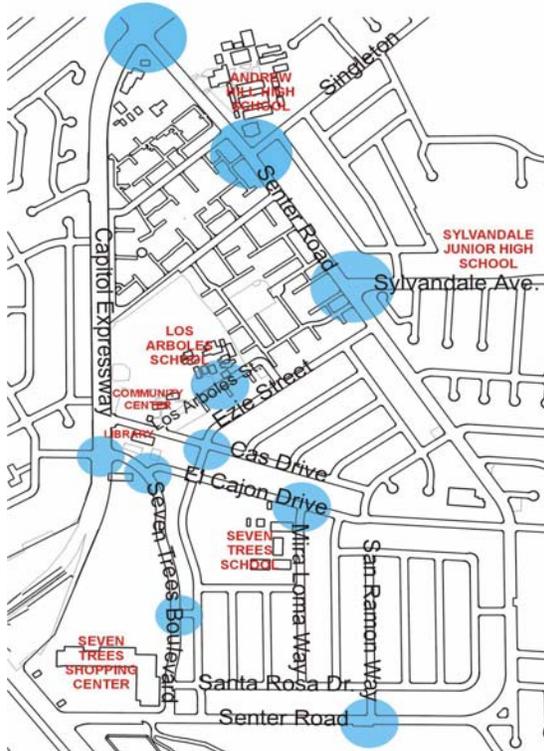
Should these measures prove effective in solving the speeding problems, other speed control devices will not be needed. However, if these preliminary measures do not prove effective, the Department of Transportation will consider other traffic calming options.

In order to initiate the process, the Neighborhood Group must contact the Department of Transportation, as well as the Police Department (contact information available the Community Resources section of this report, page 39) to bring attention to these issues. This process requires a significant amount of paperwork and is important to initiate it as soon as possible.

Parking

The issue of overcrowding has a domino effect with parking concerns in Seven Trees. Streets, driveways, and even lawns are often covered with parked cars. Residents own many of these cars, though on weekends visitors occupy the streets as well.

Residents may contact the Parking Enforcement Unit to report parking violations (for more information on the Community Resources section of the report, page 39).



Key to Figure 37.

The blue circles on the map indicate problem intersections that need to be improved in order to make them safer for pedestrians.

The pictures illustrate various methods that can be used on neighborhood streets to slow down traffic and increase pedestrian safety¹.



Center Islands are located along the centerline of a street, narrowing it.



Raised Crosswalks are flat areas raised to the level of the sidewalk with ramps along the sides.



Neighborhood Traffic Circles are raised islands, placed in intersections, around which traffic circulates.



Chokers are curb extensions or islands on one or both sides of the street that narrow the street at that location.



Speed Humps are rounded raised areas placed across the road.

Figure 38. Examples of Speed Control Options for Seven Trees

Sources: Institute of Transportation Engineers, Traffic Calming.org, and Joint Venture Silicon Valley

Noise Control

A sound wall is needed along Capitol Expressway to reduce noise pollution. In addition, there is a need to reduce noise pollution along Senter Road.

Solid masonry walls can effectively reduce noise levels (see figure 39). However, in order to mitigate its visual impact, it should be softened with landscaping such as vines and trees.

Vegetation can be employed to reduce noise pollution. This alternative is less costly, though less effective.

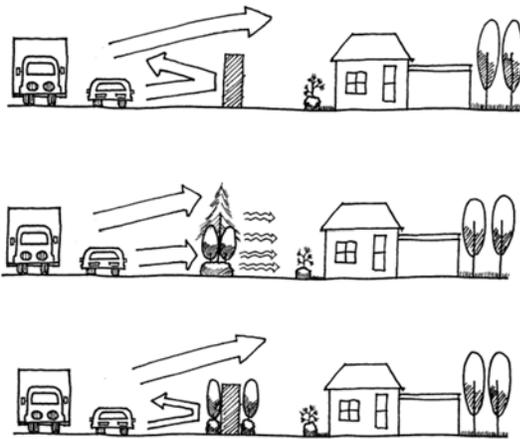


Figure 39. Sound Walls along Capitol Expressway

Public Transportation

Alternative means of transportation could be enhanced to decrease dependence on automobiles, alleviating some of the issues of congestion and parking in the community.

Maintaining and expanding public transit in and near the Seven Trees area is essential. This provides vital transportation services to the community, particularly to that segment of the population that does not drive due to disability, age, or income.

With the Valley Transportation Authority's (VTA) proposal to extend the Light Rail along Capitol Expressway², it is imperative that the community be involved in the planning process to ensure the proposed line benefits the neighborhood. One of the areas of input by the community may be the location of stops. Surveys and conversations with residents indicate that two logical locations for a station are at Seven Trees Boulevard and Senter Road (for VTA's contact information on how to

get involved in the planning process, please refer to the Community Resources section, page 39).

PARKS & RECREATION

There are many opportunities for the residents of Seven Trees to improve their recreational and open space facilities. The following are a few examples of how residents can help improve their neighborhood and provide input and ideas to the City of San José.

Solari Community Center

As the main users of the facilities, youth's voices should be an integral part of the planning for the renovation and construction of the Solari Community Center and Park. In special interviews and workshops with the community's youth, the following recommendations were offered:

Recreation

The community's youth pointed out that there is an abundance of baseball fields in the neighborhood which are underutilized. They would prefer a balance between football, soccer, and baseball fields and recommended converting some of the existing baseball fields to introduce soccer.

Teen Center and Open Gym

The Teen's Center after school sports leagues is a popular and positive influence in the lives of many neighborhood youth.

