

CITY STREAMS AND COMMUNITY DREAMS:

PLACEMAKING STRATEGIES IN NORTH SAN JOSÉ



MEET THE FALL 2023 COMMUNITY PLANNING CAPSTONE TEAM



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Lastly, a special thank you to the community members who participated in our survey. We appreciate your time and the insights you provided. We look forward to seeing North San José transform into the community you envision.

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An aerial photograph of a university campus. The image shows several large, modern academic buildings with white and grey facades. A central green field is surrounded by trees, some of which have yellow and orange autumn foliage. There are parking lots, roads, and a tennis court visible. In the background, there are hills under a clear sky. The text '00 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY' is overlaid on the top half of the image.

00 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Image source: Jovanny Escareno

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the time of this report's publication, the San José Department of Transportation (SJDOT) is preparing to initiate a new Multimodal Transportation Improvement Plan (MTIP) for North San José. This proposed MTIP (NSJ MTIP) has the potential to be transformative for North San José's residents, workers, and visitors. This report summarizes the work of eighteen graduate urban planning students from San José State University as they studied North San José in a Fall 2023 Capstone Studio course.

Led by Rick Kos, AICP, the graduate student team first undertook a community assessment to understand past and present conditions in the 6.22-square mile study area, bounded by SR-237 to the north, US-101 to the south and west, Guadalupe River to the west, I-880 to the south and east, and Coyote Creek to the east. In fact, the location of North San José (between Guadalupe River and Coyote Creek) inspired the "streams" part of this report's title. The second phase of the students' work applied contemporary placemaking strategies – coupled with input from engagement with community members – to generate recommendations that city staff might consider as North San José evolves, as is likely, into the city's next major neighborhood.

The students' community assessment phase began with a consideration of North San José's planning history. We learned that in 1974, the City of San José began implementation of the *Rincon de Los Esteros Development Plan*. It was around this time that North San José began to shed the last remnants of its agricultural past on the way to becoming the Innovation Triangle (also known as the Golden Triangle), a hub of light industrial operations and business parks. These new land uses led to the emergence of a unique part of San José, one that was not predominantly zoned for single-family residential development that characterizes much of the nation's 11-largest city.

Decades later, the 2005 North San José Area Development Policy sought a new trajectory for the area. This involved commercial and residential densification amidst a growing mix of land uses. The four-phase plan would make way for 26.7 million square feet of industrial development, one million square feet of regional commercial development, 1,000 new hotel rooms, 1.7 million square feet of neighborhood serving commercial development and 32,000 residential units.

Although the 2005 plan is no longer in effect, significant tension exists between North San José's current form – characterized by wide, car-dominant arterials and an abundance of corporate and industrial lots – and emerging visions for its future. These visions recognize that in some ways North San Jose is the city's "final frontier" to foster large-scale, densely developed, walkable, and connected neighborhoods that should be, in the words of Project Advisor Don Weden, an "intelligently more urban" place.

Bridging North San José's past and its future are the present-day experiences of residents and non-residents alike, living and interacting within the area on a daily basis. An intercept survey was conducted at eight busy locations strategically selected within

the study area. Participants were asked to share their thoughts on wide-ranging topics, including subjective ones, such as their perceptions of North San José's assets and liabilities, and practical matters such as commute and non-commute transportation modes. A total of 179 complete surveys were collected.

Participants were asked to gauge whether North San José has a distinct "sense of community" on a 1-5 scale; the results showed an average response of 3.39, more than expected, since we started the semester with the notion that North San José lacked a distinct identity.

To dig deeper, respondents were asked "What three words would you use to describe North San José to someone not familiar with the area?" When responses were aggregated into a word cloud,

residents and non-residents noted many positive sentiments including a fondness for the study area's plentiful parks and trails. On the other hand, respondents also lamented the lack of robust public transportation options, the auto-dominated landscape, and long blocks that make efficiently navigating the area on foot difficult.

An interesting finding from the survey is the rate of biking and walking as a daily commute mode was significantly higher among study area residents (20 percent) than the citywide average (2.5 percent). This could be due to the close proximity of employees' homes to major North San José workplaces such as Samsung, Cisco, and PayPal - an important part of the marketing strategy used by the area's apartment complex owners.



Image source: Jovanny Escareno

Many survey participants made astute points related to land use and zoning patterns that characterize conventional suburban sprawl, without necessarily having the tools or training to call them out by name. For example, respondents remarked on how “spread out” North San José appears; this was supported by spatial analysis using ArcGIS Pro to map the average parcel size in North San José: six times larger than their citywide counterparts!

To develop actionable recommendations for fostering “intelligent urbanism” that draw from planning and placemaking best practices, a number of San José’s mobility and design policies were considered, including but not limited to: *San José Better Bike Plan 2025*, *North San José Neighborhood Plan*, and the *San José Citywide Design Guidelines*. From this examination of North San José’s complex regulatory landscape, five placemaking principles and strategies were developed to guide North San José’s evolution into a sustainable, attractive, suburban-urban hybrid:

- Enhance livability for residents and visitors through innovative urban design
- Ensure equitable access to housing, amenities, and services
- Celebrate the area’s culture for a strong sense of identity and community
- Promote environmental stewardship and climate resiliency
- Provide green parks and open spaces for residents and visitors

In developing these placemaking principles, a hierarchy of geographic scales was established, from the micro- (small, streetside elements) to neighborhood-level. To illustrate the principles as applied to locations of various sizes, we identified the following “opportunity sites” in the study area:

- North First Street Corridor
- Moitozo Orchards
- Tasman Drive and Zanker Road
- Zanker Road (southern terminus)
- Renaissance Drive
- River Oaks Parkway
- Villagio Street and Zanker Road
- Parking Lots (multiple locations)
in North San José



The Purpose of the NSJ MTIP

At the time of this report’s publication, SJDOT is preparing to initiate a new MTIP for the study area. The future proposed North San José MTIP (NSJ MTIP) has the potential to be transformative for its residents, workers, and visitors. To achieve this, SJDOT has outlined the following objectives:

- Establish the best multi-modal network feasible with community input
- Enhance existing major transit corridors
- Prioritize transportation improvements that will contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions



01 INTRODUCTION & PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Image source: Jovanny Escareno

INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The graduate student team, from the outset of their research, recognized the potential of North San José to become the city's next major neighborhood. The area encompasses 6.22 square miles, largely within Council District 4, and is bounded by SR-237 to the north, US-101 to the south and west, Guadalupe River to the west, I-880 to the south and east, and Coyote Creek to the east (see Figure 1 on next page). In fact, the location of North San José between Guadalupe River and Coyote Creek inspired the “streams” part of this report's title.

The area has gone through several stages and transitions in its evolution, and it appears now to be especially ripe for a transformative overhaul as older office parks from the 1970s and 1980s face obsolescence with the emergence of post-pandemic remote work options. Additionally, the low-density development pattern of North San José provides a “last frontier” of sorts for the City to pursue its most pressing challenges: the need for more housing, new tax revenue-generating businesses, and addressing climate change-driven impacts. This section lays the groundwork for our project by explaining the project's objectives and providing an overview of the study area.

Why are we studying North San José?

As one of the largest neighborhoods in Silicon Valley's biggest city, North San José was strategically positioned to be fruitful ground for industrial and economic development. Large corporations such as Cisco, PayPal, and Samsung established themselves in North San José, creating job opportunities and strengthening the local economy. While corporate park and business campus styles of development were common amongst tech giants and companies throughout North San José, they do not always lend themselves to becoming neighborhood friendly for residents and non-residents alike. Having a centralized employment hub may have provided the City with abundant job opportunities, but this economic development approach alone does not

account for quality of life standards for future residents. Also, North San José could play a crucial role in accommodating a significant portion of new market rate and affordable housing with the adoption of the *2023-2031 Housing Element Update*, of which the City of San José is expected to facilitate the development of roughly 62,000 units.

These complex issues were the starting point and impetus for San José State University's Urban Planning graduate student team and the development of this community planning report. We present a set of guiding principles and placemaking strategies to support the revitalization of North San José that reflects modern urbanism's qualities and best practices.

This project was completed in partnership with the City of San José Department of Transportation (SJDOT) and CommUniverCity (CUC). CUC is a multi-sector partnership between San José residents, SJSU students and faculty, and city staff, which leverages community resources to identify and meet community-identified needs. The graduate student team, along with these partners, initiated a scope of work and process to understand the living experiences of the community in North San José and to provide recommendations for accelerating growth and leveraging resources to maximize its potential.



Figure 1: Map of the North San José Study Area

Map produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open Data Portal: 2022 Imagery basemap, Streets. Valley Water Open Data Portal: Rivers for Study Area Boundary. Self-created: Highway Shields.

At the outset of the course, students met with Councilmember David Cohen and staff members of San José City Council District 4 to gain a broader perspective of the area's challenges, history, and development as it currently exists. Students also engaged with lead staff from SJDOT and the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) to learn directly from stakeholders and to support the development of the forthcoming Multimodal Transportation Improvement Plan (MTIP) for North San José.

Class data collection processes included surveying, site visits, and informal conversations with street passersby. Fieldwork allowed significant interaction with local community members, business owners, and representatives, as well as other working professionals and non-residents of the area - all of whom informed the findings and recommendations provided later in this report.

During the initial fieldwork, students scouted the study area on foot, capturing immediate observations and images to develop their methodology and research process. These observations formed the basis of the survey design and analysis, as the class relied on these findings to identify ripe opportunities for improvement and community development at the pedestrian and resident levels. The identified opportunities encompass a variety of uses, from transit and mobility to parking and residential density.

Chapter 2 of the report begins with a brief chronological overview of the development of the study area and our definition of “North San José” as employed throughout this report. We build upon this history to analyze existing conditions, making use of a survey developed by the class to gauge resident and non-resident opinions and day-to-day life in North San José.

Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 dig into the primary findings from the survey and also include a review of the City's general plan goals and policies, design guidelines, and transportation plans for North San José.

Chapter 7 concludes with placemaking strategies inspired by survey findings and our own observations of the large study area.

These recommendations are intended to assist the City of San José in developing critical next steps for the evolution of North San José. While this is not an exhaustive list of recommendations, it aims to connect the lived experiences and voices of those interested and invested in the study area. To promote increased activity and pride in North San José, the City, along with local stakeholders, must create a plan that includes a “full mobility” proposal to bring people together safely and conveniently, as well as host more community events where people can gather and socialize.

02 HISTORY OF NORTH SAN JOSÉ

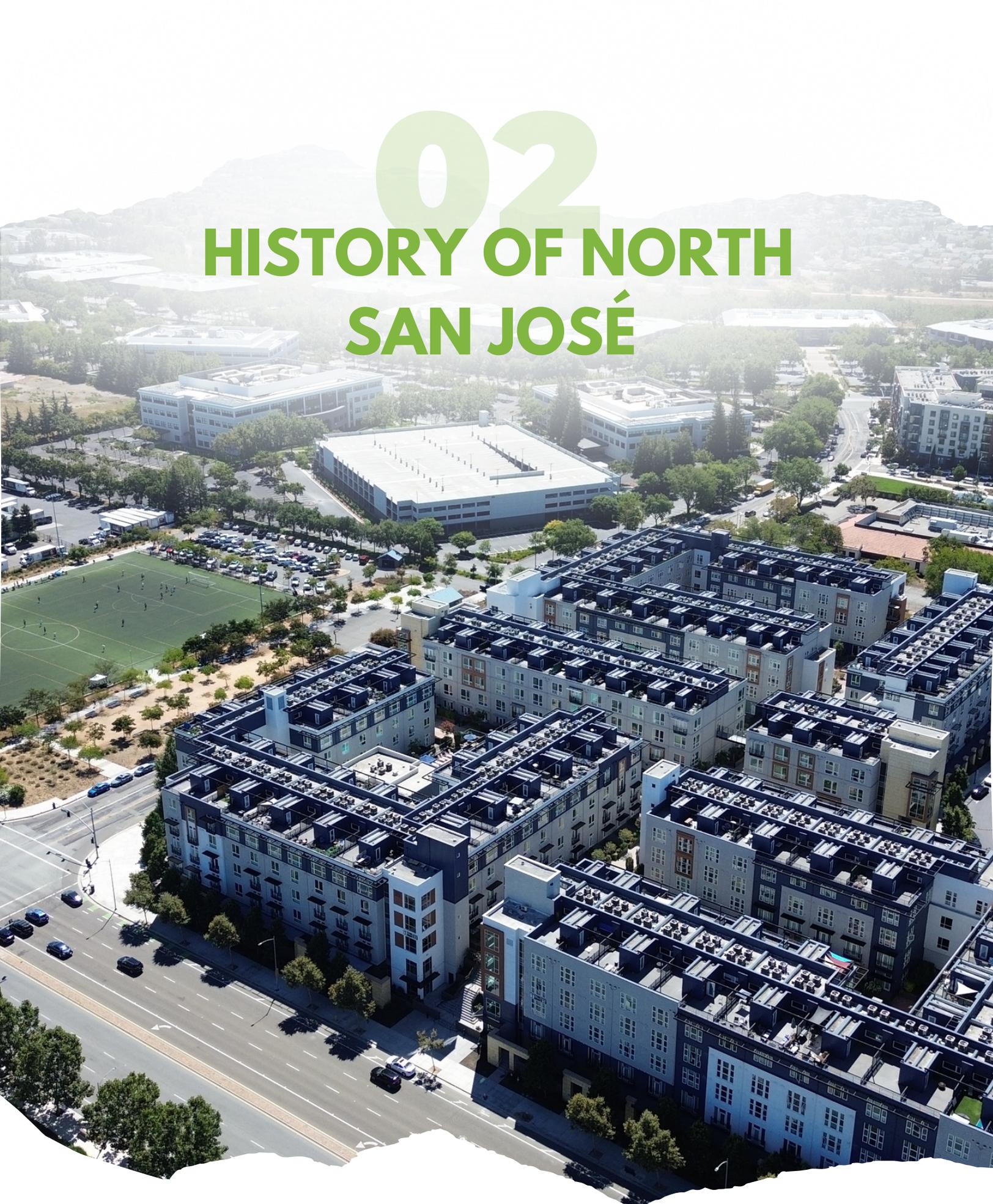


Image source: Jovanny Escareno

HISTORY OF NORTH SAN JOSÉ

This section provides an overview of the regulatory and planning conditions that have shaped North San José over the past decades, from its agricultural roots as “The Valley of Heart’s Delight” through its transition to the Innovation Triangle, and to today, as a largely underdeveloped area poised to become San José’s next major neighborhood.

In 1974, the City of San José began implementation of the *Rincon de Los Esteros Development Plan*. The area became known as the Innovation Triangle or the Golden Triangle, as it was bordered by three highways: I-880 in the east, US 101 in the south, and Hwy 237 (Montague Expressway) in the north. At the time, residential development had largely taken over the surrounding area, resulting in an overdevelopment of single family homes and under-utilization of commercial and industrial development that the City believed could stimulate economic growth.

The mid-to-late 20th-century policies of annexation and relentless expansion led to economic problems that have had lasting impacts on San José. The City developed into a “bedroom community” while its downtown district languished; an over-reliance on single-family zoning created a weak tax base. Additionally, the City suffered, and continues to suffer, from poor air quality due to the valley’s topography, which traps pollutants at lower levels. This has been exacerbated by increased traffic congestion as the decades have progressed and relatively few residents use public transportation.

In 1978, the passage of Proposition 13 capped residential property taxes at specific levels, which led to the fiscalization of land use: incentivizing commercial and business development over other uses to maximize local tax revenues. This quickly shaped subsequent urbanization in North San José and throughout Santa Clara County.



Image Source: Steuteville, Robert. "Cisco Systems campus in North San Jose." Do you know the way, San Jose? | CNU. December 5, 2017. Accessed December 12, 2023 <https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/2017/12/05/do-you-know-way-north-san-jose>.

With relatively minimal residential development in North San José, the City focused on industrial and technological development to compete with the success of tech-heavy Santa Clara and Sunnyvale.

In 1985, the Golden Triangle Task Force was formed between Santa Clara County and various local municipalities. Its goal: to further promote a synergistic plan of tech and office development that adhered to similar strategies undertaken in the neighboring cities of Santa Clara and Milpitas. This was followed by the *North San José Deficiency Plan* in 1988.

At this point, the City of San José, in response to regional traffic concerns raised by the Golden Triangle Task Force, implemented a floor area ratio ordinance in the region that restricted development towards low intensity usage. The 2005 *North San José Area Development Plan* (NSJADP) was created with the intent to promote densification and move towards mixed-use zoning in the area, with the eventual development of 32,000 housing units. The NSJADP led the County of Santa Clara, the City of Santa Clara, and Milpitas to sue the City of San José under the California Environmental Quality Act; they argued that there was insufficient mitigation of the proposed development's impact on traffic. This litigation effectively blocked the development of any housing in the neighborhood until an agreement settled the matter in 2022. Under the agreement, the City of San José agreed to commit to a number of roadway improvements, including an I-880 interchange, widening Montague Expressway, and matching funds for the VTA's projects within North San José.



Image source: Jovanny Escareno

03

DATA COLLECTION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES



Image source: Survey Intercept Site Viist at Moitozo Park captured by Report Team

Map produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open Data Portal: [Parcel](#), [Valley Water Open Data Portal](#): [Rivers](#) for Study Area Boundary. Self-Created: Highway Shields.

DATA COLLECTION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Successful urban planning efforts ideally should be founded on a clear understanding of the people of the place: their aspirations, their concerns, and their day-to-day experiences. With this in mind, the graduate student team prioritized conversations with residents and business interests in North San José. The team designed a survey to capture respondent thoughts on a variety of topics described in this section, including their experiences, transportation considerations, and demographics. See Appendices A and B for an overview of the survey methodology and data collection instruments.

Key Resident and Non-Resident Experiences

Many respondents expressed the sentiment of North San José being quiet and a place of refuge, uniquely tucked away from the hustle and bustle of the rest of the city. Others enjoy access to nearby trails within their community. Respondents noted that the study area is a nurturing place to raise a family, has quality public schools, and is a thriving community. However, respondents expressed their disappointment in the lack of connectivity within the study area. One respondent noted that to get to the nearest grocery store on foot or public transportation would not only be unsafe, but it would take over thirty minutes. This respondent noted that the lack of accessible sidewalks, transit options, and connectivity within residential areas required residents to utilize cars more often.