Presently, the floors at the gym are dangerously slippery. Several children have been injured on the slippery surface and furniture stored around the edges of the court. The youth suggested that regular cleaning and adequate storage spaces would improve the situation.

The youth would prefer to practice on a full court gym, instead of the half-court gym at Solari. Allowing youth to utilize their school gym for basketball practice after class hours would provide the needed facilities.

Many expressed that the weight room at the Center is small and the equipment is predominately upper body. They would like to see a wider variety of equipment for both upper and lower body muscles.

The youth would like access to more computers at the Teen Center, as well as a "Playstation II".

Skate Park

Skate boarding and inline skating are very popular in the neighborhood. Seven Trees youth expressed clearly their wish to have skate boarding-friendly places in the community.

There is a great opportunity to incorporate a skate park as part of the renovations for Solari Park. It has been recognized that a well-managed skate park helps keep children safer than if they were skating on the streets.

There are a few local skate parks that can be used as models for Seven Trees. These must be fully visible and accessible from surrounding streets.

Swimming Pool

The youth would like to see a community pool at the Solari Community Center. However, two public swimming pools within relatively close proximity to Seven Trees were identified after further research.

There is a swimming pool at Andrew Hill High School, which is normally open during the summer months. Currently, the pool at Andrew Hill is indefinitely closed due to major repairs. It was suggested that when it re-opens it be made accessible to the community at large, and its hours of operation expanded.

In addition, Fair Middle School, about a mile away from Seven Trees, is currently building a four million dollar swimming pool complex.

Should these two swimming pools not meet the needs of the Seven Trees community, it is recommended that the feasibility of incorporating such a facility in the new Community Center be explored.

Seven Trees Elementary Sports Field

Though many of the buildings at Seven Trees Elementary School have undergone renovation, its sports field is in dire need of attention. Many school children and residents use the sports field, but the area along El Cajon Drive is not maintained and has many potholes. Residents have also expressed their wish to install a track field in this open space.

Trees along the fence between the school and adjacent houses would help buffer the activities and provide shade for residents as well as users of the park. Figure 40, below, illustrates the field after improvements.



Figure 40. Seven Trees School Field Improvements

Pocket Parks

Small parks could be located throughout the neighborhood to provide residents a place to relax or sit under a tree. Youth, in particular, expressed their desire to see an increase in the quality and the number of pocket parks and playgrounds. A few potential locations for pocket parks are (see Figure 41):

- The barren strip of land alongside Seven Trees Boulevard.
- The common areas of the northern multi-family section of Seven Trees.
- The vacant area next to the library.
- A vacant lot across from the community center and next to the parking lot.



Figure 41. Potential locations for Pocket Parks and Community Garden

Multi-family Common Areas

The common areas of the multi-family section of the neighborhood offer great potential for outdoor family recreation, with some modest improvements such as:

- Introducing landscaping in neglected areas.
- Replacing dilapidated play equipment.
- Converting existing concrete areas to accommodate skateboard park features.

Linear Park along Seven Trees Boulevard

A strip of undeveloped land along Seven Trees Boulevard is presently an eyesore. A traditional park strip would help to beautify this area. However, the land is privately owned, and a maintenance agreement would have to be determined.

Low maintenance landscape design options that may be installed along Seven Trees Boulevard include: drought resistant or native plants and trees, stone gardens and wider sidewalks (see Figure 42).



Figure 42. Sidewalk Improvements on Seven Trees Boulevard

In addition, finished concrete paving products such as Stampcrete, Stencilcrete, Covacrete and pavers would add color, pattern and texture to a plain concrete slab at the time of pouring. Many different effects can be achieved from cobblestone to a tile effect.

In order to implement these ideas, a committee of residents interested in developing pocket parks through Seven Trees may be formed. Funding may be secured through various grant sources such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Community Action Pride (CAP) or Community Foundation Silicon Valley Neighborhood Grants Programs (for further information on these grant sources and programs please refer to the Community Resources section, page 41).

Community Garden

A community garden would provide a place where residents could grow fruits and vegetables, providing a local food source and opportunities for school-age students to learn about gardening and botany:

Possible locations for a community garden include:

- The vacant lot across the Solari Community Center and next to the parking lot. This currently underutilized property belongs to the City of San Jose.
- The vacant property next to the library.
- The areas adjacent to the two elementary schools, potentially on the school grounds.

In order to implement a community garden, a committee of interested residents may be formed. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services provides information and assistance in this process (please refer to the Community Resources section, page 41, for contact information).

BEAUTIFICATION

Residents discussed aesthetics and beautification in the community workshop. They reported some problems of graffiti, garbage, littering and noise. This section provides some solutions to these issues that affect the neighborhood.

Street Trees

Planting trees is an easy and cost-effective way to enhance a community, cut down on noise pollution, regulate the area's microclimate and provide shade and places for present and future residents to enjoy for years to come (see figure 43).

There are various locations where tree planting will greatly enhance the neighborhood:

- The barren strip of land along Seven Trees Boulevard.
- Behind the Community Center along Capitol Expressway, in order to help reduce noise pollution.
- Throughout the landscape strips along residential streets.

It is advisable to select a tree that is native to the area, since they are well adapted to our climate and soils, require less water, are subject to less environmental stress and are more resistant to disease.



Figure 43. Roadside Improvements on Capitol Expressway



Figure 44. Improvements to Residential Streetscape

Some of the plants recommended by the California Native Plant Society³ include the Big-Leaf Maple, Valley Oak, Coast Live Oak and the California Laurel. The Big-Leaf Maple is an attractive and fast growing species.

A local non-profit organization, Our City Forest, provides services to help residents plant trees. Often, these trees can be obtained at no cost and Our City Forest provides planting site, permits and selection expertise (please refer to the Community Resources section, page 41, for more information).

Tree Trimming

A program to regularly trim trees in the public right-of-way should be established, particularly for trees that block streetlights.

The City has a 15-year cycle for trimming street trees, but some specimens in the neighborhood need to be trimmed more frequently.

Litter

Garbage strewn over the neighborhood is a chronic problem. Problem areas are roadsides and gutters, around garbage cans, on parking lots of commercial areas, and the setbacks between sidewalks and roads. The following are some recommendations for managing litter:

- Clean-up days are a simple and effective way to deal with littering. The Council District office has, on many occasions, assisted the community in organizing clean-up days (please refer to the Community Resources section, page 37, for contact information).
- The community may want to approach the local retailers to encourage them to maintain their shops free of garbage. After all, clean shopping centers attract more customers.
- Schools can incorporate a community clean-up program in which students volunteer to clean up garbage. In this manner, students have the opportunity to provide community service and take an active role in caring for the place where they live.

These measures may break the cycle of littering, as once a community becomes clean it has a tendency to remain clean.

Tagging and Graffiti

Residents expressed concern for graffiti throughout the neighborhood.

Community murals have proven to be an effective deterrent to graffiti, especially along long, blank walls. There is a good example of this next to the tennis courts at Solari Community Center, where a mural has been painted on the wall. This mural has effectively discouraged graffiti (see figure 45).



Figure 45. Mural on Solari Park

Moreover, young residents can create murals as an opportunity to contribute their artistic talent to the community.

Youth participants also suggested that vegetation and landscaping directly in front of large blank walls would deter tagging.

Gateways

There are opportunities to create gateways throughout the community, thereby providing a sense of entrance and identity to Seven Trees.

Capitol /Seven Trees Gateway

One of the main pedestrian entrances into the Seven Trees community is located at Capitol Expressway and Seven Trees Boulevard. This entrance has the potential to serve as a gateway and welcome entrance into the community.

A sculpture, archway or sign can bring identity to Seven Trees.



Figure 46. Possible Entries on Seven Trees Boulevard

In order to enhance this as a gateway to the community, façade enhancements to the commercial center on Seven Trees Boulevard would be appropriate. The center north of Seven Trees is modern, in contrast to the center south of the boulevard, which is older and in need of revitalization. Figure 47 illustrates how the building could look after renovations to mirror the newer shopping center across the street.



Figure 47. Storefront Revitalization of Shopping Center on Seven Trees Boulevard

Solari Gateway

A gateway to the complex of Solari Community Center and Public Library would greatly help in making visible this important node in the community.

Currently, many pedestrians enter the Center by way of a dirt path connecting the shopping center on Capitol and Seven Trees Boulevard. This effectively serves as an informal entrance. The installation of a paved path, with overhead lights, native trees and artwork produced by youth at the community center, would welcome and invite users to the center (Figure 48 illustrates this idea).



Figure 48. Possible Pedestrian Arches on Solari Park

Implementation

The City's San Jose Beautiful Grant is designed to assist non-profit organizations, neighborhood associations and schools to beautify their communities. This grant may be a source of funding to implement some of the ideas presented above (please refer to the Community Resources section, page 42, for further information).

1 For further information on traffic calming methods, visit the following web sites www.ite.org/traffic/index.html, trafficalming.org and http://www.jointventure.org/resources/photosims/sim_index
2 Downtown/East Valley Major Investment Study, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, 2000.
3 The California Native Plant Society, Santa Clara Chapter, maintains a web site with a complete list of native trees suitable for landscaping. Their web address is www.stanford.edu/~rawlings/blazcon.htm.

ACTION PLAN

This chapter describes the actions needed to implement the neighborhood improvement recommendations. Time frames, responsible City departments and other parties, and potential funding sources are identified. Individual action items are listed according to their priority, as determined by the community. The Action Plan Matrix summarizes time frames, responsibilities and funding.

Action Items and Priorities

The Top 10 Action Items are the most important neighborhood priorities. They reflect the community's weighing of current neighborhood issues, long-term neighborhood vision and feasibility. Some of the Action Items are capital improvements, such as improved pedestrian crossings at key intersections. Others are policy or program-based, such as increased code enforcement efforts. The Top 10 balance need and impact. However, there are a total of 20 Action Items. The community considers all the items important.

It may happen that Action Items outside the Top 10 become more feasible than anticipated at the time this neighborhood plan was prepared. That is, new funding sources or programs may arise. Or, as implementation efforts proceed, one or more items in the "Top 10" could take significantly longer to implement, or could be pursued in a different way than envisioned in the neighborhood plan. In such cases, items outside the Top 10 should be re-evaluated for implementation.

Implementation and Oversight

A key element of implementing the Neighborhood Plan is the strong leadership of the Seven Trees Neighborhood Group (STNG).

The Neighborhood Group is the main contact point between various City departments pursuing various Action Items and the neighborhood. It evaluates implementation-related issues and progress on a regular basis, and serves as a forum for neighborhood input and outreach.

The Neighborhood Group also determines the makeup of various subcommittees that may be needed, such as a Neighborhood Traffic Subcommittee to work with the Department of Transportation on pedestrian safety recommendations.

The Group must also periodically re-evaluate the Neighborhood Plan's priorities, given changes in community concerns, funding or other factors that support re-ordering of Action Items. Finally, the Group gauges the effectiveness of implementation efforts by City staff and others, and communicate concerns and/or support to departmental and/or City Council staff.