Respondents also expressed the need for more dog parks, safer walking options, and greater traffic control. Perceptions of North First Street, for example, included safety concerns such as pedestrian fatalities and speeding cars.

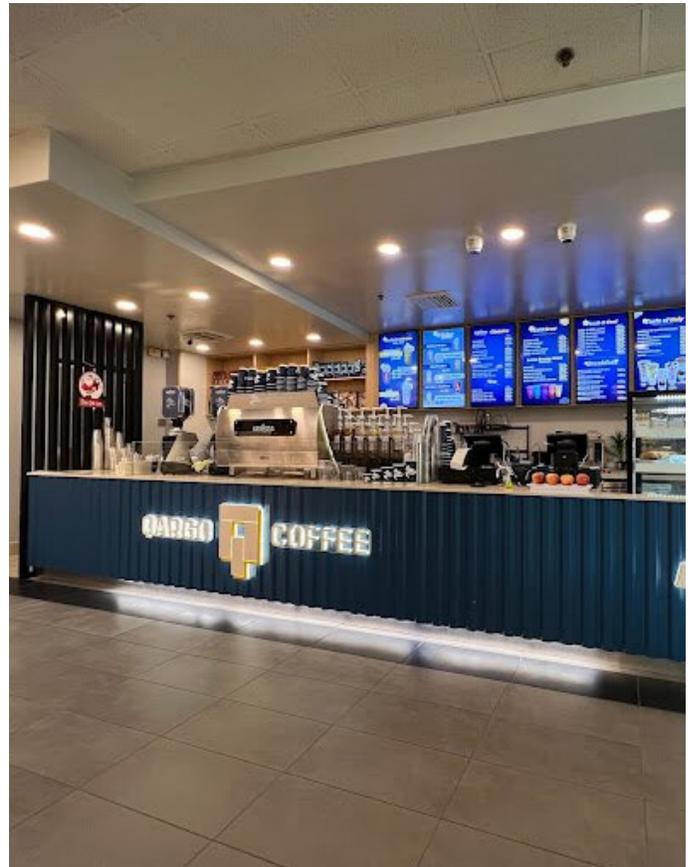
Residents noted that parks are key points of interest for the community as

they offer a variety of play structures, foliage, and sports facilities (such as tennis and basketball courts) for residents to interact with each other outside of the home and workplace. Many respondents noted that parks are where they often bring relatives and friends to gather and socialize.



Image source: Survey Intercept Site Viist captured by Report Team

At one of the study area's more frequented coffee shops (Qargo Coffee across from Moitozo Park) employees were enthusiastic in expressing their desire for more weekday customers. Since its opening right after the COVID-19 pandemic, Qargo Coffee had an increasingly hard time attracting customers throughout the week. Employees stated that they believe most residents leave the area for daily errands and recreation. During the week, residents were more likely to stop in to grab and go on their way to work rather than enjoy the space within the shop. Similarly, the owner of a nearby convenience store and deli (The Market at North Park) expressed that most days were slow, but during the weekend residents buy things they may have forgotten or need more of for convenience, rather than drive to the nearest full-service grocery store miles away in neighboring Santa Clara, for example.



Source: "Located at North Park Apartment Homes." Photo provided by management (Mar 2023)
https://www.tripadvisor.com.ph/Restaurant_Review-g33020-d25341849-Reviews-Qargo_Coffee_San_Jose-San_Jose_California.html#photos;aggregationId=101&albumId=101&filter=7&ff=677248803



Resident Perceptions of Community

The focus of this report is on placemaking strategies for North San Jose’s evolution and thus required that we started by acknowledging our preconceived notions: that the study area lacks a distinct “sense of “place” and ”community”. With our biases out in the open, we then set out to see what local residents think.

We were surprised that not a single resident rated North San Jose’s sense of community as a “1”, the lowest possible score, despite some of the critical opinions expressed to other questions in the survey. Table 1 shows the results of resident perceptions of community. Figure 2 shows the results of a related survey question: “what three words best describe North San Jose”?

Table 1: Sense of Community Rating by Residents in North San José

Do you feel there is a sense of community in North San José? Rate on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the strongest sense of community. (Resident)					
Rating	1	2	3	4	5
Survey Count	0	19	34	39	10
Average = 3.39					

Just over 61 percent of our respondents were residents of the North San José study area. This was not too surprising, considering that our survey collection locations were often adjacent to a multifamily residential complex or were a component of it (ground floor retail).

When combined with respondents who entered the study area for work, just under 75 percent of total respondents either lived or worked in the study area.

Most respondents answering “Other” were in the study area to go to the gym or a fitness class. In sum, a significant majority of respondents had meaningful interest in North San José (either living or working in the study area), which can inform new policy direction in the future. Figure 4 summarizes respondents’ purpose for being in the study area when approached.

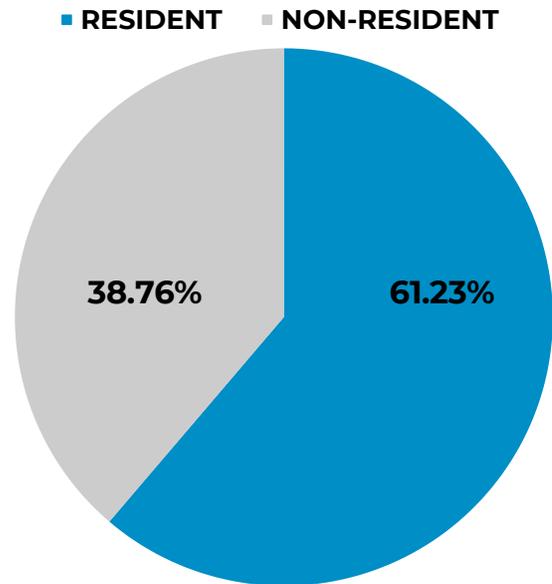


Figure 3: Proportion of Survey Respondents Reporting as Resident or Non-Resident

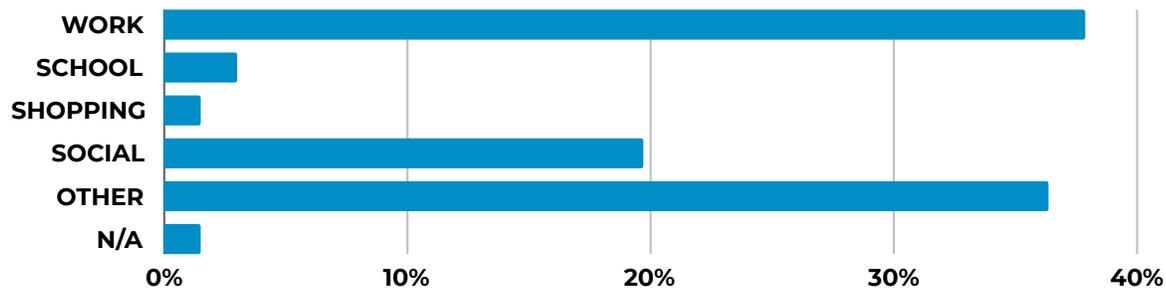


Figure 4: Purpose of Visiting North San José (Non-Resident)

We were also interested in how respondents - particularly those coming to North San Jose for work - arrived at their destinations. Figure 5 summarizes our key findings.

Some respondents noted that their number of work/commute trips had been significantly reduced due to the rise of remote work and hybrid options as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a few indicating that they were no longer required to go into the office at all. For those who go to the office at least once a week, there is a clear preference for driving followed by some who chose to walk. Very few people biked or rode public transit due to a combination of factors, including unsafe and poor bicycle infrastructure, limited route options to their destination (either inside or outside the study area), and too much time taken for each trip. These findings illustrate a clear preference for car trips, mirroring citywide trends collected in 2021, which found that 69 percent of residents commute by car and only 3.5 percent used public transit (City of San José 2021).

Interestingly, however, the rates of biking and walking from our survey findings are significantly higher than the 2.5 percent citywide rate (note: the City's Climate Smart Data Dashboard displays these two modes as one total figure). This is likely due to high density of multi-family housing located in close proximity to business offices, such as Samsung, Cisco, and PayPal, some of the region's largest employers. This enviable proximity has become a key marketing strategy for nearby apartments (Irvine Company Apartment Communities, n.d.)

We asked the same question to residents regarding *non-work* trips to see whether or not their choice of transportation mode changed. We found the responses to be fairly similar

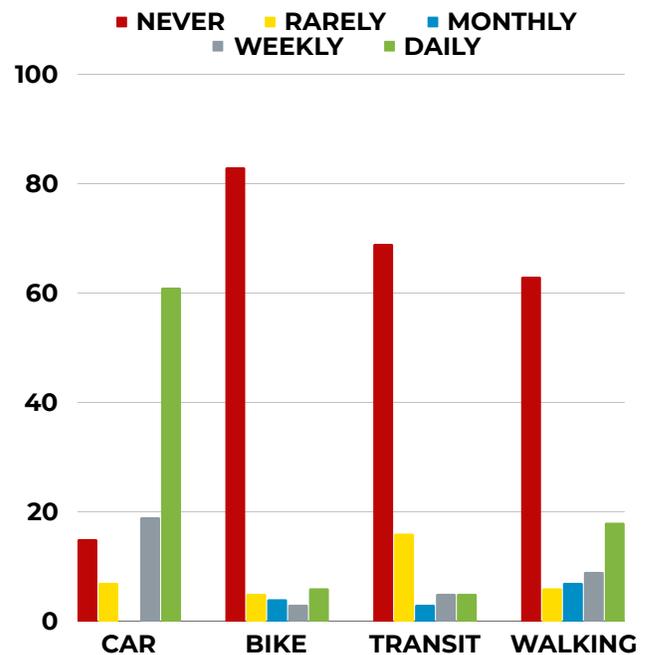


Figure 5: Resident Frequency of Transportation Mode for Work Trips

work trips, with a strong preference for cars and little bike or public transit use. However, a noticeable uptick in walking trips was observed when compared to other modes of transportation and we attributed this to two potential factors: mixed-use development and access to green space. See Figure 6 for the results.

Regarding mixed-use development, many of the area's residential complexes feature ground-floor retail or are near to strip malls. This proximity allows residents to run daily errands or visit local shops without the use of a car.

Regarding access to green spaces - such as Moitozo Park, River Oaks Park, and the Guadalupe and Coyote Creek trails - many respondents have immediate access to these spaces just outside their front door, which also contributes to lessened dependence on private vehicles for some daily trips.

Resident respondents confirmed that North San José lacks sufficient public transportation infrastructure to support non-car trips. *Move San José*, the city’s access and mobility plan, notes that one of the primary mobility improvements needed in District 4 is the “20 Minute Neighborhoods” model that enables a person to have their basic needs met within a 20 minute (or less) bike or walk trip (City of San José, 2022). District 4 also lacks a number of services and amenities that ideally could be accessed without a car, such as clinics and community centers.

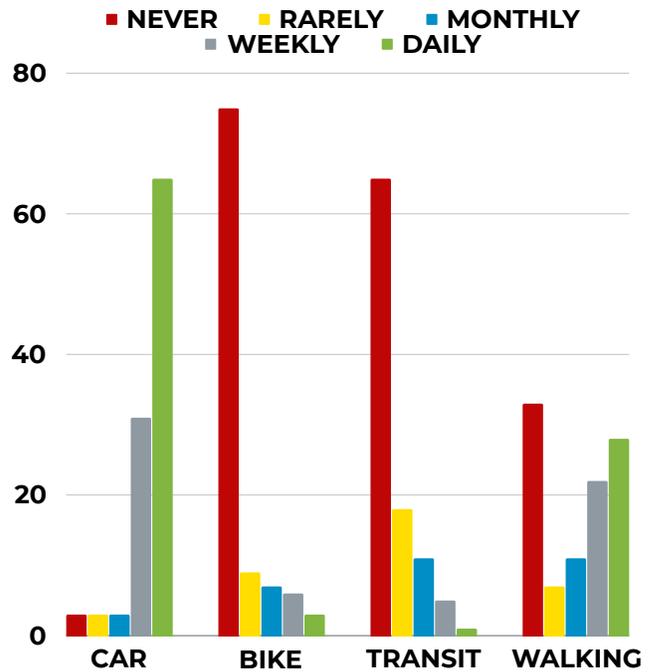


Figure 6: Resident Frequency of Transportation Mode for Non-Work Trips

Non-resident respondents who traveled to the study area overwhelmingly drove. As stated above, many of the non-residents either worked in the study area, or were there for “Other” reasons, predominantly the gym or a fitness class. Figure 7 summarizes the survey findings.

While the study area is served by three of the VTA’s light rail lines, *Move San José* notes that transit expansion and existing service upgrades (e.g. frequency of service, dedicated signals, and increased hours of operation) were near the top of the list of necessary improvements to encourage public transportation use within District 4 (City of San José, 2022).

Finally, we asked respondents which facilities and amenities they would like to see added in the study area. Figure 8 shows the results.

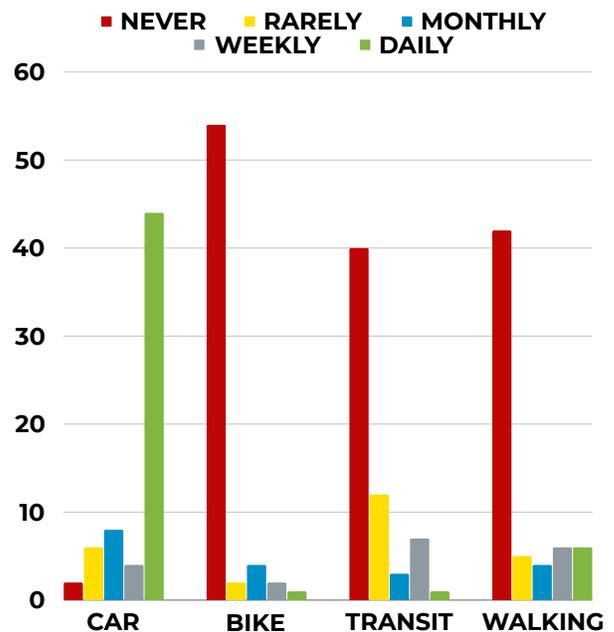


Figure 7: Non-Resident Frequency of Transportation Mode for traveling to North San José

We found it notable that many respondents noted a severe lack of “third places” in North San José, spaces that are neither work nor home, but that urban vitality so often depends on (Oldenburg, 2014).

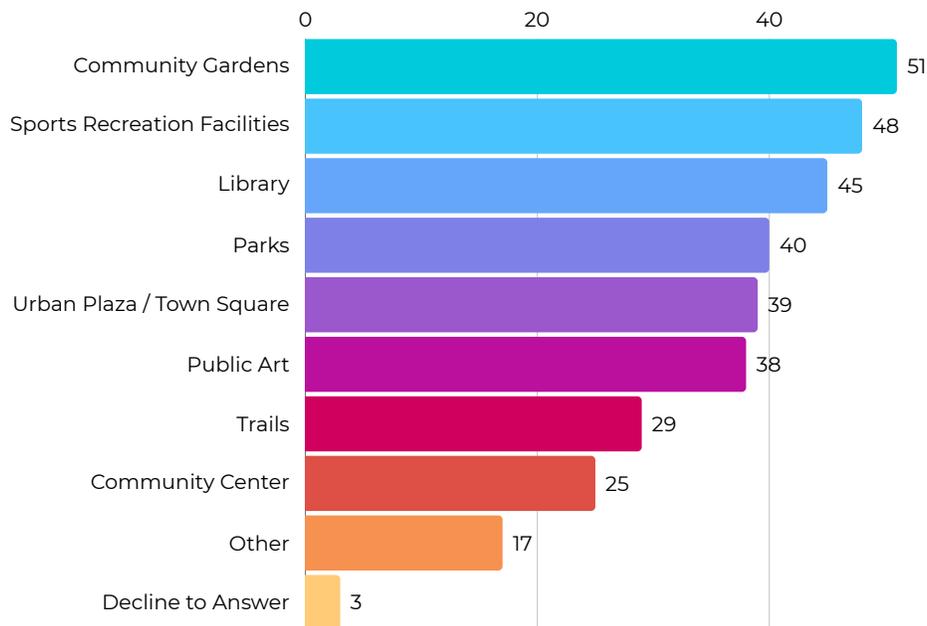


Figure 8: Public Amenities “Wishlist”

In summary, data from the survey confirmed many of our initial observations about mobility in North San Jose. In an area oriented for office parks - with large swaths of parking only accessible from a wide, four-lane road - residents and non-residents alike logically choose the most accessible and convenient transport option: cars.

In the following section, we present the results of GIS-based spatial analysis of the study area’s land uses and physical characteristics.

04 LAND USE AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS



Image source: Jovanny Escareno

LAND USE AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS

This section begins with an analysis of current land uses in North San Jose before examining other physical characteristics such as the density of traffic intersections, the size of land parcels, and the vast expanses of land consumed by surface parking.

Land Use in the North San José Study Area

Initial Hypothesis

At the beginning of the semester, the graduate student team was posed a simple question by their professor: what kind of “place” is North San José? A group word cloud exercise (see Figure 9) highlighted initial student opinions of the study area as being flat, paved, sprawling, and overwhelmingly concrete.

Stating these as our preliminary perceptions of the study area helped frame our subsequent spatial analysis: was our choice of adjectives appropriate to fairly characterize North San José?