ACTION PLAN MATRIX

Prio rity	ACTION ITEM	Time Frame	Lead Agencies	Potential Funding Source
1.	<i>Enhance Pedestrian Safety</i> throughout neighborhood streets with speed control (traffic calming) measures, radar trailers and/or photographic control of speeding drivers.	<u>S/M</u>	DOT	General Fund, DOT “Traffic Calming” Program
2.	<i>Assist the community to address social problems</i> such as youth safety, gangs, substance abuse, reluctance to report crimes, public drinking and excessive noise in residential areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of non-emergency 311 hotline • Expand substance abuse education and counseling • Provide translation services (Spanish & Vietnamese) • Expand after school activities and care for youth • Institute school uniforms • Increase police presence and community training • Increase lighting levels in local parks. • Work with local merchants to stop selling alcohol to suspect individuals 	Ongoing	PR&NS, SJPD	Catholic Charities “Wellness Village” General Fund
3.	<i>Improve Public Transit.</i> Ensure that the future Light Rail along Capitol Expressway has a station either at Seven Trees Boulevard and/or Senter Road near Seven Trees Shopping Center.	<u>S</u>	VTA	VTA Light Rail Expansion Funds
4.	<i>Reduce Litter.</i> Continue and expand clean-up days. Encourage local retailers to maintain their shops free of garbage.	Ongoing	PR&NS, CD7	City Budget CAP Grant
5.	<i>Strengthen the Seven Trees Neighborhood Group (STNG),</i> primarily through promotion and outreach.	Ongoing/ <u>S</u>	PR&NS, CD7	City Budget
6.	<i>Repair and improve Seven Trees Elementary School</i> sports field. Repair and improve the facilities including the addition of a track for community use.	<u>S</u>	PR&NS FMSD	City Budget
7.	<i>Trim Trees:</i> Establish a regular tree-trimming program	Ongoing/ <u>S</u>	DPW	City Budget
8.	<i>Improve Existing Housing:</i> especially multi-family housing, through maintenance and repairs such as painting, landscaping, and structural repairs.	Ongoing/ <u>S</u>	DOH, PB&CE	Homeowner grants, Private investment
9.	<i>Improve Code Enforcement</i> in the neighborhood to address issues of overcrowding, building code violations, blight on private properties, abandoned vehicles and lawn parking.	Ongoing	PB&CE	City Budget
10.	<i>Improve the existing Open Recreation Building and Teen Center at Solari.</i>	Ongoing	PR&NS	City Budget

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|---|
| <u>Time Frames</u> | CD7 | Council District 7 Office |
| <u>Short Term:</u> 1-3 years | DOH: | Department of Housing |
| <u>Medium Term:</u> 4-6 years | DOT: | Department of Transportation |
| <u>Long Term:</u> 7-10 years | DPW: | Department of Public Works |
| | FMSD | Franklin-McKinley School District |
| | OED: | Office of Economic Development |
| | PB&CE: | Department of Planning, Building & Code Enforcement |
| | PO: | Property Owners |
| | PR&NS: | Department of Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services |
| | SJPD: | San Jose Police Department |
| | SJRA: | San Jose Redevelopment Agency |
| | VTA: | Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority |

Prio rity	ACTION ITEM	Time Frame	Lead Agencies	Potential Funding Source
11.	<i>Create New Housing Opportunities</i> , especially for seniors and low-income residents.	<u>M/L</u>	DOH	Private Investment, Housing Funds
12.	<i>Revitalize Commercial Centers</i> .	<u>S/M</u>	OED, PO	Private Investment
13.	<i>Plant Street Trees</i> : along residential streets, on the barren strip of land along Seven Trees Boulevard and along Capitol Expressway.	<u>S</u>	DOT	Our City Forest Grants General Fund
14.	<i>Create Soccer Fields</i> : Convert some of the existing baseball fields to accommodate soccer.	<u>S</u>	PR&NS	City Budget (Solari Park Renovation)
15.	<i>Create Community Garden</i> : Initiate a community garden project in the neighborhood.	<u>S/M</u>	PR&NS	CAP Grant City Budget
16.	<i>Gateways</i> : Create pedestrian gateways throughout the community to provide a sense of entrance and identity to Seven Trees.	<u>M</u>	DPW	CAP Grant SJ Beautiful Grant
17.	<i>Implement Noise Control</i> : Add a sound wall along Capitol Expressway to reduce noise pollution, on the northern section of the neighborhood in particular.	<u>S/M</u>	DOT	VTA Grant
18.	<i>Create Small (Pocket) Parks</i> : Add pocket parks throughout the neighborhood. These small parks should be landscaped, dilapidated play equipment replaced, and concrete areas adapted for skateboarding.	<u>S/M</u>	PR&NS, PO	Private Investment, General Fund
19.	<i>Implement Anti-Graffiti Strategies</i> : Add vegetation and landscaping and commission mural projects directly in front of large blank walls to deter tagging.	<u>S</u>	PR&NS	General Fund
20.	<i>Create a Skate Park</i> : Incorporate a skate park as part of the renovations for Solari Park.	<u>S/M</u>	PR&NS	City Budget (Solari Park Renovation)

Time Frames

Short Term: 1-3 years

Medium Term: 4-6 years

Long Term: 7-10 years

CD7

Council District 7 Office

DOH:

Department of Housing

DOT:

Department of Transportation

DPW:

Department of Public Works

FMSD

Franklin-McKinley School District

OED:

Office of Economic Development

PB&CE:

Department of Planning, Building & Code Enforcement

PO:

Property Owners

PR&NS:

Department of Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services

SJPD:

San Jose Police Department

SJRA:

San Jose Redevelopment Agency

VTA:

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The following is a list of programs, policies and funding sources available from the public as well as the corporate sector to neighborhood organizations and non-profit groups interested in improving the quality of life in their communities. They address housing issues, street and traffic concerns, code enforcement, crime prevention, neighborhood programs, and private sponsors of community-based initiatives.