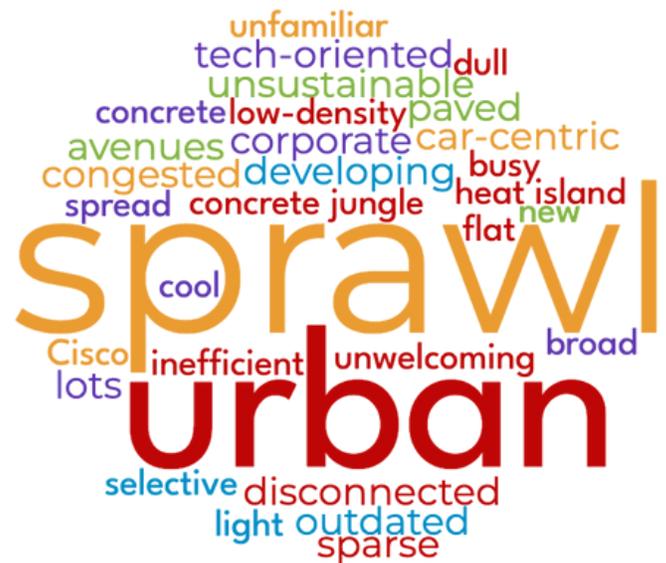


Figure 9: Word Cloud Created by SJSU Graduate Students Using *Poll Everywhere*

Hypothesis Testing: Mapping the Land Use Zoning in the Study Area

To help define “place” characteristics in North San José, we embarked on multiple field trips. Our initial impressions were that street block lengths are enormous, with infrequent safe crossing locations for pedestrians, further emphasizing block lengths. We also began to use the phrase “islands of activity” to describe active uses that are completely surrounded by non-active uses (primarily very underutilized parking lots). Ultimately, we found North San José to be profoundly auto-centric and sprawling - no surprise there! These observations were confirmed by a review of General Plan Land Use designations in North San José, shown in Figure 10.

“Industrial Park” is the most prevalent land use designation, representing over 40 percent of the study area’s land mass, excluding rights of-way. The second most common designation is “Transit Employment Center” (19.2 percent of the study area), which corresponds to the parcels on either side of North First Street between Orchard Parkway and Zanker Road, south of Montague Expressway. Oftentimes, buildings within this designation resemble those in the Industrial Park land use, but differ only by their proximity to VTA light rail.

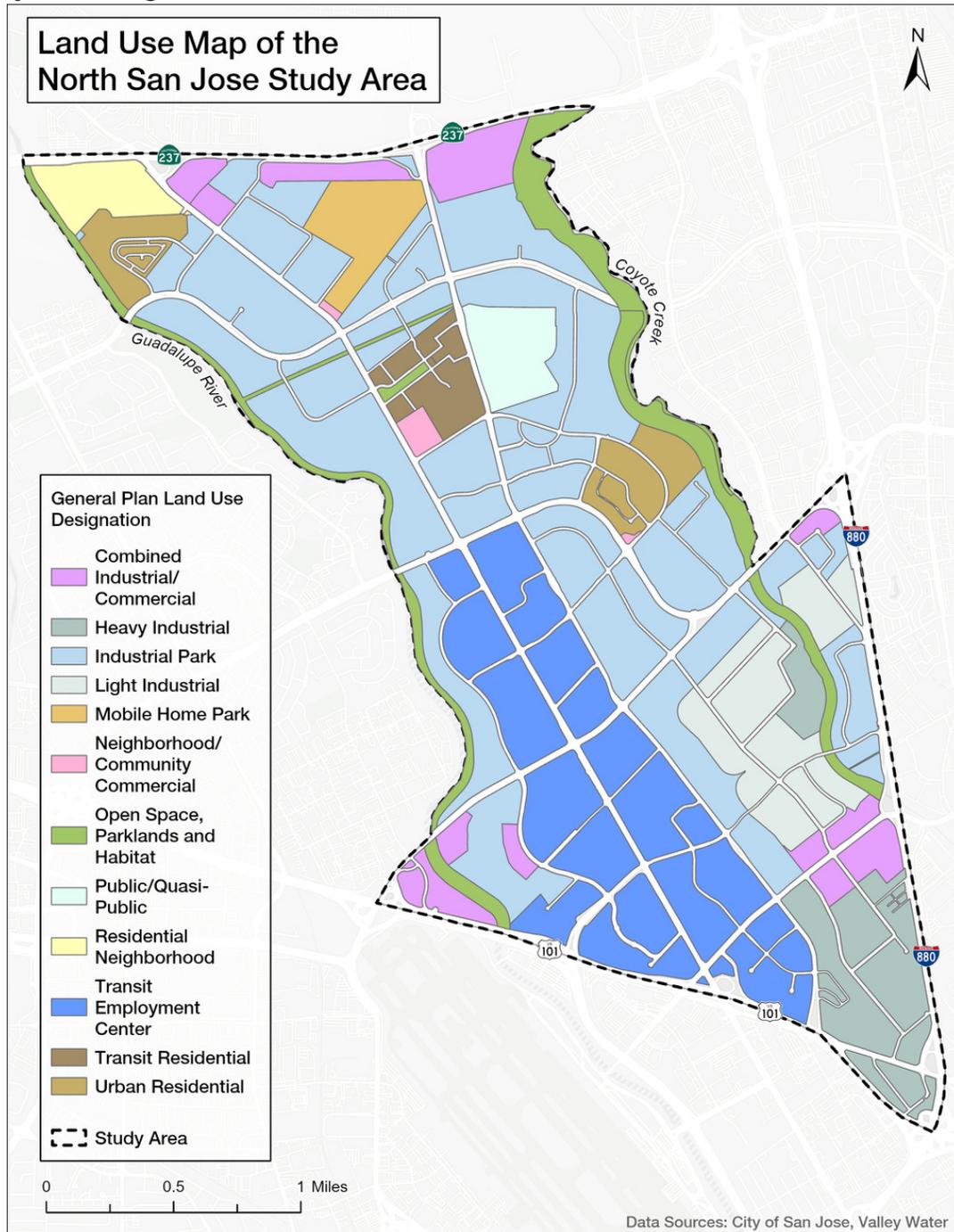


Figure 10: General Plan Land Use Map of the North San José Study Area

Map produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open Data Portal: General Plan 2040. Valley Water Open Data Portal: Rivers for Study Area Boundary. Self-Created: Highway Shields.

Looking at North San José as a whole, it becomes clear that it is occupied by low-density office park uses. As displayed in Table 2, 60.5 percent of the study area is designated for industrial or commercial park uses, while only 10 percent is designated for residential uses. Compared to the City at large, which is primarily zoned for single-family residential, North San José is much less populated and far less “active” (Badger and Bui 2019). With such vast areas dedicated to industrial and commercial uses, North San José can be confidently described as a sparsely-settled and sprawling area. Table 2 summarizes the percentage of the study area within each land use designation.

Table 2: Land Use Designation in the North San José Study Area

General Plan Land Use Designation	Square Miles	Percentage of Study Area
Transit Employment Center	1.01	19.24%
Industrial Park	2.15	40.95%
Open Space, Parklands and Habitat	0.38	7.24%
Combined Industrial/Commercial	0.35	6.67%
Heavy Industrial	0.34	6.48%
Light Industrial Park	0.34	6.48%
Urban Residential	0.20	3.81%
Mobile Home Park	0.12	2.48%
Public/Quasi-Public	0.12	2.29%
Transit Residential	0.11	2.10%
Residential Neighborhood	0.10	1.90%
Neighborhood/Community Commercial	0.02	0.38%
Total Designated Land in Study Area (excl. rights-of-way or freeway interchanges)	5.25	100%
Total Industrial/Commercial Designated Land in Study Area	3.18	60.5%
Total Residential Designated Land in Study Area	0.53	10%

Table produced by: Scott Karoly, Fall 2023. City of San Jose Open GIS Data Portal: General Plan 2040.

Spatial Analysis of the North San José Study Area

Parcel Size in the Study Area

The graduate student team created a series of maps to take their initial field observations and quantify them to better understand the study area as it currently exists. Figure 11 displays each individual parcel of land in North San José. The

median parcel size is just under one acre, although 20 percent of the parcels are five acres or larger. Notably, parcels on average are over six times as large as the citywide average parcel size!

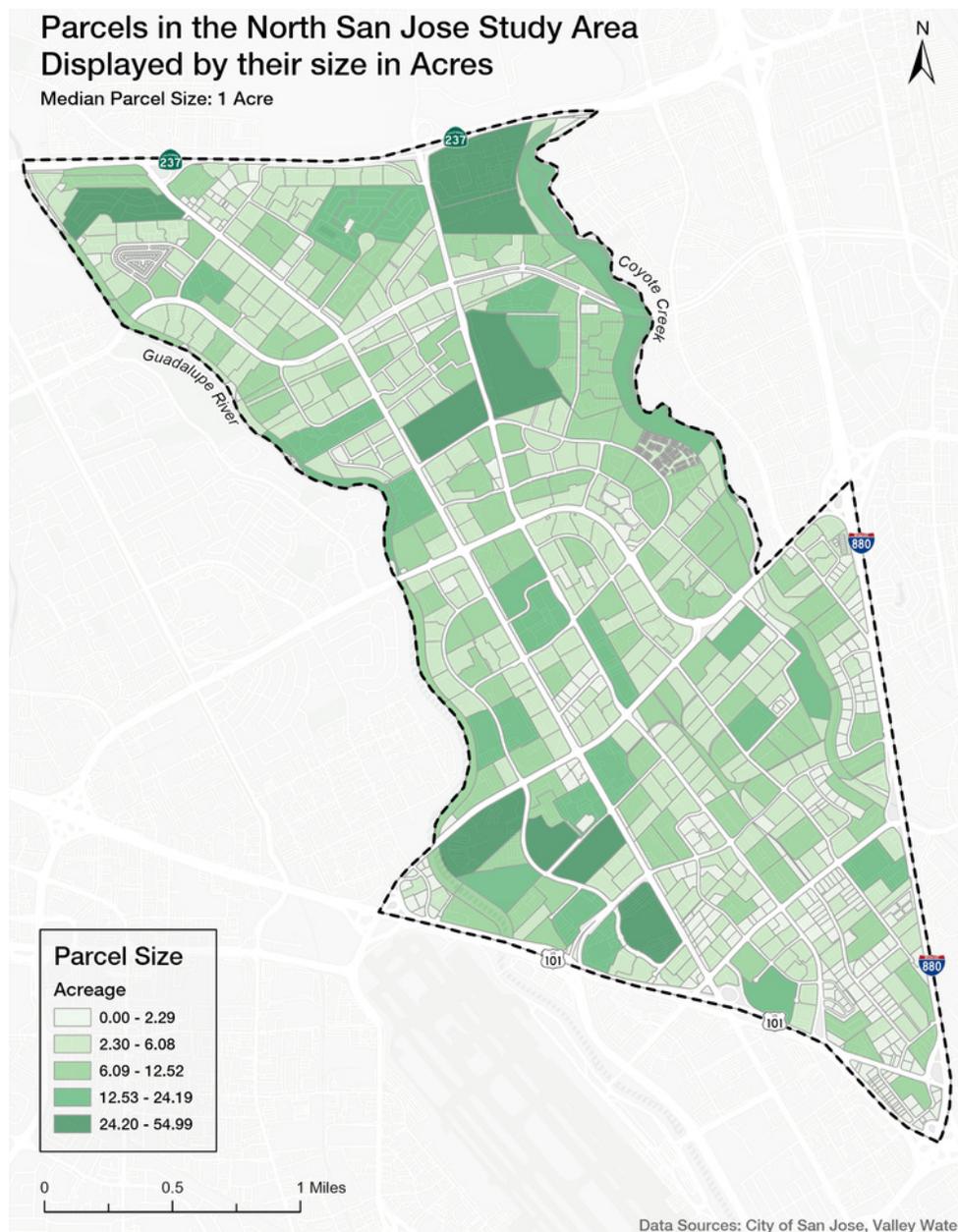


Figure 11: Parcels by Size in the North San José Study Area

Map produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open GIS Data Portal: [Parcel_Valley](#).
[Water_Open_Data_Portal](#); Rivers for Study Area Boundary. Self-Created: Highway Shields

Parking Coverage in the Study Area

As many student and survey respondents noted, North San José has a significant amount of space dedicated to parking lots. Since this could not be quantified using zoning data, we used an ArcGIS Deep Learning Model to classify surface parking lots using high-resolution aerial imagery of the study area; the model is designed to classify specific pixels after being trained to recognize parking lots. The results (shown in Figure 12) revealed that over 16 percent of North San José is covered in parking! The actual figure may in fact be higher since the model is unable to “see” parking areas obscured by trees and other features.

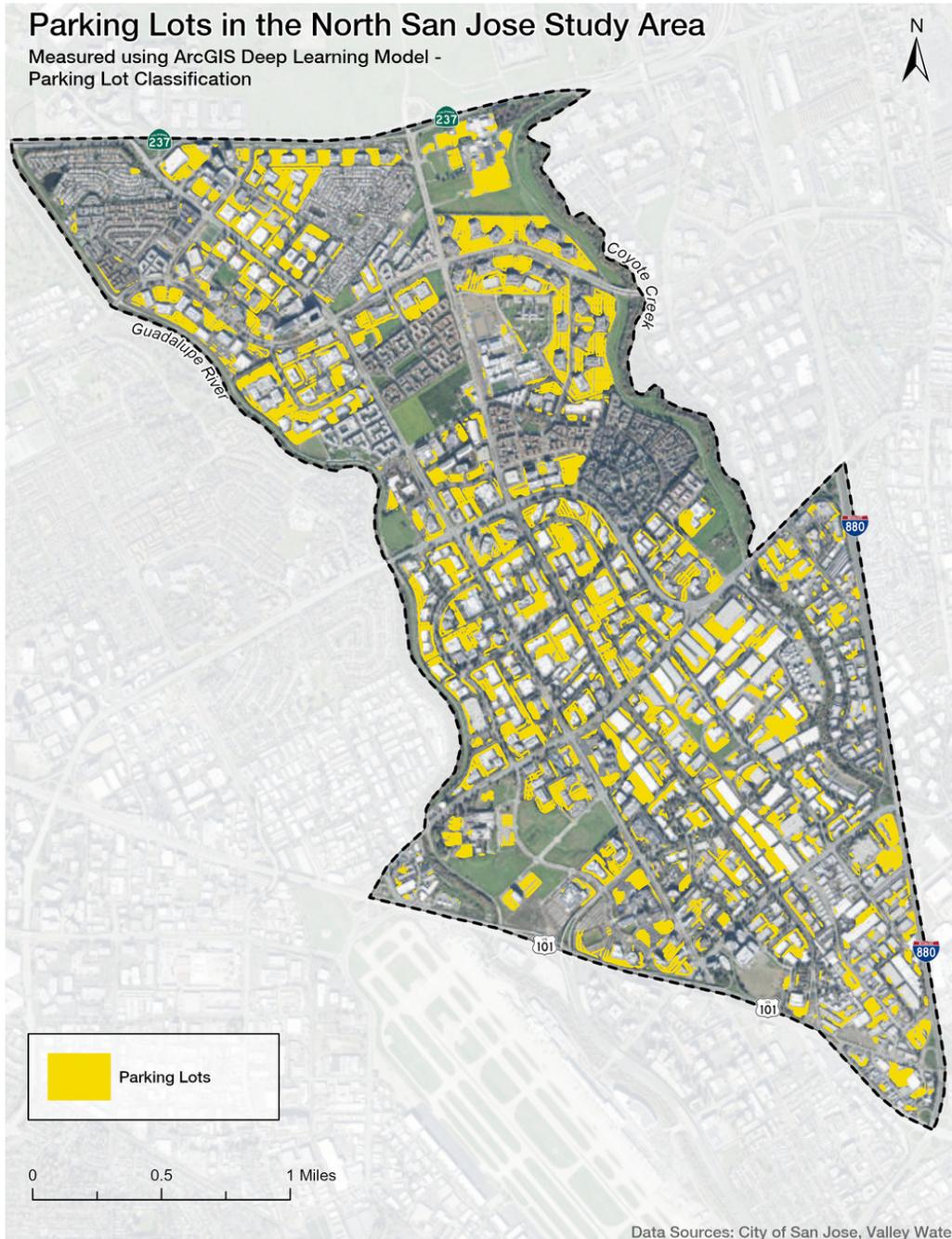


Figure 12: Parking Lots in the North San José Study Area

Map produced by Hannah Meeks, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open GIS Data Portal: Santa Clara County 2022 Imagery basemap, Valley Water Open Data Portal: Rivers for Study Area Boundary, Self-Created: Highway Shields.

Walkability in North San José

Beyond having very large parcels, the study area's street network is not designed for walkability. Walkable neighborhoods are defined as having short average block lengths and high intersection density. These are two of the measures used to calculate a neighborhood's Walk Score, which is a commonly used metric to determine walkability - specifically in real estate (Baobeid, Koç, and Al-Ghamdi 2021). The median block length within the public right-of-way in the study area is 962 feet. There are 24 blocks with a length of 1,900 feet or greater - or twice as long as the median length (see Figure 13). These long blocks make it less convenient for walking as it takes much longer to get to one's destination. For context, block lengths in downtown San José are typically between 350 and 750 feet. In cities like San Francisco, there are blocks as short as 150 feet. Smaller block lengths are proven to impact how walking distances are perceived, and in turn encourages more pedestrian activity (Singh 2016). The presence of long block lengths in North San José is likely contributing to lower pedestrian activity for both residents and visitors.

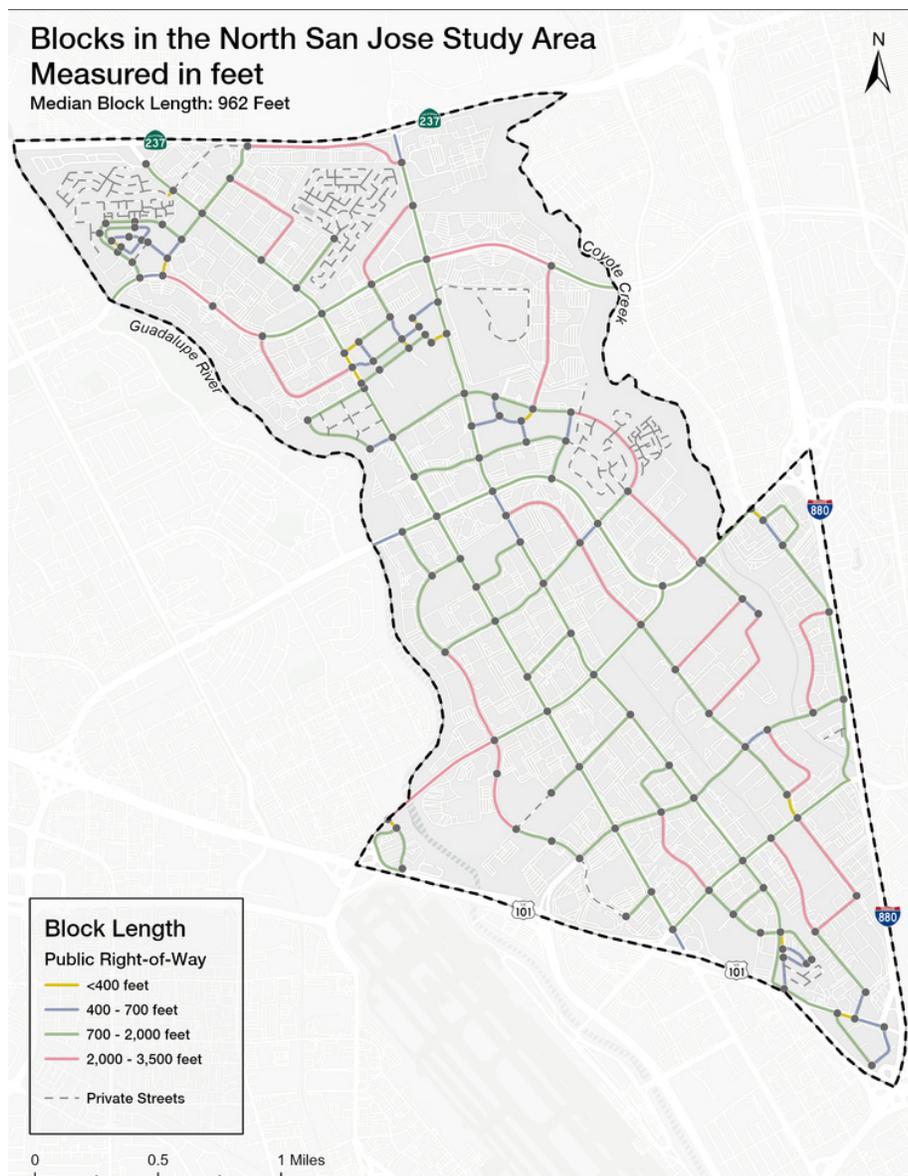


Figure 13: Block Length Map of the North San José Study Area

Map produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open Data Portal: [Streets](#), [Street Intersections](#), [Valley Water Open Data Portal](#); [Rivers](#) for Study Area Boundary. Self-Created: Highway Shields.

Related to block size, intersection density plays a role in walkability and activity. North San José is defined by a low level of intersection density. Figure 14 shows the results of subdividing the study with a “fishnet” of quarter-mile squares and counting the number of intersections in each square. The median number of intersections per quarter-mile in the study area is one. This lack of frequent intersections makes it difficult to reach destinations within the study area, and can explain why there were few concentrations of areas of high activity spread thinly across a vast landscape. This suggests a strong relationship between street connectivity and urban form. Additionally, this is consistent with the finding that “... urban form is highly dependent upon the street network pattern” (Hajrasouliha and Yin 2015). With so few intersections per quarter-mile, pedestrian activity and denser urban forms appear to be inhibited.

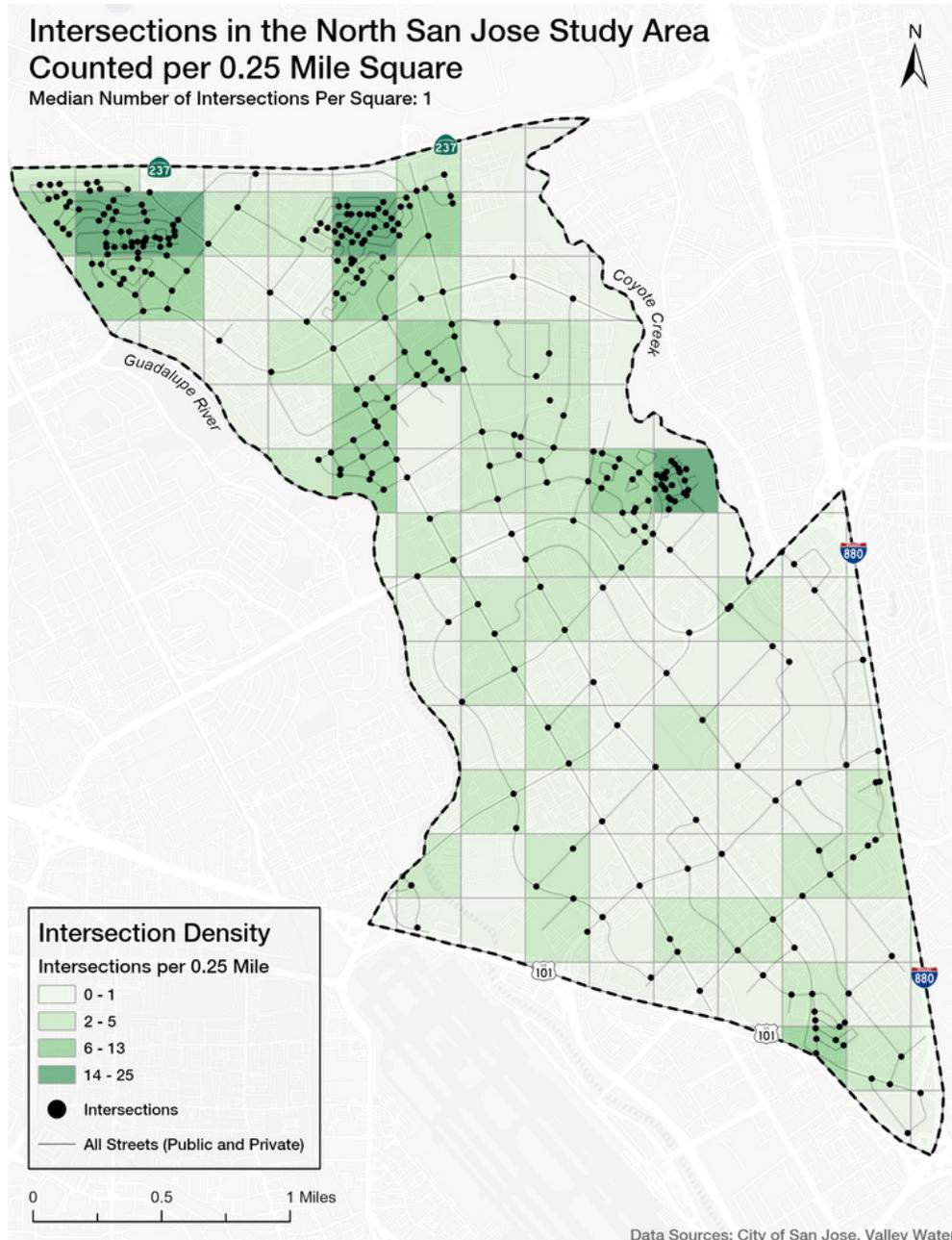


Figure 14: Intersection Density Map of the North San José Study Area

Map produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open Data Portal: [Streets](#), [Street Intersections](#), [Valley Water Open Data Portal](#); [Rivers](#) for Study Area Boundary. Self-Created: Highway Shields.

Activity Centers in the Study Area

An analysis of activity centers in the study area using a methodology created by the American Planning Association (APA 2023) helped us locate the “islands of activity” mentioned earlier. Using Point of Interest (POI) data from SafeGraph, we created a heatmap of activity centers; the resulting heatmap is shown in Figure 15.

The major areas of activity are located primarily around the major commercial centers in North San José: Shop@First on Holger Way and North First Street, The Market Place on West Trimble Road and North First Street, and River Oaks Shopping Plaza on River Oaks Parkway and Montague Expressway, to name a few.

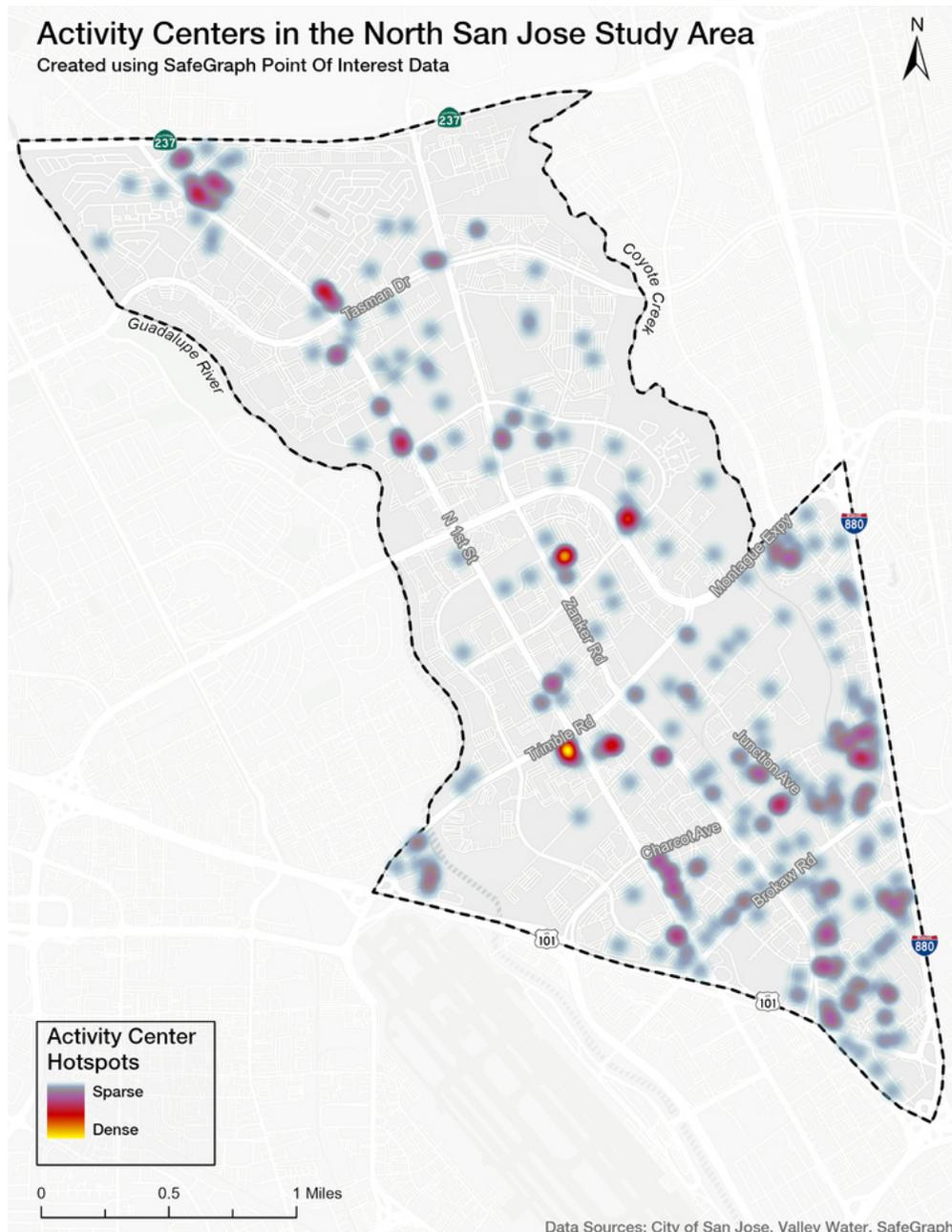


Figure 15: Heatmap of Activity Centers in the North San José Study Area

Map produced by Jordan Weinberg, Fall 2023, [ESRI Community Analyst](#); SafeGraph Point of Interest (POI) data, [Valley Water Open Data Portal](#); Rivers for Study Area Boundary. Self-Created: Highway Shields.

05

POLICY REVIEW: GENERAL PLAN, DESIGN GUIDELINES & TRANSPORTATION PLANS



Image source: Jovanny Escareno

POLICY REVIEW: GENERAL PLAN, DESIGN GUIDELINES, & TRANSPORTATION PLANS

The Policy Landscape of North San José

A series of planning policies have been instrumental in guiding North San José's development over the past decades. While the survey findings and spatial analysis covered in the previous sections provided a glimpse of the existing conditions, a review of current policies reveal the City's priorities and goals for how it sees North San José evolving. This section provides a brief summary of the policy landscape in North San José, with a focus on transportation and urban design.

The policy landscape in North San José is complex. Many development plans, transportation programs, and design guidelines have been produced to influence the area's shape and form both in broad strokes and with accompanying, targeted approaches.

This is a complex environment for developers and policymakers to navigate. Accordingly, before the student team developed recommendations, we first considered the plans, policies, and programs that currently affect North San José's transportation and design.

The 'Legacy' of the NSJADP

Although the NSJADP has been effectively retired since May 2022, it contains critical elements that are relevant to understand, specifically when it comes to transportation and urban form. The plan made a push for new development to follow more intelligently urban design patterns, and this is reflected in other plans and guidelines developed and adopted by the City.

The intent of these policies is for North San José to become a connected, walkable, and dense community for businesses and residents alike. In order to incorporate respondent feedback from the intercept survey for this report into actionable recommendations, all of the plans, policies, and programs pertinent to North San José's transportation and design objectives must be considered.

Envision San José 2040 General Plan

The *Envision San José 2040 General Plan* provides direction on zoning and land use designations and clearly positions North San José as an employment growth area and major transit corridor. For example, the "Transit Employment Center" designation allows a floor area ratio up to a very 'urban' 12.0., and unlike other employment center districts, it limits the availability for residential and mixed-uses through a residential zoning overlay (City of San José 2023).

Transportation

San José Better Bike Plan 2025

The *San José Better Bike Plan 2025* (BBP 2025) centralizes San José's goals for its bicycle infrastructure. With infrastructure improvements based on community input and needs, the BBP 2025 attempts to encourage bicycle use and ultimately a mode shift away from car-dominated transportation (City of San José 2020). The plan identifies 14 projects in the North San José study area, particularly along the corridors of North First Street, Zanker Road, River Oaks Parkway, and Holger Way.

Move San José

The *Move San José Plan* establishes the city's goals and approach for decreasing car trips and expanding transportation options for historically underserved communities. The plan centers equity in order to conduct balanced analysis while recognizing the outsized impact of transportation planning decisions (City of San José 2022a). In District 4, *Move San José* recommends the following:

- Expansion of bike infrastructure and low-stress routes
- More walkable sidewalks and trails, particularly in areas where gaps are prevalent
- More developed mobility hubs (stronger transportation connections)
- Safer streets for pedestrians (ADA-accessible, pedestrian refuges and curb extensions)

Climate Smart San José (Climate Action Plan)

The *Climate Smart San José* plan focuses on greenhouse gas emission reduction strategies and plays a major role in shaping North San José. The plan calls for densification in planned growth areas, and highlights complete streets, transit-oriented development, and placemaking as essential elements of the city's decarbonization strategy (City of San José 2018a).

The plan also emphasizes the need for local bus service improvements and a larger role of biking and walking in the community.

VTA Complete Streets Program

Complementing San José's *Complete Streets Design Standards & Guidelines*, the VTA Complete Streets Program is focused on implementing specific infrastructure improvements on Tasman Drive (Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority 2020).

Of the 31 improvements planned, five fall within our North San José study area:

- Bicycle & pedestrian facility improvements, which include widened sidewalks and raised bike lanes
- Light rail station accessibility improvements, applicable for all stations along Tasman Drive

- Bus stop improvements at the North First Street and Baypointe Parkway intersections
- Reconfiguration of the Zanker Road intersection with more bike and pedestrian friendly facilities
- Coyote Creek Trail improvements, with the intention of reducing lane widths for expanded bike lanes and buffers, along with new wayfinding signage

Design and Form

North San José Neighborhoods Plan and Design Guidelines

Adopted in 2009, the *North San José Neighborhoods Plan* (NSJNP) has acted as a supplemental policy to the now-retired NSJADP.

The NSJNP is intended to provide policies and implementation tools for future development in this part of the city, reflecting the stated needs of residents and businesses (City of San José 2009).

The NSJNP calls for a variety of services and amenities to be added to North San José, such as parkland and open space, a library and community center, educational facilities, and a mix of retail options.

Figure 16 is taken from the closely related *North San Jose Area Design Guidelines* and highlights a vision for improved roadway, transit, and linear open space connectivity - especially much-needed east-west links between Coyote Creek and the Guadalupe River.



Figure 16: NSJADG Sketch of a Future North San José

Source: North San José Area Design Guidelines, City of San José, 2010. Retrieved from: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/15619/636681401842500000>

North San José Area Design Guidelines

To facilitate the transformation of large-lot industrial and commercial sites to mixed-use urban sites, the NSJADG sets (flexible) standards for new private and public projects (City of San José 2010).

Notably, the NSJADG calls for the division of super blocks, pedestrianized mid-blocks, proper articulation of building masses, new contemporary architectural styles, adaptive reuse, new plazas, and defined urban frontages.

Additionally, the NSJADG identifies North First Street as being the area's signature boulevard. To bolster its function and distinctiveness, the NSJADG advocates for the creation of new landmarks, an enhanced transportation network, and more green space along North First Street.

San José Citywide Design Guidelines

As a part of a larger effort to consolidate and standardize design elements city-wide, the City adopted the *San José Citywide Design Guidelines* (SJCDG). Though the NSJADG remains the primary design guide for development in North San José, the SJCDG provides direction in many areas that the former document fails to cover.

The SJCDG takes a more context-based design approach towards transit infrastructure, pedestrian paseos, active frontages, and site lighting (City of San José 2022b).

Even for commercial and industrial spaces, the SJCDG calls for publicly accessible open spaces, pedestrian and bicycle access to street frontages, and public art elements that accentuate unique and memorable features.

San José Complete Streets Design Standards & Guidelines

As the primary defining document shaping the city's streets, the *San José Complete Streets Design Standards and Guidelines* (2018) has enormous influence on streetscape and connectivity. It sets a people-oriented, connected, and resilient foundation for streets in San José.

For North San José, these guidelines urge stronger pedestrian accommodations and more adaptive street configurations. Most importantly, it also considers the role of streets in placemaking.

The document also advances the idea that "placemaking is essential to complete intersections," which reflects its holistic perspective on street design and form (City of San José 2018b).

Connections to the NSJ MTIP

At the time of this report's publication, SJDOT is preparing to initiate a new MTIP for the study area.

The future proposed North San José MTIP (NSJ MTIP) has the potential to be transformative for its residents, workers, and visitors. To achieve this, SJDOT has outlined the following objectives:

- Establish the best multi-modal network feasible with community input
- Enhance existing major transit corridors
- Prioritize transportation improvements that will contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions

As we considered the forthcoming MTIP planning process, the graduate student team realized that many of San José's design guidelines, zoning regulations, transportation plans and projects are largely convergent in their aims and objectives. Broadly speaking, they express the city leaders' desire for people-oriented and distinctive, readily-identifiable places. More importantly, the guidelines and planning policies attempt to expand accessibility far beyond what currently exists in North San José.