COUNCIL DISTRICT 7

Council District 7 represents the South Central area of the City of San José, which includes the Seven Trees neighborhood. The council office works with the community on issues that affect its livelihood.

Telephone: (408) 277-5226

e-mail at district7@ci.sj.ca.us.

www.ci.san-jose.ca.us/council/dist7/

HOUSING

Housing Production

Housing Development Program - Low-interest loans are provided to developers to construct new affordable rental housing. Telephone: (408) 277-4747.

www.sjhousing.org/program/prog_new.htm

Predevelopment Loans: Predevelopment loans assist non-profit housing developers with the early stages of planning affordable housing projects, such as hiring architects or obtaining appropriate zoning permits. The maximum loan amount is \$100,000. Telephone: (408) 277-4747.

www.sjhousing.org/program/prog_index.htm

10% Set-aside - San José's Housing Department sets aside 10% of its housing funds available for large development projects for City initiated revitalization and special projects. Telephone: (408) 277-4747

Other Assistance - The San José Housing Department also provides funds for the development of senior housing projects, Single-Room Occupancy Hotels (SRO), homeless shelters, transitional housing, and other special needs housing. Telephone: (408) 277-4747

Housing Rehabilitation and Preservation

www.sjhousing.org/program/prog_index.htm

Housing Preservation Program - lends funds to eligible lower-income homeowners of single-family and duplex properties for basic repairs. Telephone: (408) 277-4747

Rental Housing Rehabilitation Program - provides loans to owners of rental housing occupied by qualifying lower-income households for needed repairs. Telephone: (408) 277-4747

Mobile Home Repair Loan Program - funds up to \$15,000 in repairs to eligible lower-income mobile home owners. Telephone: (408) 277-4747

Emergency Grants, up to \$7,500 are provided for lower-income rental properties. Most of these grants are being used to convert fixed window bars on properties to releasable bars to ensure better safety. Telephone: (408) 277-4747

Assistance to Low and Moderate Income Homebuyers and Renters

Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC) Program - Under this program, moderate-income buyers can, for 10 years, receive a federal income tax credit for 15% of their mortgage expenses. This program is on a first come, first serve basis, with slots usually filling up within a month after they become available in early January. Telephone: (408) 277-4747

California Housing Loan Insurance Fund (CHLIF) - This program allows moderate income homebuyers to only pay a 3% down payment on a home up to \$227,000, rather than the usual 20%. The CHLIF currently suffers from a poor marketing and outreach program, limiting its success in the community. Telephone: (408) 277-4747

Focus on Upgrading Neighborhoods (FUN) Program - The FUN program offers a long-term, low interest rehabilitation loan to very new homeowners of moderate income. Homes must be within the Greater Downtown Area and not exceed 110% of the median home price after rehabilitation. The FUN program also requires front-yard landscaping and exterior painting if the building needs it. Telephone: (408) 277-4747

First Time Home Buyers - The Project Development program offers financing to first time home buyers, as well as nonprofit and for profit developers of affordable housing to low and moderate income people. For more information call (408) 277-4747

Housing Rehabilitation Loans - The City of San José has a housing rehabilitation program that offers low interest loans for home repairs to qualified lower income property owners. To

qualify, the applicant must be an owner of a single family home or mobile home. Telephone: (408) 277-4747

Legal Issues - The Legal Aid Housing Project offers a wide variety of housing services to low and moderate-income families. Mortgage default counseling, free tenant / landlord counseling and mediation services are provided. Issues they can help with are: evictions, deposits, utility shut-offs, lockouts, abandonment, repairs, rent withholding, rent raises, housing discrimination. Counselors are available to assist with selected cases. For additional information stop by 480 North First Street, or call (408) 283-1540.

Rental Housing Assistance - The County of Santa Clara offers assistance to low-income individuals and families in obtaining rental housing. More information is available at Santa Clara County Housing Authority. Telephone (408) 275-5770.

Paint Grants - The City of San José offers a Paint Grant Program in which the city will pay up to 80% of the cost of exterior painting of qualified single family homes and mobile homes. In order to qualify, the owner(s) must be occupants of the house, and they must meet low-income eligibility requirements. For additional information and application call (408) 277-4747.

Rental Dispute Mediation and Arbitration (Rent Control) - Rent increases on triplexes and apartment buildings are limited to once a year and may not be raised more than 8%. Landlords and tenants may file petitions for hearings on increases exceeding those limits. Telephone: (408) 277-5431.

Emergency Shelter Grant Program - The City of San José receives annual federal funds from HUD to distribute to nonprofit organizations serving the homeless. The program is designed to help improve the quality of existing shelters, help make available additional emergency shelters and shelter beds, and constrain the increase of homelessness through funding prevention programs.

Homelessness - If you or someone you know is homeless or about to be homeless, the City can help. Call 1-800-7-Shelter (1-800-774-3583) for information.

STREETS AND TRAFFIC

www.ci.san-jose.ca.us/dot/

Immediate Concerns - For a problem in the street such as fallen tree limbs, debris, or a large dumped object, sewer or oil spills, over-water from landscape median islands, a missing stop sign, or a traffic signal that is not working, call (408) 277-4373 for assistance (24 hours).

Sanitary Sewers – Sewer crews will respond to sewer problems caused by the sewer main or in sewer lateral pipes within five feet of a property's sidewalk. Telephone: (408) 277-4373 (24 hours).