In the context of the NSJ MTIP, the review of policies in this chapter reinforces the notion that placemaking is integral to the transportation planning process.

As the SJDOT begins developing the NSJ MTIP, the staff will be cognizant of the already-adopted web of plans, policies, and programs that shape the future of North San José. Similarly, we have done our best in the remaining chapters to align our placemaking recommendations to the city's adopted plans, policies, and programs.

06

PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES & SUBURBAN RETROFITTING PROPOSALS



AI image produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, Bing Image Creator, November 27th, 2023,
<https://bing.com/create>

PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES & SUBURBAN RETROFITTING PROPOSALS

The previous sections of this report described the planning context for North San José and presented an overview of survey findings to help us understand what is on the mind of community residents. This section looks into the future, recognizing that North San José is likely to become the city's next major neighborhood. We give emphasis to placemaking techniques as a framework for a series of recommendations for the city's planners to consider. This section begins within an overview of placemaking and then applies placemaking principles to specific sites in North San José.

The Basis of Placemaking

Placemaking is the process of shaping the built environment and public areas to represent a community's values, thereby increasing community members' connection to each other and to the physical spaces around them. This process also includes 'programming': the promotion of community activities (Project for Public Spaces 2007).

Ideally, placemaking efforts work in conjunction with community development programs, economic development services, and infrastructure planning to create sustainable communities "with a strong sense of place." (Wyckoff 2014)

In order to engage in effective placemaking, San José planners must collaborate with the local community to begin identifying the kind of place they want to cultivate in North San José. As described in previous sections, North San José is heavily car dependent, with a high concentration of office and industrial uses. Many residents and visitors are unable to distinguish between North San José and neighboring communities, reflecting a

distinct lack of "sense of place" in this part of the city.

The field of urban planning has evolved since the initial development of North San José, and so has the City's goals for the area. Today, the City is much more focused on sustainability, equity, and embracing community. Achieving these goals will require adjustments to both the built environment and social elements of the area (SPUR 2020). To this end, the graduate student team devised five key placemaking principles which guide the development of this report's recommended placemaking strategies and the selection of placemaking opportunity sites and tools.

Inputs into our Five Recommendations

The City's community plans and goals, as well as results from our community survey, informed the development of our five placemaking recommendations. They are intended to better "integrate" North San José with the rest of the city, improve the liveliness of the area, and give it a stronger identity for residents and visitors alike.

As a starting point, we noted that the City’s General Plan includes seven “guiding community values” which align with its vision statement: “San José embodies the energy and vitality of its unique human, natural and economic resources.” (City of San José 2023). These guiding community values, illustrated in Figure 17, include: (1) innovative economy, (2) environmental leadership, (3) diversity and social equity, (4) interconnected city, (5) healthy neighborhoods, (6) quality education and services, and (7) vibrant arts and culture.

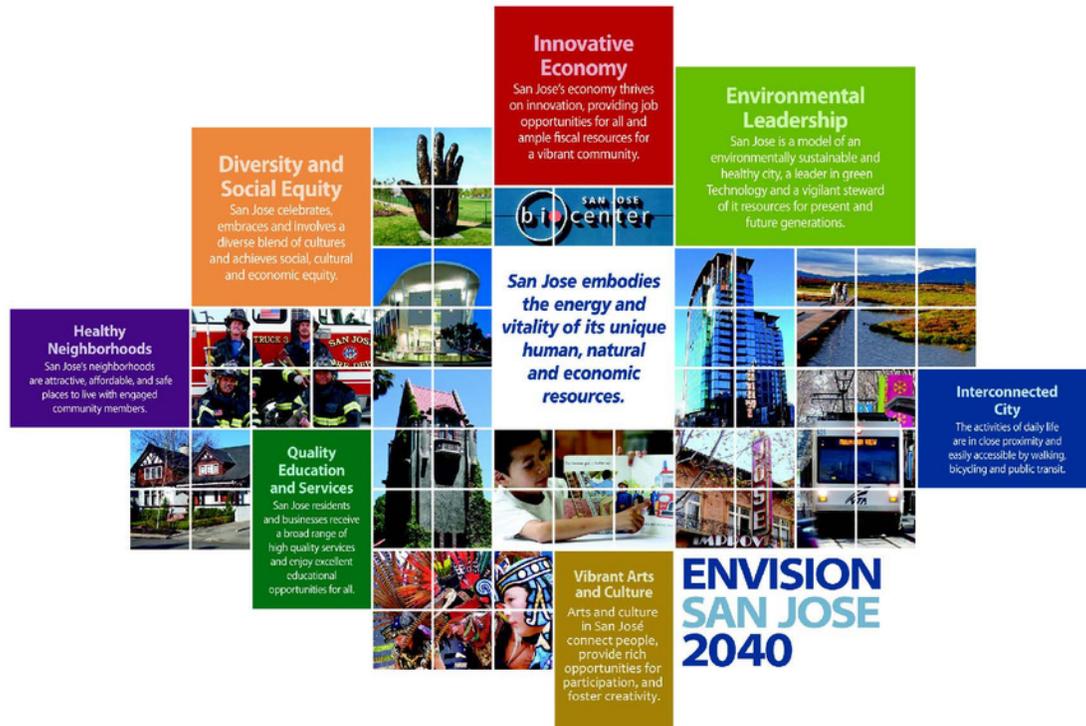


Figure 17: Graphic of Community Values Stated by the San José 2040 General Plan

Source: Envision San José 2040 General Plan, Chapter 1 Pg 13

As a way to begin exploring these guiding principles, the student team completed an “urban montage” exercise: in-the-field, experiential, observational analysis of the study area, to become familiar with North San José. This process included informal conversations with locals, counts of park users and transportation mode choices, and the collection of “artifacts” such as flyers and photos of quirky or unique characteristics of the area. We also explored the vast, six-square-mile area by car, via VTA light rail, and on foot.

The montage exercise yielded interesting findings which we categorized into four themes: (1) land use patterns and the built environment; (2) connectivity and usability of transportation; (3) “third places”: parks, open spaces, and community centers; and (4) a sense of place through culture and community.

The intercept survey findings described in previous sections of this report were also instrumental in the development of our placemaking recommendations. Community involvement is central to the decision-making process, as it can help residents better understand the City’s goals and build trust; this helps reduce ‘friction’ down the line by ensuring that community needs and desires are being met. (Konsti-Laakso and Rantala 2018).

From the survey responses, community members consistently commented on key considerations for the creation of this report’s placemaking strategies. First, many survey participants found that the “good places” in North San José included natural spaces like Coyote Creek and Guadalupe River. They also appreciated the area’s varied food choices, especially Indian cuisine, and the proximity of commercial areas. Complaints often included traffic, rent prices, a lack of community services and maintenance (such as problems with safety and garbage), the high cost of living, a lack of walkability, and the bland design of large buildings and single-use developments.

Lastly, we incorporated literature on cultivating a “sense of place” into our recommendations. Writer and urbanist Tony Hiss states that changing a place must accomplish three things: (1) nurture growth, (2) protect the environment, and (3) develop jobs and homes for all. He posits that many places today are losing their uniqueness and that the focus should be on the user experience in a place, as well as taking concrete actions to reach particular goals. (Hiss, 1990).

Placemaking Principles and Strategies

In alignment with the City’s goals, resident opinions, and a review of the relevant literature, the graduate student team identified five placemaking principles, and related implementation strategies were identified, illustrated in Figure 18. These principles and strategies were then used to identify specific placemaking opportunity sites in North San José upon which to envision implementation of the recommendations.

Placemaking Principles



Figure 18: Placemaking Principles identified for North San José

Source: Report Production Team

PRINCIPLE 1. Livability: Enhance livability for residents and visitors through innovative urban design.

Making a place more livable and attractive for residents is the ultimate goal of placemaking (Wyckoff n.d.). North San José has been the home of many trailblazing and innovative tech giants. This innovation, however, is not reflected in the area's generally bland and inspiring architectural design. Adopting an "intelligent urbanism" approach, North San José should exemplify best practices in contemporary urban planning and design. Related strategies should focus on improving livability: improving walkability, bolstering reliable and frequent public transit options, strategically decreasing auto dependence, and shaping policies to support transit-oriented, mixed-use development (SPUR 2020).

PRINCIPLE 2. Equity: Ensure equitable access to housing, amenities, and services.

Two significant challenges facing San José as a whole are the cost of housing and the closely related prevalence of a large unhoused population. Zoning and land use policies in North San José have historically stifled the production of new housing stock, especially affordable housing and access to daily amenities such as full-service grocery stores and pharmacies, green spaces, and medical care (National League of Cities 2021).

Access improvements should also include improved wayfinding and infrastructure that fully complies with ADA standards to improve equitable access for seniors, families, and those with disabilities.

PRINCIPLE 3. Culture and Identity: Celebrate the area's culture for a strong sense of identity and community.

North San José currently lacks a strong sense of place and a neighborhood-wide sense of community. Notably, when asked to identify things they liked and disliked about North San José, many survey respondents named locations outside of the study area. Creative placemaking is essential for fostering local identity and should be designed to be inclusive and reflective of the diverse community they serve (Zuma and Rooijackers 2020).

For example, incorporating branding and public art into public realm can improve an area's sense of identity and culture (Frederick and Mehta 2018). In addition, aside from the parks in North San José, there are few community spaces where residents can gather. Most community events are organized by residential complexes, office or industrial campuses, or schools, meaning they are not available to those who are not a part of those organizations. Increasing opportunities for connection will improve a sense of culture and identity.

PRINCIPLE 4. Sustainability and Climate Resiliency: Promote environmental stewardship and climate resilience.

In alignment with the City's environmental leadership, this placemaking principle reflects the vital importance of environmental stewardship and preparation for climate impacts in North San José. The strategies for this principle consist of preserving natural environments and adding native plants to parks and developments, including additional tree canopy and preservation of the natural wetlands near Coyote Creek

and Guadalupe River. It also includes climate mitigation strategies such as green roofs and the use of the natural form (biomimicry) in the area's development and operation. Additionally, new development that is LEED Green Building-certified should be prioritized in order to mitigate climate impacts.

PRINCIPLE 5. *Open Space and Natural Environment: Provide green parks and engaging open spaces for residents and visitors.*

Parks and open spaces should be available for all who live in and visit North San José. Integrating native plants, trees, and natural elements into public spaces can make them more attractive and comfortable in addition to contributing to a sense of tranquility and well-being (Frederick and Mehta 2018). Ideally, these spaces should be designed with amenities such as recreational components and/or community gardens.

Incidentally, new community gardens were the top amenity that our survey respondents said they wished to see in North San José.

Incorporating Placemaking Principles into North San José

In summary, this section identified five placemaking principles centered around equity, sustainability and resilience, open space and the natural environment, culture and identity, and livability.

The next section builds on this foundation and identifies ten locations in North San José where placemaking interventions might be implemented. We encourage the SJDOT staff - as they launch the North San Jose MTIP planning process - to share these principles and locations during community engagement activities.

07 RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION



AI image produced by Milauni Patel, Fall 2023, Bing Image Creator, November 27th, 2023,
<https://bing.com/create>

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Placemaking is central to fostering a sense of identity and community: two qualities that, in our study of North San José, are much needed. This section describes a number of placemaking recommendations and related opportunity sites for SJDOT to consider during their development of the NSJ MTIP.

Scales of Placemaking

Placemaking can occur at different scales, summarized in Table 3. For the purposes of this study, four different scales were identified, each suggesting unique placemaking approaches:

- micro
- site
- corridor
- neighborhood

Table 3: Definition of Placemaking by Scale

Scale of Placemaking	Description	Example Interventions
Micro	Small, streetside elements	Murals, wayfinding, marketing signage
Site	Contained elements within a specific property	Retrofitting a vacant building for a community-serving purpose
Corridor	Corridor-specific elements along paths of travel	Increased tree canopies, Paseo punch-throughs to break up superblocks
Neighborhood	Neighborhood-wide elements	Transit oriented and mixed-use developments featuring distinctive design elements

Types of Placemaking

Now that we've addressed *scales* of placemaking, we should also consider *types* of placemaking approaches. As described by Wyckoff (2014) these types are (1) strategic, (2) creative, (3) standard, and (4) tactical. These are illustrated in Figure 19 and described below.



Figure 19: Types of Placemaking according to Wyckoff

Image source: Wyckoff, Mark A. "Definition of Placemaking: Four Different Types."
https://www.canr.msu.edu/uploads/375/65824/4typesplacemaking_pzn_wyckoff_january2014.pdf

- **Standard:** The universal and “multipurpose” kind of placemaking. Standard placemaking is considered to be long-term and large-scale, but it can be conducted in a short-term manner. Most placemaking projects can be included under standard placemaking, but they are generally related to improvement-based actions like new neighborhood programming and civic spaces.
- **Strategic:** Centered on achieving a specific goal, strategic placemaking is traditionally a collaborative effort. This can involve a wide range of participants and partners, who are focused on a targeted, mid-term project. These projects are typically implemented along major corridors and create or enhance major centers and essential mobility nodes.
- **Creative:** The most design-oriented approach, creative placemaking is intended to expand opportunities for art and cultural activities. Creative placemaking projects can range from small-scale street art installations to major developments with animated architectural features and themes.
- **Tactical:** Unlike the other three types, tactical placemaking is intended for quick and small changes. Following the “lighter, quicker, cheaper” approach, this type of placemaking is intended to reshape existing spaces without high costs.

Standard Placemaking Recommendations

Opportunity Site #1: North First Street Corridor

Designated as a future Grand Boulevard in the *Envision San José 2040 General Plan*, North First Street will require enhancements. There are multiple ways, both at the micro- and corridor-scale, that could positively impact and transform the study area's main strip. The expansion of the street's tree canopy, along with the addition of native plants, can help reduce noise pollution and heat island effects. Furthermore, the inclusion of new wayfinding signage and distinctive art that reflects the area's agricultural and high-tech heritage could cement a sense of place and direction for both residents and visitors. This could be achieved by collaborating with local companies and organizations along the corridor, such as VTA, Samsung, and PayPal.

Opportunity Site #2: Paseo Punch-Throughs

North San José's wide roads are easy for motorists to navigate but less pleasant for those who walk or roll. The long blocks and infrequent intersections in the study area contribute to its general lack of walkability. One method to remedy this is to create walking paths *between* existing streets. Connectivity can be formalized with the incorporation of paseos.

Paseos are "...landscaped pedestrian and bicycle connections through medium and large blocks that are separated from vehicular traffic and parking areas to provide enjoyable outdoor space, comfortable shortcuts for pedestrians and bicyclists, and increased access to the adjacent neighborhoods" (City of San José 2022).



Case Study: Connective Corridor, Syracuse, New York



Source: Syracuse University. "Connective Corridor." N.d.
Retrieved from:
<https://connectivecorridor.syr.edu/about/history-2/>

The Connective Corridor is a public-private partnership between the City of Syracuse, Syracuse University, and National Grid, and represents the promise of greater accessibility through placemaking.

Beginning as an idea to connect two disparate parts of Syracuse in 2005, the Connective Corridor evolved to provide better mobility options and simultaneously create new public amenities, green spaces, and public art along its route (Syracuse University n.d.).

The Connective Corridor has subsequently been recognized nationally as a prime example of synthesizing place and mobility.

Notably, paseos are acknowledged in both the NSJADG and the SJCDG as necessary features to support pedestrian and bike connectivity. With such large block lengths, creating paseo “punch-throughs”, such as those we suggest in Figure 20, can significantly reduce walking times and encourage pedestrian activity.

A paseo network could be created in North San José through multiple means: direct City investments, partnerships with property owners on potential paseo routes, or as a part of new developments through the entitlement process.

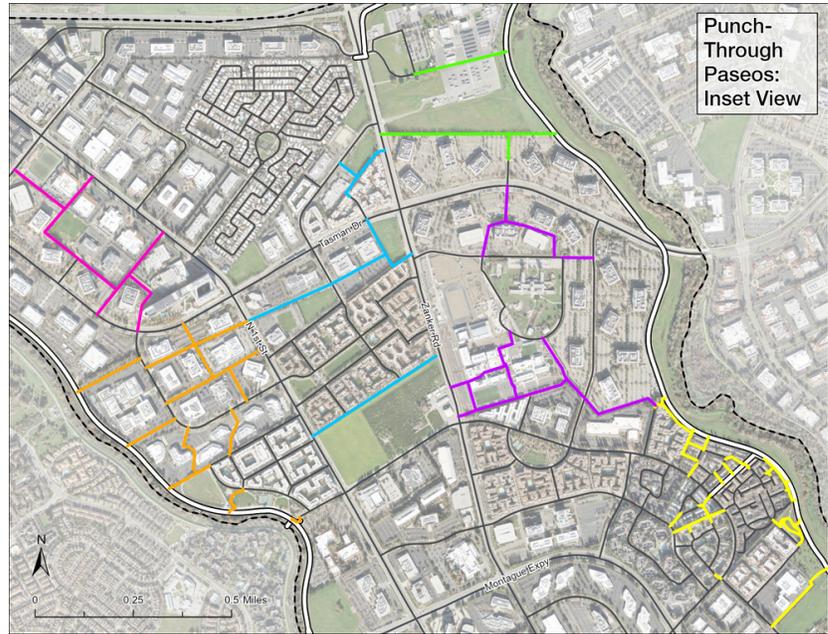


Figure 20: Paseo Punch-Through Concept Map

Map produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open Data Portal: [Streets](#), [Street Intersections](#), [Valley Water Open Data Portal](#); [Rivers](#) for Study Area Boundary. Self-Created: Highway Shields.

Opportunity Site #3: Zanker Road (southern terminus)

At the southern tip of Zanker Road, there is a large island in the median of the road. Currently, it is slated for the 101/Zanker Road interchange project, which is intended to reconnect the southern part of North San José with the Rincon South neighborhood.

As a slight modification, new green space in the form of a “pocket park” could be integrated into the project. We used AI imagery tools to envision what this might look like (see Figure 21). Such a space could also serve as a pedestrian refuge and a traffic calming design element.