Sidewalk, Curb, and Gutter Repair - The property owner is responsible for keeping the sidewalks in front of his or her property in a safe and usable condition. If there is sidewalk damage, the Sidewalk Repair Service must be called at (408) 277-2572.

Street Light Repair - If a streetlight is not working, call the street light repair recorder at (408) 277-5517 24 hours a day with the following information:

- The name of the street and the nearest cross-section.
- Street address of the property.
- The street light number (for example: 12L231).

Street Sweeping - San José Streets are swept once a month. If you have any questions or concerns regarding street sweeping, call (408) 277-2571.

Street Trees – The street trees are trimmed by the city once every 15 years. All other tree maintenance is the responsibility of the owner. For tree trimming, planting, removal, permits, and other concerns call the City Arborist at (408) 277-2762.

Traffic Studies – If you have a concern with traffic in your neighborhood, the first step is to contact the City's Department of Transportation (DOT):

Telephone: (408) 277-4304 (Traffic Engineering)

e-mail: traffic.calming@ci.sj.ca.us

www.ci.san-jose.ca.us/dot/traffic_calming.htm

Traffic Enforcement Unit – Can provide higher than normal levels of enforcement at select times of day and locations.

Telephone: (408) 277-4351.

In addition, the **Neighborhood Automated Speed Compliance Program** (NAS COP) installs a

photo-radar van at the request of the majority of residents on a street. Telephone: (408) 794-6216.

Traffic Signals – To report a problem with traffic signals such as burnt out lamps, call the Traffic Signal Repair Shop at (408) 277-5515. If you have a concern regarding the timing at a traffic light (for example not enough green time for traffic movement) or if you would like to request a study for a new signal, call the Signal Operations Unit at (408) 277-4304.

Downtown East Valley Transit Improvement Plan – The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) schedules public meetings and open houses to discuss station locations, parking issues and potential grade separations for the Light Rail extension along Capitol Expressway. For information contact (408) 321-5744, or e-mail: downtown.eastvalley@vta.org

CODE ENFORCEMENT

www.ci.san-jose.ca.us/code/

Abandoned Vehicles - Vehicles abandoned on the street should be reported to Vehicle Abatement Hotline at (408) 277-5305. If a vehicle is on private property, call (408) 277-5307. Commercial vehicles 10,000 lb. or greater may not be parked on a residential street. Exceptions are made for situations such as building, loading, etc. Enforcement of this code is done by the Police Department at (408) 277-4222. To report an inoperable or disassembled vehicle on private property, call the Code Enforcement Division at (408) 277-4528. The City also provides free towing to residents who have junked or inoperable vehicles stored on their property by calling (408) 277-4931.

Lawn Parking - Parking on the lawn of a residence is a violation of municipal codes. To report a car parked on a lawn, call (408) 277-4528. A warning letter will be sent for alleged violations and/or an inspector will be assigned to the case. If the vehicle is not removed from the lawn, a \$25 fine will be given to the violator.

Early Setting Out of Yard Trimmings - Yard trimmings may be set out only 24 hours prior to pick up. The fine for the first time offense is \$25, second time offense is \$50, and third time offense is \$75. If your neighbor has yard trimmings out more than 24 hours, it is important that you report them. Call (408) 277-4528 for more information.

Graffiti - Graffiti is vandalism and a blight on the neighborhood. If you see someone vandalizing

property with graffiti call the Anti-Graffiti Hotline at (408) 277-2758.

The City of San José has an Anti-Graffiti Program. The program's purpose is to prevent graffiti through education and to remove graffiti from City, private and business property. To receive free paint to cover up graffiti, call the Paint Bank at (408) 277-5827.

Illegal Dumping - It is illegal to dispose of any type of material, garbage, large items, or hazardous waste by dumping it on the side of the road, in parks, alleyways, commercial dumpsters, or vacant lots. To report illegal dumping (408) 277-4373.

If you need to dispose of large household items, call Recycle Plus at (408) 277-2700 to make an appointment for bulky goods collection. If you live in a house, the fee is \$18 for up to three large items. If you live in an apartment, contact the manager or owner.

Usually there is a telephone number on shopping carts for free pick-up. Neighbors can call that number to have the cart removed.

Hazardous Waste - It is illegal to dispose of paint, oil, solvents, or household cleaning chemicals through the regular garbage collection service. Call (408) 299-7300 for information. Disposal of household hazardous waste is provided free of charge to all San José residents through a countywide collection program. Weekend drop-off events are held in locations throughout Santa Clara County. Telephone: (408) 299-7300.

Houses and Properties in Disrepair - The City of San José works to curb neighborhood blight. If your neighbor's house is blighted, you can call (408) 277-4528 for help and information. Your neighbor will receive a warning and a \$250 violation charge if the problem is not fixed.

The City of San José offers low interest loans for the repair of homes for owner occupied units. Telephone: (408) 277-4747.

CRIME PREVENTION

The City of San José Police Department offers programs to educate residents about crime prevention and safety measures. Many of the 32 programs offered are school-based intervention programs. For more information call the Crime Prevention Unit at (408) 277-4133. www.sjpd.org/comm_serv.html

311 - This is the non-emergency police number to be use at times when the police are needed but it is not an emergency. Such times are: Abandoned vehicles, unless suspected stolen, noise disturbances, such as loud music or loud parties, parking complaints, lost or found property, and barking dogs. If you are not sure if your need is an emergency, error on the side of caution, and call 911.

D.A.R.E - A free program for schools designed to:

- Provide students with a knowledge base on the effects of drug abuse.
- Build decision-making and problem solving skills and strategies to help school students to resist drug use, peer pressure and violence.
- Provide students with alternatives to drug use.

While officers conduct the D.A.R.E. lessons, a licensed teacher is required to be present in the classroom. The teacher is expected to reinforce the D.A.R.E material by integrating its objectives into the general curriculum for the particular grade level. Telephone: (408) 794-1210.

Drug Hotline - If anyone has information on any illegal drug activity, call the hotline at 971-DRUG. The Crime Stopper telephone number is 947-STOP. All calls are strictly confidential.

Homeless Complaints - If you see homeless people engaging in activities that you believe to be illegal, call the San José Police Department at (408) 277-5300.

Police Activities League (PAL) - The San Jose Police Activities League was founded in 1967 with a few youngsters, a few dollars and dreams of assisting the youth in our community. What once was a dream is now a reality. Some 10,000 young people are currently participating in PAL programs. Telephone: (408) 272-9725.

Project Crackdown - Project Crackdown is a multi-agency, multi-service approach to target City, County, and private resources toward those neighborhoods impacted by "drugs and gangs." Project Crackdown's emphasis is that the City of San José will not tolerate drugs and gangs and their negative impact on neighborhoods. Telephone: (408) 277-2838.

The San José Mayor's Gang Task Force - The Gang Intervention and Mediation Services Unit provides staffing and coordination to the San José Mayor's Gang Task Force. The mission of the Gang Task Force is to provide the leadership, coordination, and resources to create a citywide "continuum of services". These services will work

together towards the prevention and reduction of gangs and gang violence in the City of San José. Telephone: (408) 277-4237.

NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAMS

Community Action Pride Grants: Community Action and Pride Grants (CAP) are intended for individual neighborhood groups (both established and emerging) proposing projects, services and activities that foster or enhance safety, reduce blight and crime, and improve the quality of life in a neighborhood. All San José, resident-based neighborhood groups are eligible for these grants. Community Action and Pride Grants Program offers grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000 to neighborhood groups to finance a wide range of proposals such as human services, community events, park projects, lighting, and neighborhood safety improvements. Telephone: (408) 277-5208.

Community Development Block Programs - A Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is money received from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to be administered locally by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services.

The City programs and community agencies that receive CDBG funds must address at least one of the following national objectives set by Congress:

- Benefit low and moderate income persons
- Address the eradication or prevention of slums and blight, or
- Meet a community development need in an urgent situation

Telephone: (408) 277-4971.

Community Foundation of Santa Clara County Neighborhood Grant Program - These grants are funded by the City of San José for small-scale projects ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 and are distributed and managed through an existing Neighborhood Grants Program of the Community Foundation. Telephone (408) 321-2666

Community Gardens – These are year-round gardens managed by volunteer staff where residents can have their own garden plot to grow organic vegetables, herbs, flowers or fruit. Telephone: (408) 277-2575

www.sjcommunitygardens.org

Community Improvement Program - A citywide program that focuses on multi-family residential units. Initial inspections of the buildings are performed, and the owners are then notified and

required to make improvements within a specified amount of time. Telephone: (408) 277-4528.

Neighborhood Reinvestment - Neighborhood Reinvestment was established in 1978 to revitalize declining lower-income communities and provide affordable housing for their residents through the development and support of local resident-led partnerships that include business leaders and local government officials. For more information about these programs call or write to:

Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation
1325 G Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 376-2400

Neighborhood Services Division - The Division of Neighborhood Services of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) works in association with community based organizations, neighborhood associations, and individual residents to improve neighborhoods through a variety of clean-ups, gang diversion, and grant programs and the development of programs to improve the relationship between neighborhoods and schools. Services include Neighborhood Development Center (NDC), Project Crackdown, P.E.A.R.L.S. (Parent Education and Resource Link Services), Project Blossom, and Weed and Seed.

Telephone: (408) 277-4461.

Our City Forest – assists residents, neighborhood groups, City departments, schools, corporations and agencies, providing services ranging from tree planting to tree care to educational workshops. It also provides free trees and materials through special grants.

Telephone: (408) 99TREES or (408) 998-7337

www.ourcityforest.org

P.E.A.R.L.S. (Parent Education and Resource Link Services) - P.E.A.R.L.S. provides a direct phone line for families to request information, services, and existing resources within their community. This program extends to families the opportunity to receive a number of referrals that will address their particular needs. It also provides agencies with an opportunity to receive referrals at no cost, from families whose needs match those services or programs that the agency provides.

Telephone: (408) 277-5337.

<http://www.ci.san-jose.ca.us/prns/yspearls.htm>

Project Blossom - Project Blossom works with neighborhoods suffering from severe problems associated with blight, health and safety issues, and poor property maintenance. The program's

goal is to educate residents to access City and other governmental services to effect change and control neighborhood situations.

Telephone: (408) 277-5350.

www.ci.sanjose.ca.us/prns/ndc.htm#blossom

San José Beautiful - The Beautification Grants Program provides up to \$ 2,000 in funding to be matched by volunteer efforts and/or cash donations. Projects must be within the city limits of San José, and in a highly visible public area. San José Beautiful's mission is to beautify the City through community advocacy, education and empowerment.

Telephone: (408) 277-5208.

www.sjbeautiful.org

San José B.E.S.T. (Bringing Everyone's Strengths Together) - B.E.S.T. is a managed program to provide funding for a continuum of prevention, intervention and suppression programs targeted at youth exhibiting at-risk, high-risk and gang-involved behaviors. Agencies apply for funding through an annual Request for Qualifications process (RFQ). Telephone: (408) 277-4693.

www.ci.san-jose.ca.us/prns/ysbest.htm

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS & CORPORATE SPONSORS

The following organizations offer grants for community projects and services.