Figure 21: Idea - a Pocket Park at Southern Terminus of Zanker Rd.

AI image produced by David Bafumi, Fall 2023, “A park with native trees and shrubs on a large isosceles triangle-shaped median with 2 lanes of traffic on either side across from the 24-Hour Fitness on Zanker Rd in San Jose California. The median park is not in the middle of an intersection” prompt, Bing Image Creator, November 27th, 2023, <https://bing.com/create>

Strategic Placemaking Recommendations

Opportunity Site #4: Moitozo Orchards

Moitozo Orchards has potential to become the centerpiece of connectivity and placemaking in North San José. The site could be reconfigured as a new community garden, farmers market, and town plaza while maintaining its visible agricultural heritage as one of Santa Clara Valley's last orchards. See Figure 22 for an AI-generated image of what this site could become.

Many survey respondents noted their desire for new community gardens in North San José. Though Moitozo Orchards is yet to be developed, there is still ample opportunity to enhance its form. Short-term improvements can include mid-street crosswalks, enhanced signage and wayfinding, protected bicycle lanes, and enhanced intersections at North First Street and Zanker Road. In the interim, these improvements can increase accessibility between residential communities and allow for a direct link between the Guadalupe River and Coyote Creek Trails.

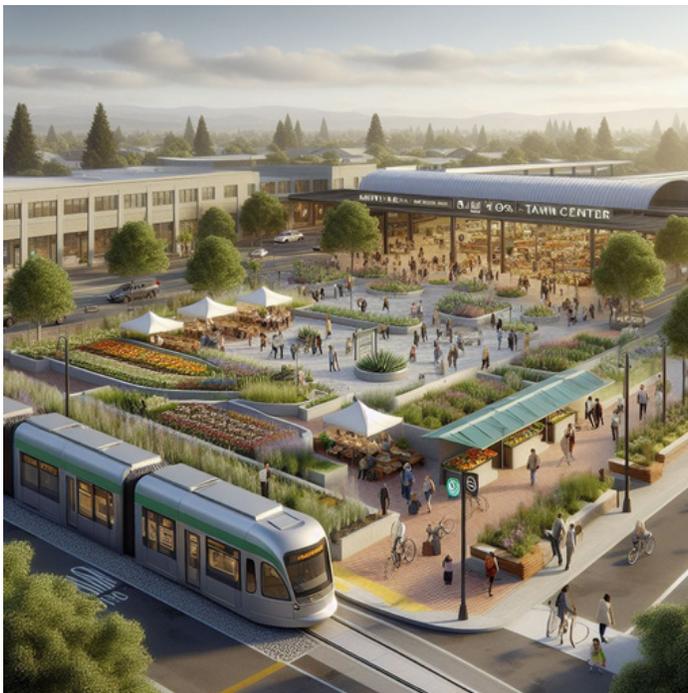


Figure 22: Community Garden and Town Plaza at Moitozo Orchards

AI image produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, "A realistic rendering of an urban plaza and town center at the corner of North First Street and River Oaks Parkway in North San Jose, California. The town center includes a community garden, a transit station with a light rail train and buses, signage showing which way the train and buses are going as well as arrival and departures. The plaza has people shopping at a large farmer's market, bicycle parking, and trees. There are native California plants and bioswales." December 3rd, 2023, <https://bing.com/create>

Opportunity Site #5: Tasman Drive and Zanker Road

The intersection of Tasman Drive and Zanker Road may be a great location for supportive housing. In coordination with VTA's *Tasman Corridor Complete Streets Program* (Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority 2020), the City could work to expand accessibility to the site and support increased pedestrian activity in the area. Furthermore, as the Coyote Creek Trail nears completion, distinctive branding and wayfinding will be important additions to consider.

Opportunity Site #6: 211 River Oaks Parkway

The former Hewlett-Packard campus at 211 River Oaks Parkway is very suitable for new mixed-use development. In fact, a 737-unit project is being currently considered for the site (Avalos 2023). With development likely in the near future, there is a likelihood of increased demand for mobility choices. Since this area is not currently serviced by public transportation, expanded bus service or an urban circulator system could reduce the strain on River Oaks Parkway.

Opportunity Site #7: 123 Devcon Court

123 Devcon Court presents itself as a possible site for redevelopment, and more importantly, as a way to introduce residential and mixed-use development on the southern edge of the study area. This would require more investments in bike and pedestrian infrastructure not just along Bering Drive, but also East Brokaw Road and Zanker Road. Supporting these new connections can alleviate the impacts of Highway 101 as a barrier and better accommodate mixed-uses.

Creative and Tactical Placemaking Recommendations

Opportunity Site #8: Creative Placemaking at Renaissance Drive

Along Renaissance Drive is a bland wall barrier that insulates the California

Impressions community from the rest of the neighborhood. The street itself connects multiple different townhome and apartment complexes. It also connects to Tasman Drive. To instill a sense of community and belonging, new public art features and murals could be incorporated in future street improvements (see Figure 23 for an AI-generated idea for this wall).



Figure 23: Proposed Mural Along Renaissance Drive

AI image produced by Jovanny Escareno, Fall 2023, "Can you place a mural of fruit orchards on an 8 foot wall next to a 6 foot wide sidewalk in North San Jose, California Behind the wall are two story townhomes" prompt, Bing Image Creator, November 27th, 2023, <https://bing.com/create>

Opportunity Site #9: Tactical Placemaking at Vilaggio Street and Zanker Road

There is a small urban plaza on the eastern end of Vilaggio Street and Zanker Road. This could be the location for new community events such as pop-up markets or seasonal activities. Given the plaza is along six-lane Zanker Road, efforts should be made to increase walkability to make greater use of the existing plaza and associated

greenspace. Additions such as a pedestrian refuge island and artistic crosswalks could attract much-needed activity to the area.

Opportunity Site #10:

Parking Lots Across North San José (Multiple Locations)

Parking lots, as we noted in an earlier chapter, comprise over 16 percent of the study area's total land area. These surface lots largely supply the parking needs of the local technology companies. While the commercial office market continues to reel from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, actual parking usage may remain much lower than the amount currently allocated. Simultaneously, there is a noted parking strain in existing residential areas. In partnership with property owners, a new transportation demand management (TDM) program to lease these "underperforming" parking spots to local residents could alleviate this issue. Alternatively, the parking lots could be used as new green spaces, whether a part of a paseo punch-through program or not, even if temporarily.

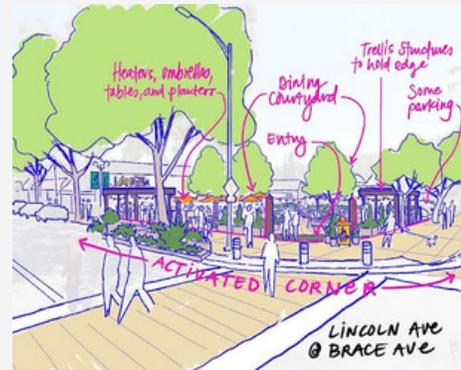
Implementation Considerations

The successful implementation of these wide-ranging recommendations will hinge upon public and private cooperation and focus. On the private end, collaboration will be required between the City and major companies with offices located in North San José, such as Google, PayPal, Samsung, and Cisco.

These companies offer many perks or (free) amenities that potentially disincentivize employees from leaving and supporting other businesses in the area. It may be worth investigating if, and how, companies can assist with implementing some of the placemaking recommendations provided in this report.



Case Study: Al Fresco Initiative, San José, California



Source: SPUR. "Making Al Fresco Work." 2023. Retrieved from: https://www.spur.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/SPUR_Making-Al-Fresco-Work_0.pdf

A product of the COVID-19 pandemic, the San José Al Fresco Initiative offers a glimpse of how quick changes can create completely new spaces. Though mostly oriented towards restaurants, the Al Fresco Initiative has changed the way parking spaces are used in the city (SPUR 2023). Underutilized streetside and off-street parking has been converted along many commercial strips, leading to a more identifiable and pedestrian-focused environment. In fact, the Al Fresco program has inspired San José to consider the full pedestrianization of multiple city streets. Private businesses have followed suit in many places, cultivating new private plazas and promenades for their communities.

These companies collectively have an enormous real estate footprint that draws in many people who do not live in the area. Each company stands to benefit from contributing to building community bonds through collaborative placemaking efforts.

On the public end, we encourage placemaking interventions to be incorporated into the City’s 5-Year *Capital Improvement Plan* (CIP). The CIP serves as the main planning instrument for capital projects such as road maintenance, bicycle lanes, trails, and parks. As such, the CIP has the potential to be a major implementation tool that is not otherwise captured in the *NSJ Neighborhoods Plan* or *Design Guidelines*. There are two key City Service Areas (CSAs) of the CIP that can be used to incorporate transportation and design improvements: (1) Neighborhood Services and (2) Transportation and Aviation Services.

Integrating this report’s recommendations into future CIPs would align the City’s overall mobility goals (and those of the future NSJ MTIP) while ensuring consistency with the *General Plan*. It is crucial that cities rely more heavily on their General Plan to guide their capital investments, since general plans often already outline specific projects and improvements (Mathur 2019). For example, the *Envision San José 2040 General Plan* calls for “[n]ew development [to] orient buildings toward public streets and transit facilities and include features to provide an enhanced pedestrian environment” (City of San José 2023). Many of our recommendations, especially the paseo punch-throughs, exemplify the type of urban spatial structures that the General Plan calls for.

To conclude this section, Table 4 summarizes our two placemaking opportunity sites and related recommendations:

Table 4: List of Placemaking Opportunity Sites and Corresponding Recommendations for the NSJ MTIP

Opportunity Site	Principles	Description	Scale	Policy Alignment	Implementation Option	Timeframe
North First Street	1, 3, 4	Expansion of tree canopies, transition to complete street, new place-based public art	Corridor, Micro	SJ Complete Streets, Climate Smart San José	Public-private partnership with businesses and organizations along the corridor	Short-term, Mid-term
Intersection of Tasman Drive and Zanker Road	5	In addition to VTA Complete Streets Improvements, new wayfinding signage	Site	VTA Complete Streets	Collaboration with VTA’s Tasman-related infrastructure improvements	Mid-term
Moitozo Farm	3, 4	Enhancements to existing pedestrian and bike paths and wayfinding signage	Corridor, Site	BBP 2025, Move San José, SJCDG, NSJNP	Partnership with property owner and business and residences along River Oaks Parkway	Long-term

Table 4 cont.: List of Placemaking Opportunity Sites and Corresponding Recommendations for the NSJ MTIP

Opportunity Site	Principles	Description	Scale	Policy Alignment	Implementation Option	Timeframe
123 Devcon Court	1	Upgraded bike paths and pedestrian connectivity options in support of new mixed-use development	Site	BBP 2025, Move San José	Coordination with property owners along East Brokaw Road, Zanker Road, and Bering Drive	Mid-Term
211 Renaissance Drive	3, 4	New community mural and inspiring public art	Site	SJCDG	Partnership with California Impressions community and neighboring residences	Short-term
211 River Oaks Parkway	1	Urban circulator feasibility study	Site Corridor	SJCDG, NSJNP	Collaboration with VTA, businesses, and residences on transit accessibility	Long-Term
Zanker Road (southern terminus)	4	Parklet or pocket park adjoining the US 101/Zanker Road Project	Site	SJ Complete Streets, NSJNP	Collaboration with Caltrans and VTA on the 101/Zanker Road project	Mid-Term
Intersection of Vilaggio Street and Zanker Road	3	Pedestrianized Zanker Road crossing for easy community access to plaza	Neighborhood	NSJADG	Partnership with the Crescent Village Apartment Homes community	Short-term
Entire North San José Study Area	2, 3, 4	Incorporation of paseo punch-throughs between existing and new developments	Micro, Neighborhood	NSJADG, Climate Smart San José	Creation of a "paseo punch-through program," which could encourage participation by property owners.	Long-term

08 CONCLUSION



AI image produced by Hannah Meeks, Fall 2023, "a boulevard with medium sized shops and housing buildings and pedestrians on 5 foot sidewalks and bike lockers and transportation corridor with light rail, bus lane, and one car lane with tree canopy made up of native California plants on North First Street in North San José California. No cars, bikers or people on light rail tracks" prompt, Bing Image Creator, December 1st, 2023, <https://bing.com/create>

Limitations and Research Gaps

The intent of this report is to provide insights gathered through surveying community members of North San José, to present placemaking principles and strategies, and to identify opportunity sites where the City of San José can implement these recommendations, perhaps through SJDOT's MTIP planning process.

This leaves room for future exploration into applying the placemaking principles to elements like housing and transportation improvements. Some additional areas for recommended study include methods to incorporate equity into urban development decision making, opportunities for meaningful (not “checklist”) citizen participation in the planning process, and collaboration with employers within and around the study area.

Housing, including affordable housing, will play a key role in neighborhood-scale transformation in North San José (City of San José 2022). As recommended in previous sections, underutilized industrial and commercial properties can be repurposed to help meet the region's unmet housing needs. It is clear that this is already underway given recent housing proposals, such as a 107-unit development at the intersection of North First Street and Trimble Road (Avalos 2023b) and a development at 550 East Brokaw that could potentially include over 1,200 units (Avalos 2023a).

Another area that requires deeper study is the provision of a richer web of **interconnected mobility options** within North San José, with a priority given to active modes of travel. As our survey revealed, driving is the most frequent mode of travel for both commuting and completing non-work trips. Meanwhile, public transit is infrequently used within the study area.

Feedback provided by survey respondents shows that **safety and convenience** are two main factors influencing the transportation decisions of individuals traveling to, from, and through the study area. However, our research stops short of a thorough analysis of alternatives and how they can help make public transit, walking, and biking in the study area more attractive. Additionally, there may be tension between prioritizing public transit options for getting to North San José and prioritizing transit options for traveling *within* the study area.

An opportunity for future research would be to determine how to achieve an appropriate balance between the two. This may include looking at how needs differ between the **daytime versus nighttime populations**, as well as the travel behavior of those who *live* in the study area and those who *work* in it, to identify what actions can be taken to encourage more biking, walking, and transit use.

The issue of **climate resilience and sustainability** also demands a more detailed examination. North San José is an area that has historically suffered from multiple floods, as it is one of the lowest elevation areas in the Santa Clara Valley and is located adjacent to San Francisco Bay's estuaries. Care needs to be taken to ensure that the storm drains, dikes, and other water management infrastructure are prepared for high intensity 'atmospheric river' downpours. It should also be noted that the redevelopment of North San José will involve considerable increases in the carbon footprint, both from new construction during development and from the needs of the higher population due to increased density in the neighborhood. These will require mitigation efforts on behalf of developers, private companies, and the City.

The final area for future research is **equity and citizen participation**. This involves focusing on how to incorporate equity into decision making for future development in North San José and providing recommendations for how members of the community can meaningfully participate in the planning process. Somewhat related to this topic is the matter of promoting educational and opportunity pipelines that connect young residents to the economic opportunities of the neighborhood, encourage resident entrepreneurialism, and create 'incubator' spaces for new businesses and start-ups.

Next Steps

The survey responses established a baseline understanding of how local residents and business owners perceive North San José. A natural next step would be to build upon the foundation of our graduate student team's survey findings and the recommendations in this report in order to develop specific proposals for changes to North San José. Once those are identified, it would then necessitate more public engagement for feedback. This ensures the prescriptions accurately reflect what the community wants to see in their neighborhood.

Closing Remarks

The collective effort of 18 graduate SJSU urban planning students in the production of this report effort culminated in a forward-looking set of guiding principles and policies for North San José's redevelopment, employing an innovative approach that combined both planning and placemaking best practices.

We are particularly proud of the time spent outside of the classroom, "embedding" ourselves in the day-to-day rhythms of North San José. This included considerable on-the-ground fact-finding, such as visiting key points of interest, surveying user (resident and non-resident) experiences, and capturing drone footage. Taken together, these efforts provided answers to the question we posed at the start of our work: "what kind of 'place' is North San José?" The vast study area's public realm is largely characterized by wide, car-dominant arterials and an abundance of corporate and industrial lots, rather than vibrant and safe places within which local residents can spend quality time.

In the end, our hope is that planners and non-planners alike can “nudge” North San José away from its current largely suburban form and towards something resembling a more “intelligently urban-suburban hybrid” to meet the needs of present and future city residents and businesses: that is, a place (in the truest sense of the word).

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APPENDIX A: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Resident Surveys: Living and Interacting within North San José

We developed a survey to inform the future of the study area and policies to guide planned development in this North San José. Below is a discussion of the methodology, data analysis, and surveying process.

Survey Preparation

To prepare for the survey development, we used Qualtrics, a tool that is flexible, adaptable, and efficient in meeting the needs of our project. Qualtrics is a browser-based survey maker used to disseminate surveys and collect responses. Survey results can be aggregated and displayed visually using a variety of tools available to users, providing detailed analyses and insights.

The survey consisted of four primary categories:

- General experiences with North San José,
- Transportation
- Green space and Amenities
- Demographics.

Three main themes emerged from our engagement with survey respondents:

- Social Interaction & Civic Engagement
- Connectivity & Accessibility
- Parks & Public Spaces

Student Training Methods

Prior to conducting surveys, the class was provided with an overview of best practices to engage with community members by Don Weden, a retired Principal Planner with the County of Santa Clara. After the lecture, students were provided with the draft survey and instructed to review the Qualtrics offline survey user guide. Students were also given an opportunity to participate in a role-playing exercise with examples of resident and non-resident responses.

After the exercise, students were encouraged to critique the survey questions and the Qualtrics survey tool itself, and provide comments to the survey design team to ensure an effective and efficient survey implementation process.

Survey Implementation

Each of the 18 student surveyors was responsible for collecting at least ten complete surveys. Surveyors selected from 27 time slots and were dispersed in groups of two or three among the nine selected sites within the study area. The sites selected were geographically dispersed throughout the study area, with a mix of public and private spaces, as well as a mix of land uses with logs of foot traffic. The sites varied in the types of commercial uses (grocery stores, coffee shops, gyms) and public uses (parks) in an effort to draw from a diverse sample of respondents. Each group of surveyors was assigned to visit two to three data collection sites throughout September and October 2023, for a maximum of 2.5 hours per “shift”.