Adobe Systems' Community Relations Program goals are to positively impact, strengthen, and benefit local communities to make them healthier places to live and work in. They support non-profit organizations that service disadvantaged youth, homeless, people with disabilities, minorities, the elderly, victims of abuse, disaster relief, medical and hospice care, arts and animal rights. They provide cash grants with no minimum and no maximum amounts. Telephone: (408) 536-3993.

www.adobe.com/aboutadobe/philanthropy/main.html

Andrew Hill Wellness Village – Catholic Charities Provides community trainings and events to promote family wellness on topics such as healthy communication, community resources, health topics, and other related topics. Telephone: (408) 283-6150

www.ccsj.org/services/youth/wellness_village.htm

American Express - offers grants for community services, including: the American National Red

Cross, Meals on Wheels, and Hands on Atlanta, an event in which volunteers rehabilitated houses, painted schools and upgraded parks in inner city neighborhoods.

www.americanexpress.com/corp/philanthropy

Ben & Jerry's Foundation offers grants to benefit children and families, disenfranchised groups, and the environment. They seek to support grassroots groups that demonstrate a plan for long-term viability that will lead to new ways of thinking and acting. Full Grants range from \$1,000 to \$ 15,000, and Small Grants are under \$ 1,000.

Ben & Jerry's Foundation

30 Community Drive

South Burlington, Vermont 05403-6828

(802) 651-9600

www.benjerry.com/foundation/index.html#types

Digital Equipment Company has a Community Involvement Department which sponsors community activities and offers grants to programs and activities promoting the following issues: solutions to social issues which impact children and youth, critical community needs and programs recognized as model. They also offer equipment grants for computer related needs for educational purposes. Telephone: (978) 493-6650

e-mail: contribution@digital.com

www.digital.com/community/corporatecontributions.html

Dreyers - offers small grants and donates ice cream products and gift certificates and auction items to bona fide non-profit organizations for community events.

www.dreyers.com

Fannie Mae Foundation - a private non-profit organization, supports local and national organizations to provide affordable housing and to improve the quality of life in communities. The Foundation offers *Home-Buying Fairs* to inform people about how they can buy a house, featuring experts to answer questions and inform the public on how to buy a house.

Telephone: 1-888-752-7170

Fannie Mae also offers *Community Outreach Grant* awards for: affordable housing production, fair housing and fair lending promotion, community based responses, use of technology to strengthen community based organizations, disseminating information about home ownership, and strengthening organizational and individual capacity through home ownership counseling and other activities.

Telephone: (202) 274-8078

www.fanniemaefoundation.org/CommunityGrants/cmy.pdf

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit, non-denominational Christian housing organization that builds affordable, houses in partnership with those in need of adequate shelter. Habitat has built about 30,000 houses across the United States. Houses are sold at no profit, with no interest charged on the mortgage. Homeowners and volunteers build the houses under trained supervision. Individuals, corporations, faith groups and others provide financial support.

Silicon Valley Habitat for Humanity
888 North First Street, Suite 215
San Jose, CA 95112
Telephone: (408) 294-6464
www.habitat.org

Hewlett Packard sponsors the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, offering grants for various charitable purposes generally concerned with youth, education and community programs. The Foundation sponsors neighborhood improvement, community service, and family transition.

William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
525 Middlefield Road, Suite 200
Menlo Park, CA 94025
Telephone: (650) 329-1070
www.corp.hp.com/Publish/UG/

IBM sponsors grants for educational and community purposes.
www.ibm.com/IBM/IBMGives/index.html

Intel Foundation sponsors a wide variety of educational programs as well as non-profit organizations.
www.intel.com/intel/community/foundation/appro.html

Pacific Bell Foundation offers grants to community organizations. Additional information is available by writing to:

The Pacific Bell Foundation
175 E. Houston, Suite 200
San Antonio, TX 78205
Telephone: 1-800-672-3930

Prudential Foundation sponsors works to improve community life. Their primary focus is critical children's issues, community and

education issues. They also sponsor promotion of public, private and non-profit sector cooperative efforts to revitalize urban neighborhoods, spur economic development, and increase community stability. They also fund efforts to help economically disadvantaged people by sponsoring affordable housing, employment, and job training.

The Prudential Foundation
751 Broad Street, 15th Floor
Newark, NJ 07102-3777
www.prudential.com/aboutpru/community/apczz/013

Sun Microsystems has several programs for community outreach, including Community Development Grants, which are awarded to programs that increase educational and employment opportunities for people who live and work near Sun's major employment centers.

Community Development Grant Programs
Worldwide Corporate Affairs Department
Sun Microsystems, Inc
901 San Antonio Road MS: UPAL1-462
Palo Alto, CA 94303
www.sun.com/corporateoverview/corpaffairs/grants.html

Wells Fargo offers grants for community development, including affordable housing for low and moderate-income families, job training and community revitalization for low to moderate-income neighborhoods. They also sponsor educational programs.

Wells Fargo Foundation
455 Market Street, 0104-034
San Francisco, CA 94163
Telephone: (415) 975-5235
Fax: (415) 975-6260
www.wellsfargo.com/cra/contrib/

William Randolph Hearst Foundation sponsors a wide variety of programs ranging from education, health, social services and culture.

The William Randolph Hearst Foundation
90 New Montgomery Street, Suite 1212
San Francisco, CA 94105-4504
Telephone: (415) 543-0400



Seven Trees

neighborhood plan



San José State
UNIVERSITY

Urban and Regional Planning Department
One Washington Square
San José, CA 95192-0185
(408) 924-5882
urbplan@email.sjsu.edu
www.sjsu.edu/depts/urbplan/up0d131.htm