Survey collection instruments included paper and digital (iPad) formats, depending on the availability of survey type and preferences of the surveyor and respondent. The paper survey was also translated into both Vietnamese and Spanish. The survey instruments are included in Appendix B.

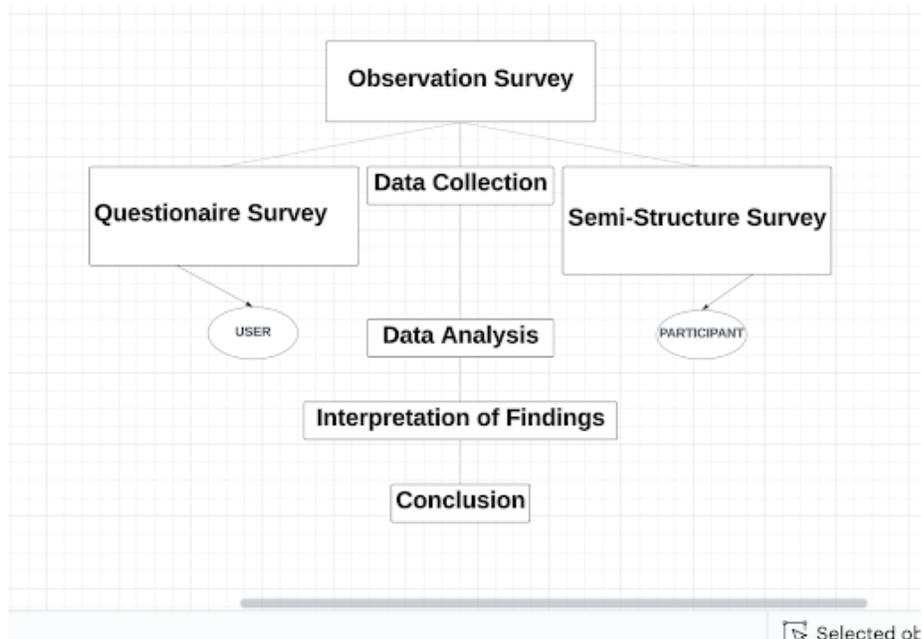


Figure 24: Survey Methodology Chart

Survey Design

The survey was designed to (1) gauge resident interests in and perceptions of various planning and development intervention strategies, (2) identify areas in North San Jose needing improvement (both physical areas and conceptual planning issues), and (3) capture what residents and non-residents would like to see in the study area.

A map of the study area included in the survey helped participants identify and orient themselves to our area of interest.

Outreach Methods

To ensure that objective qualitative responses were captured, surveyors were assigned specific sites throughout the study area based on their classification as a common or popular community gathering space, a large campus or work setting, or the site of a major transportation corridor or intersection.

These sites included Starbucks, River Oaks Park, The Market Place (shopping center, Caffe Bene, 24-Hour Fitness, Target, Moitozo Park, and Zuka Foods). Each site was assigned to two to three surveyors. The time slots chosen for outreach were based on the likelihood of highest foot traffic during both weekday and weekend hours.

Additionally, the class reached out to City Councilmember David Cohen's (District 4) staff, who provided contact information for registered Neighborhood Associations in North San José, and emailed those residents to inform them of the opportunity to complete the survey.

APPENDIX B: INTERCEPT SURVEY

Here is the survey instrument used in this analysis of North San Jose. Spanish and Vietnamese versions were also produced; these can be requested by contacting Prof. Rick Kos at richard.kos@sjsu.edu. Note that there is a 3-page survey (for **residents** living within the study area) followed by a 5-page survey (for respondents living **outside** of the study area).

Living In and Interacting With North San José

Resident Survey

Introduction

Join forces with San José State University's (SJSU) Masters of Urban Planning program to shape the future of North San José! SJSU is working in partnership with CommUniverCity (a collaborative between the community, university, and the city) and the City of San José Department of Transportation for this project. This survey is intended to increase our understanding of the current state of North San José, as well as some of the ways that residents would like to see the area enhanced. The final report will encompass a collection of proposed objectives, urban planning principles, and regulatory guidelines that will recommend ways for future development of the North San José area with the community input provided by the survey.

This survey is divided into four portions: general experiences with North San José, transportation in the area, green spaces and amenities, and demographics. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can opt out of participating in any part or all of this survey at any time. You also have the right to skip any question you do not wish to answer. The data collected in this survey will be anonymous - the final report will not share any identifying characteristics of the participants.

Please only fill out this survey if you are 18 years of age or older.

Experience in North San José

1. How did you find out about this survey?
 - a. QR Code
 - b. Community Group
 - c. CommUniverCity student [SURVEYOR FILL OUT]

--	--

- d. Other
- e. Cannot choose / decline to answer

2. Are you a resident of North San José, as defined within the boundaries of the map below?
- Yes
 - No

5. What are some of the best places in North San José and why? (for example, a park, restaurant, or other space)

6. Is there anything in North San José that you wish wasn't here?

7. Do you feel like there is a sense of community in North San José? Please rate on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being no community, and 5 being a strong community.

Sense of Community in North San José (circle below)

1 2 3 4 5

8. Can you explain your answer for the previous question?

Transportation in North San José

9. What modes of transportation do you use to go to work? Please indicate on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being never and 5 being daily.

Type of Transportation	1 - never	2 - rarely	3 - monthly	4 - weekly	5 - daily
Car					
Bike					
Public transportation (bus or light rail)					
Walking					

10. What modes of transportation do you use for non-work trips (social, shopping, etc.)?
Please indicate on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being never and 5 being daily.
-

Demographic Questions:

16. What is your age?
- a. 18-25
 - b. 26-35
 - c. 36-50
 - d. 51-64
 - e. 65+
 - f. Cannot choose / decline to answer
17. What is your gender identity?
- a. Male
 - b. Female
 - c. Nonbinary
 - d. Other (please fill in) _____
 - e. Cannot choose / decline to answer
18. What is your race and ethnicity? (Select all that apply)
- a. White
 - b. Asian Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian
 - c. Hispanic/Latino/Latinx
 - d. Black/African American
 - e. Indigenous (American Indian or Alaska Native)
 - f. Other (please fill in) _____
 - g. Cannot choose / decline to answer

End of Survey - Thank you for your time!

Living In and Interacting With North San José

Non-Resident Survey

Introduction

Join forces with San José State University's (SJSU) Masters of Urban Planning program to shape the future of North San José! SJSU is working in partnership with CommUniverCity (a collaborative between the community, university, and the city) and the City of San José Department of Transportation for this project. This survey is intended to increase our understanding of the current state of North San José, as well as some of the ways that residents would like to see the area enhanced. The final report will encompass a collection of proposed objectives, urban planning principles, and regulatory guidelines that will recommend ways for future development of the North San José area with the community input provided by the survey.

This survey is divided into four portions: general experiences with North San José, transportation in the area, green spaces and amenities, and demographics. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can opt out of participating in any part or all of this survey at any time. You also have the right to skip any question you do not wish to answer. The data collected in this survey will be anonymous - the final report will not share any identifying characteristics of the participants.

Please only fill out this survey if you are 18 years of age or older.

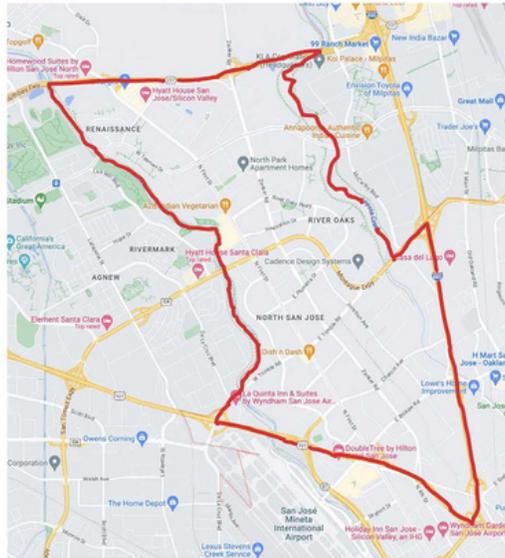
Experience in North San José

1. How did you find out about this survey?
 - a. QR Code
 - b. Community Group
 - c. CommUniverCity student [SURVEYOR FILL OUT]

--	--

- d. Other
- e. Cannot choose / decline to answer

2. Are you a resident of North San José, as defined within the boundaries of the map below?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Cannot choose / decline to answer



3. (if non-residents) What is the purpose of your visit to North San José today?
- a. Work
 - b. School
 - c. Shopping
 - d. Social
 - e. Other (please fill in) _____
 - f. Cannot choose / decline to answer

4. What three words would you use to describe North San José to someone not familiar with the area?

5. What are some of the best places in North San José and why? (for example, a park, restaurant, or other space)

6. Is there anything in North San José that you wish wasn't here?

Transportation in North San José

7. (if non-resident) What modes of transportation do you use to travel to North San José?
Please indicate on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being never and 5 being daily.

Type of Transportation	1 - never	2 - rarely	3 - monthly	4 - weekly	5 - daily
Car					
Bike					
Public transportation (bus or light rail)					
Walking					

8. (if non-resident) What factors prevent you from considering alternative modes of transportation when coming to North San Jose if you rely on driving?

Continue to the other side →

Public Areas and Amenities in North San José

9. How often do you use the trails and parklands along the Guadalupe River or Coyote Creek? Please indicate on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being never and 5 being daily.
(mark applicable column)

North San José Trails	1 - never	2 - rarely	3 - monthly	4 - weekly	5 - daily
Guadalupe River Trail					
Coyote Creek Trail					

10. (if non-resident) What kinds of public parks and recreation facilities, or other amenities, should be added in North San José? (select all that apply)
- a. Sports Recreation Facilities
 - b. Parks
 - c. Trails
 - d. Urban Plaza / Town Square
 - e. Public Art
 - f. Other (please fill in) _____
 - g. Cannot choose / decline to answer
11. What kind of privately-owned amenities should be added to North San José? (select all that apply)
- a. Retail
 - b. Restaurants
 - c. Groceries and Markets
 - d. Housing
 - e. Other (please fill in) _____
 - f. Cannot choose / decline to answer

Continue to the other side →

Demographic Questions:

12. What is your age?
 - a. 18-25
 - b. 26-35
 - c. 36-50
 - d. 51-64
 - e. 65+
 - f. Cannot choose / decline to answer
13. What is your gender identity?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
 - c. Nonbinary
 - d. Other (please fill in) _____
 - e. Cannot choose / decline to answer
14. What is your race and ethnicity? (Select all that apply)
 - a. White
 - b. Asian Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian
 - c. Hispanic/Latino/Latinx
 - d. Black/African American
 - e. Indigenous (American Indian or Alaska Native)
 - f. Other (please fill in) _____
 - g. Cannot choose / decline to answer

End of Survey - Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX C: PASEO PUNCH-THROUGH AND OWNERSHIP METHODOLOGY

Methodology

In figuring out the best way to create this network of new Paseos, we developed a methodology to improve walkability and connections within the study area. To that end, we decided to focus on the section of the study area north of Montague Expressway, as Census data shows that these areas are much more densely populated than the area south of Montague. Additionally, the General Plan Land Use designation map showed that all of the residential zoning in our study area is located North of Montague.

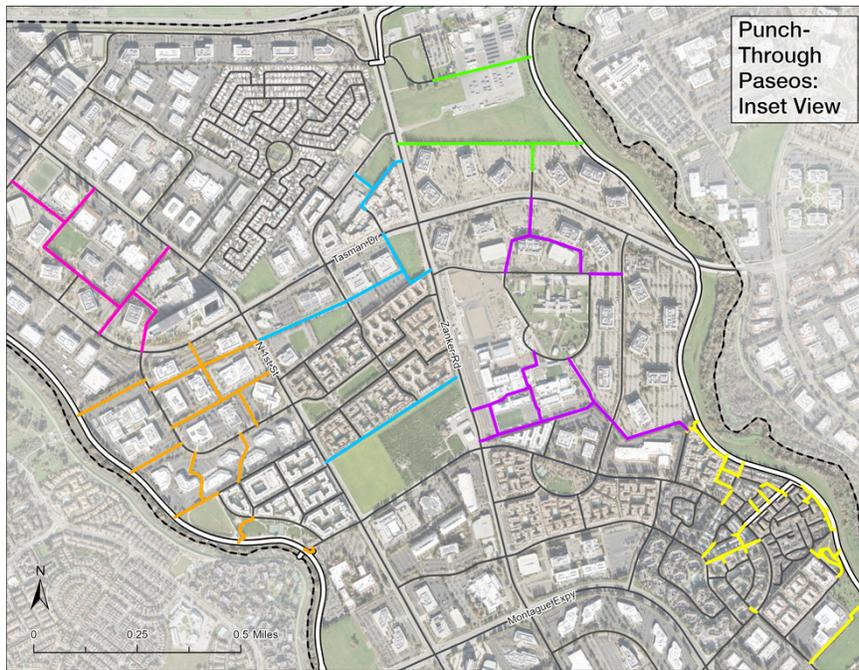
For practicality, we decided to recommend new Paseos where (1) existing desire lines are visible on aerial imagery, (2) in natural gaps between existing buildings, and (3) where existing service roads or paths are visible on aerial imagery but were not included in street network datasets provided by the City. Parking lots were prime candidates for proposed Paseos since parking lots accounted for over 16 percent of the entire study area. Building pedestrian connections through these lots will allow people to travel to nearby areas on foot as opposed to driving. In addition to parking lots, our goal was to increase permeability between dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs in the study area, linking them to nearby Paseos or roads.

We also decided that creating Paseos using largely straight lines was important, as we wanted to create connections that allowed people to reach their destinations quickly. Meandering paths were only used when an existing building was in the way of a desired connection. Finally, we decided to maximize connections to the Guadalupe River Trail and the Coyote Creek Trail. Our community survey showed that these were popular routes for residents and visitors to the study area. These two paths are also the only off-street, protected bikeways running north-south through the study area.

A close up of our proposed network of Paseos is seen in the body of this report and also below. A full map is also included below.

The proposed Paseos are divided into six groups based on their location within the northern part of the study area. Each group is color coded. The total length of new Paseos within the network is 7.7 miles.

Installing this network of Paseos would cut the median block length within the study area in half, to 475 feet. The intersection density within the study area would also increase, though less drastically. The median number of intersections per square quarter mile remains one, due to the very low intersection density south of Montague Expressway. That said, the mean number of intersections per quarter mile square increases by 27 percent, from 2.25 to 2.87.



(from Chapter 7) Figure 21: Paseo Punch-Through Concept Map

Map produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open Data Portal: [Streets](#), [Street Intersections](#), [Valley Water Open Data Portal](#): [Rivers](#) for Study Area Boundary. Self-Created: Highway Shields.

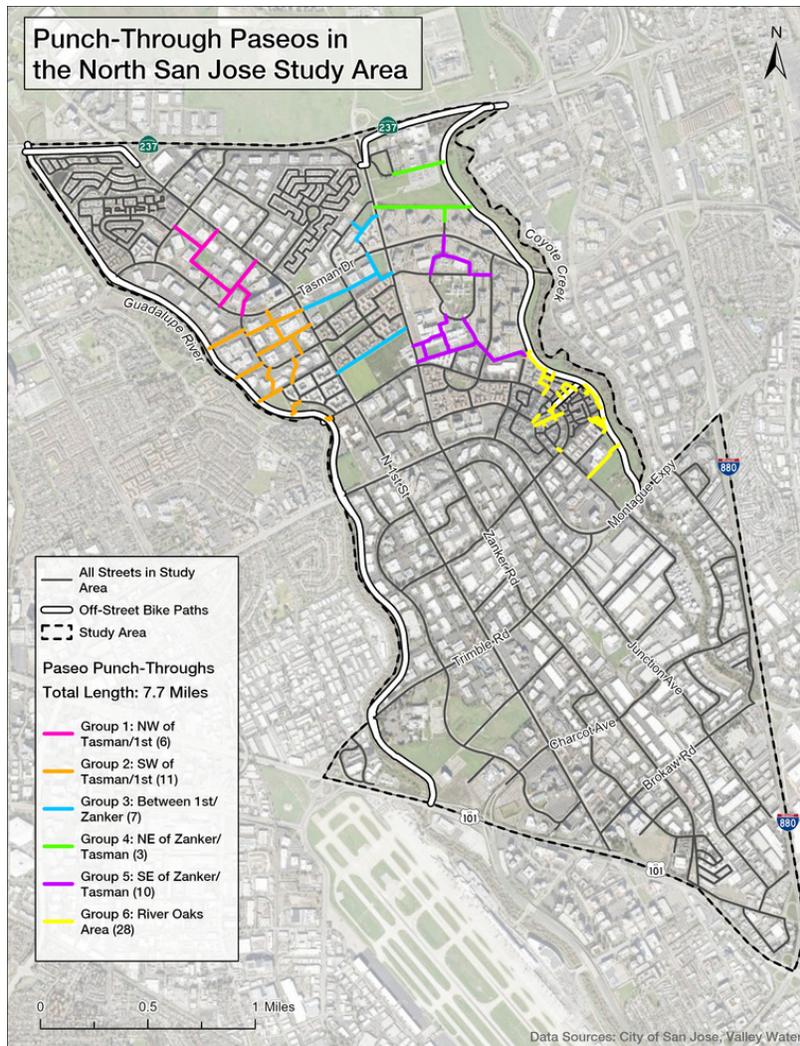


Figure 25: Full Paseo Punch-Through Concept Map

Map produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open Data Portal: [Streets](#), [Street Intersections](#), [Valley Water Open Data Portal](#): [Rivers](#) for Study Area Boundary. Self-Created: Highway Shields.

Ownership Map

A map of the top fourteen landowners in the Study Area was also produced. The goal was to identify if any parcels in close proximity had the same land owner. If nearby parcels have the same land owner, it could increase the ease of parcel aggregation for new development and related placemaking opportunities.

Ownership Map Methodology

The entire study area contains 1,182 parcels. Within those parcels are 836 individual assesseses (the entity that pays taxes on the land). After identifying the number of parcels each assessee owned, we decided to focus on assessees with an ownership frequency of seven parcels or higher. This was due to the rapid decline in frequency below seven, and because assessees with larger land ownership could have a greater impact on the evolution of the study area.

The results identified the top 14 landowners, each given an anonymized alias. We decided to note whether the assessee was a private company or public agency to provide fuller information while still preserving anonymity. The total acreage for each assessee's total ownership within the study area was also calculated to show what size parcels could be developed.

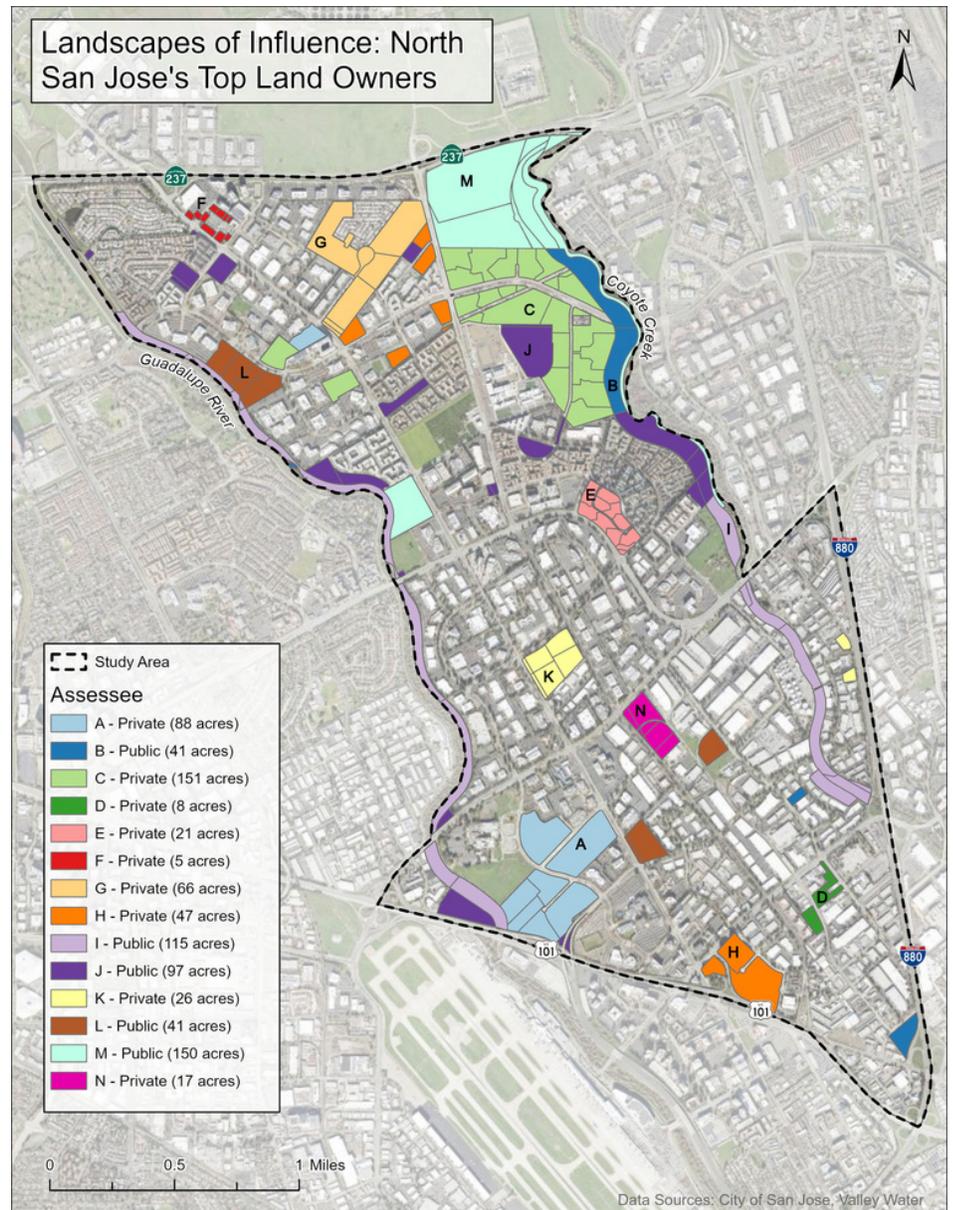


Figure 26: North San José's Top Land Owners

Map produced by Hannah Meeks, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Department of Transportation: Private GIS Parcel data. [Valley Water Open Data Portal](#): Rivers for Study Area Boundary. Self-Created: Highway Shields

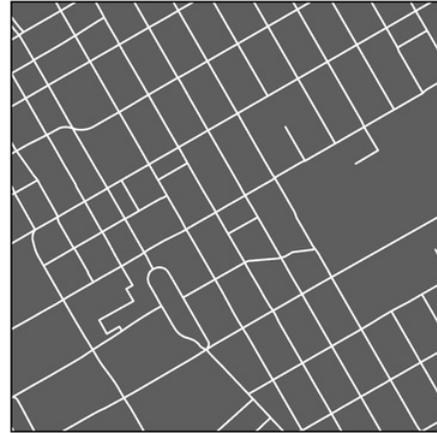
APPENDIX D: OTHER MAPS OF NORTH SAN JOSÉ



Figure 27: Map of North San José

Map produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open Data Portal: [Streets](#), Valley Water Open Data Portal: [Rivers](#) for Study Area Boundary, VTA Open Data Portal: [Light Rail Track](#), [Light Rail Stop](#).

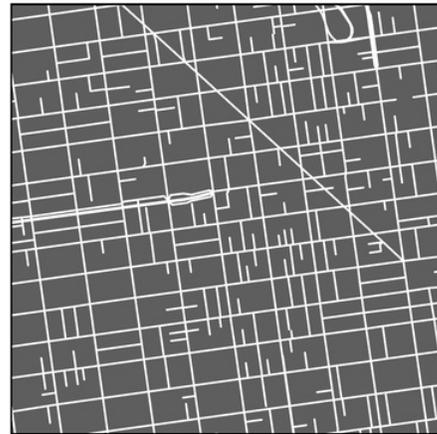
Downtown San Jose



North San Jose



San Francisco



Data Sources: City of San Jose, Valley Water

Figure 28: Comparison of Street Networks in North San José, Downtown San José, and San Francisco

Map produced by David Bafumi, Fall 2023, City of San Jose GIS Open Data Portal: [Streets](#), [DataSF](#); City of San Francisco [Streets](#).

Superblock Structure of the North San Jose Study Area

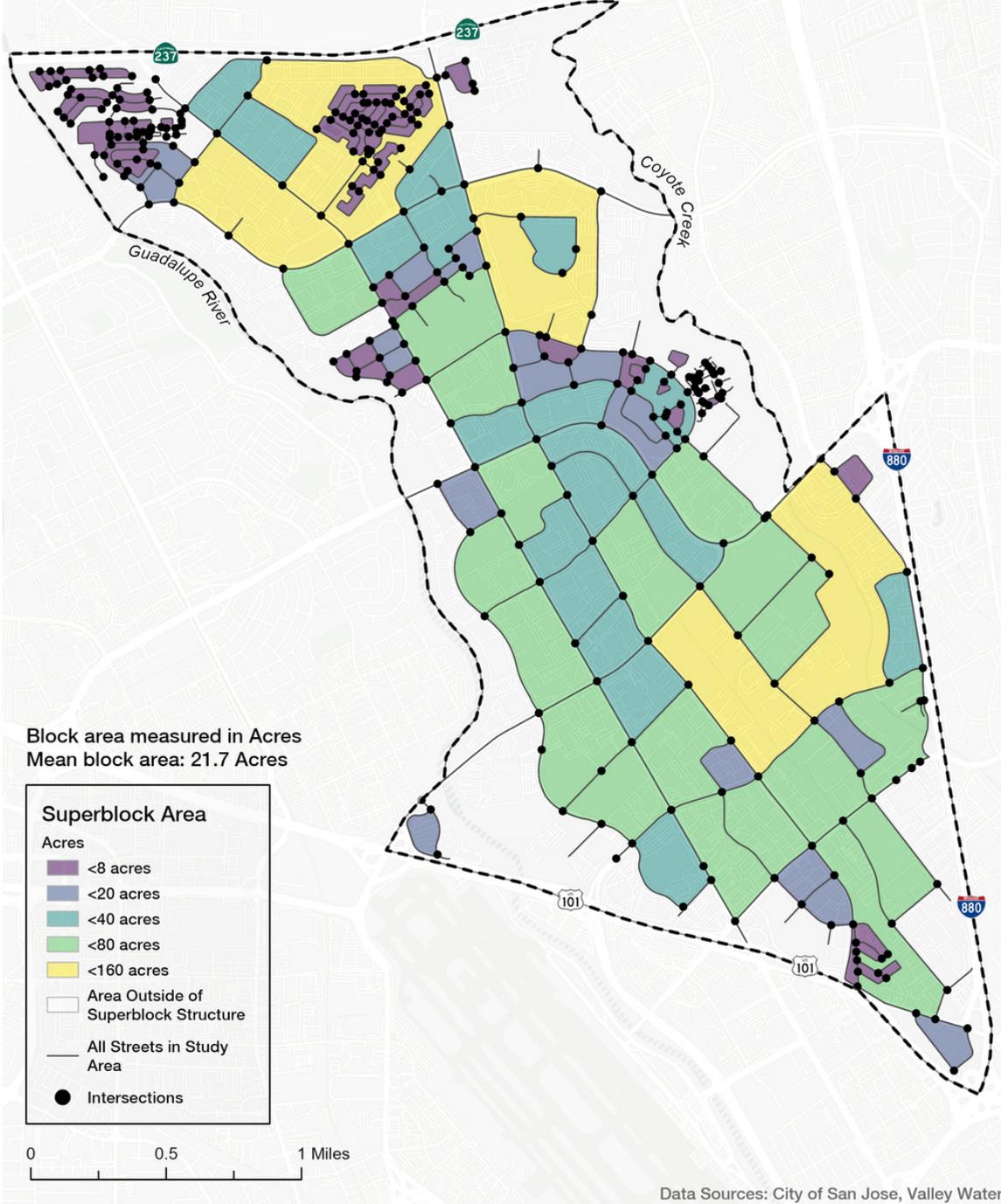


Figure 29: Superblocks in North San José

Map produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open Data Portal: [Streets](#), [Street Intersections](#), [Valley Water Open Data Portal](#), [Rivers](#) for Study Area Boundary. Self-Created: Highway Shields.

Superblock Structure of the North San Jose Study Area

With Proposed Grid Streets from 2005 Area Development Policy

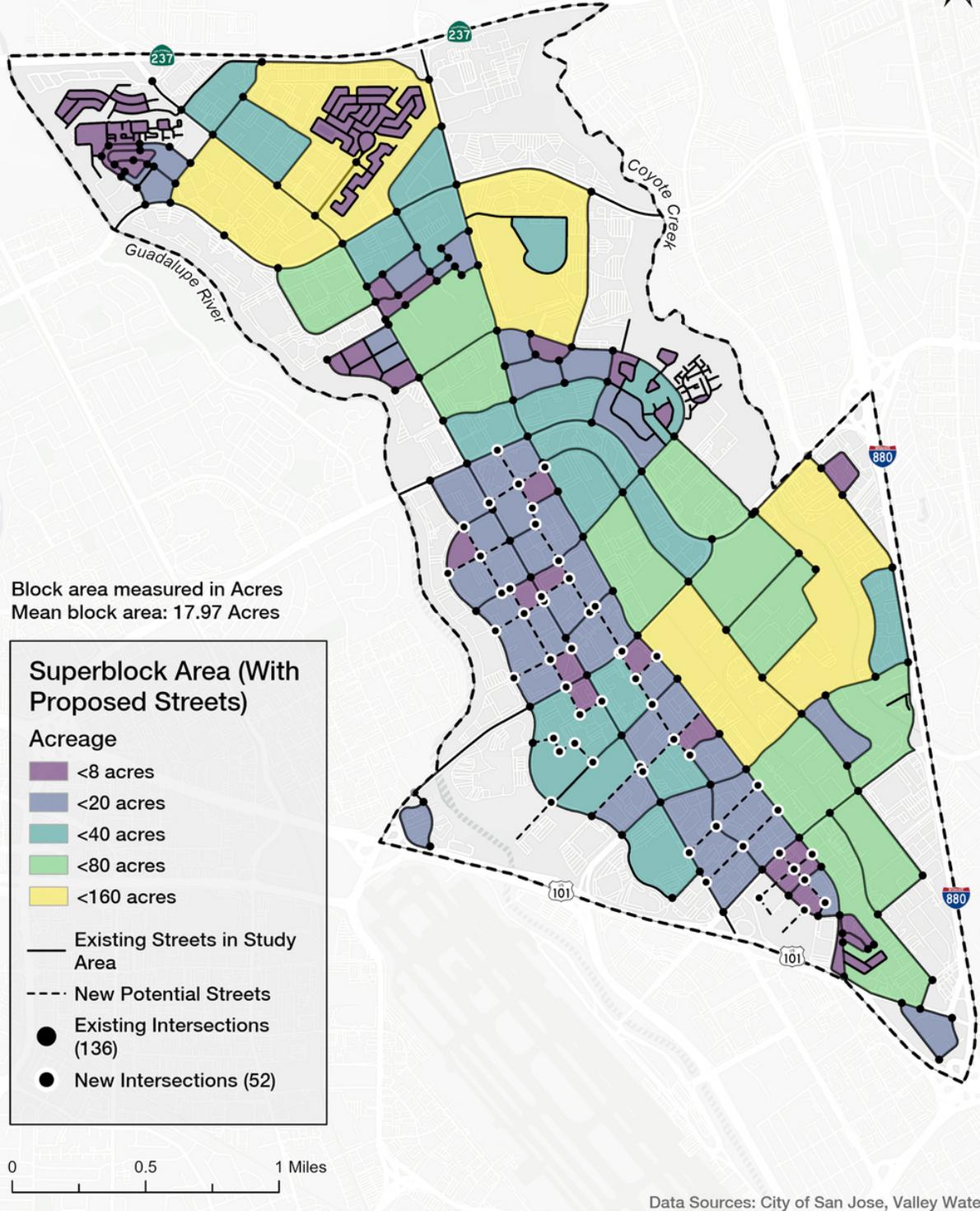


Figure 30: Superblocks with Proposed Streets

Map produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open Data Portal: [Streets](#), [Street Intersections](#), 2005 NSJDAP Georeferenced [Map](#), [Valley Water Open Data Portal](#): [Rivers](#) for Study Area Boundary. Self-Created: Highway Shields.

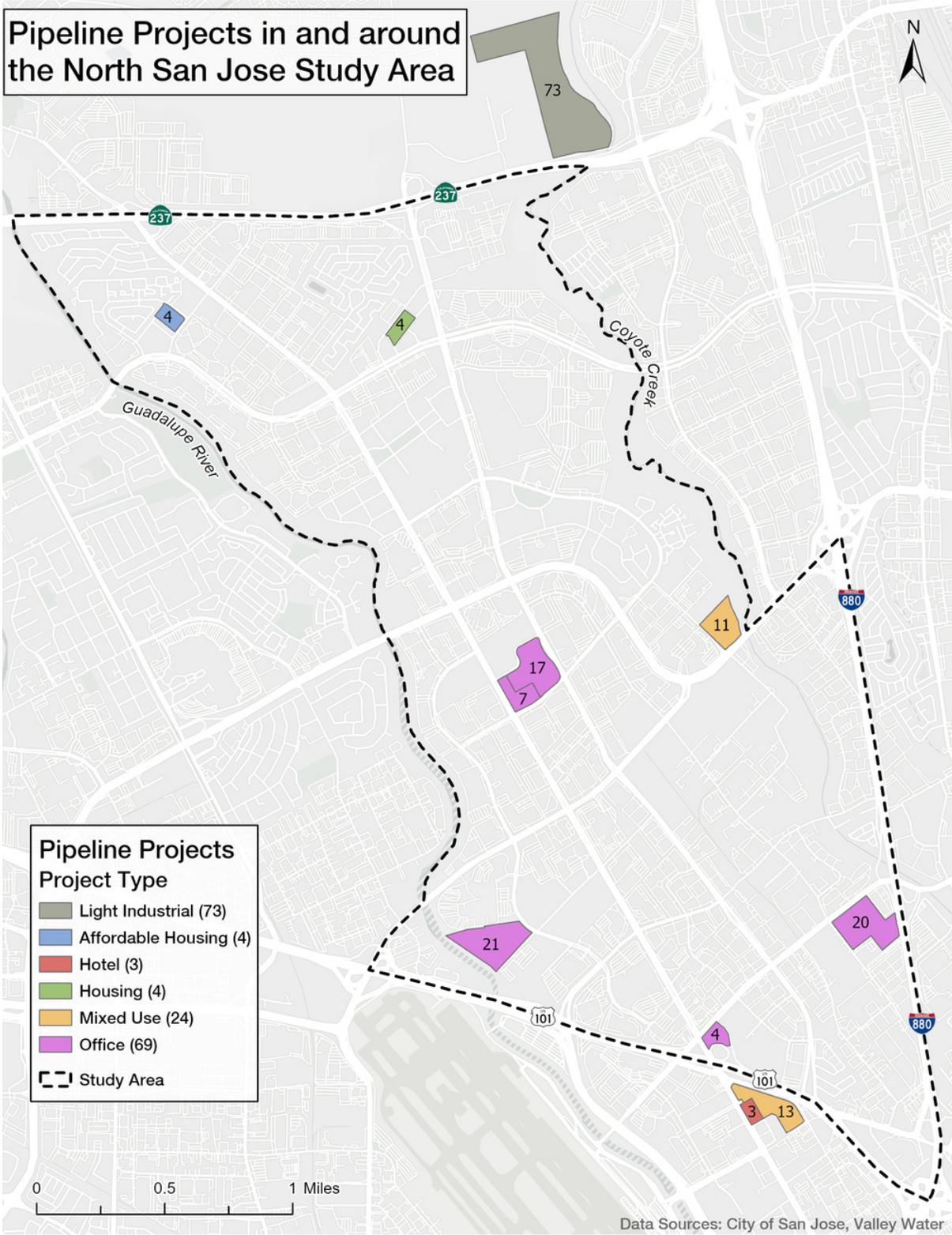


Figure 31: Pipeline Projects In and Around North San José

Map produced by David Bafumi, Fall 2023, City of San Jose GIS Open Data Portal: [Major Private Development Footprints](#); [Valley Water Open Data Portal](#); [Rivers](#) for Study Area Boundary. Self-Created: Highway Shields.

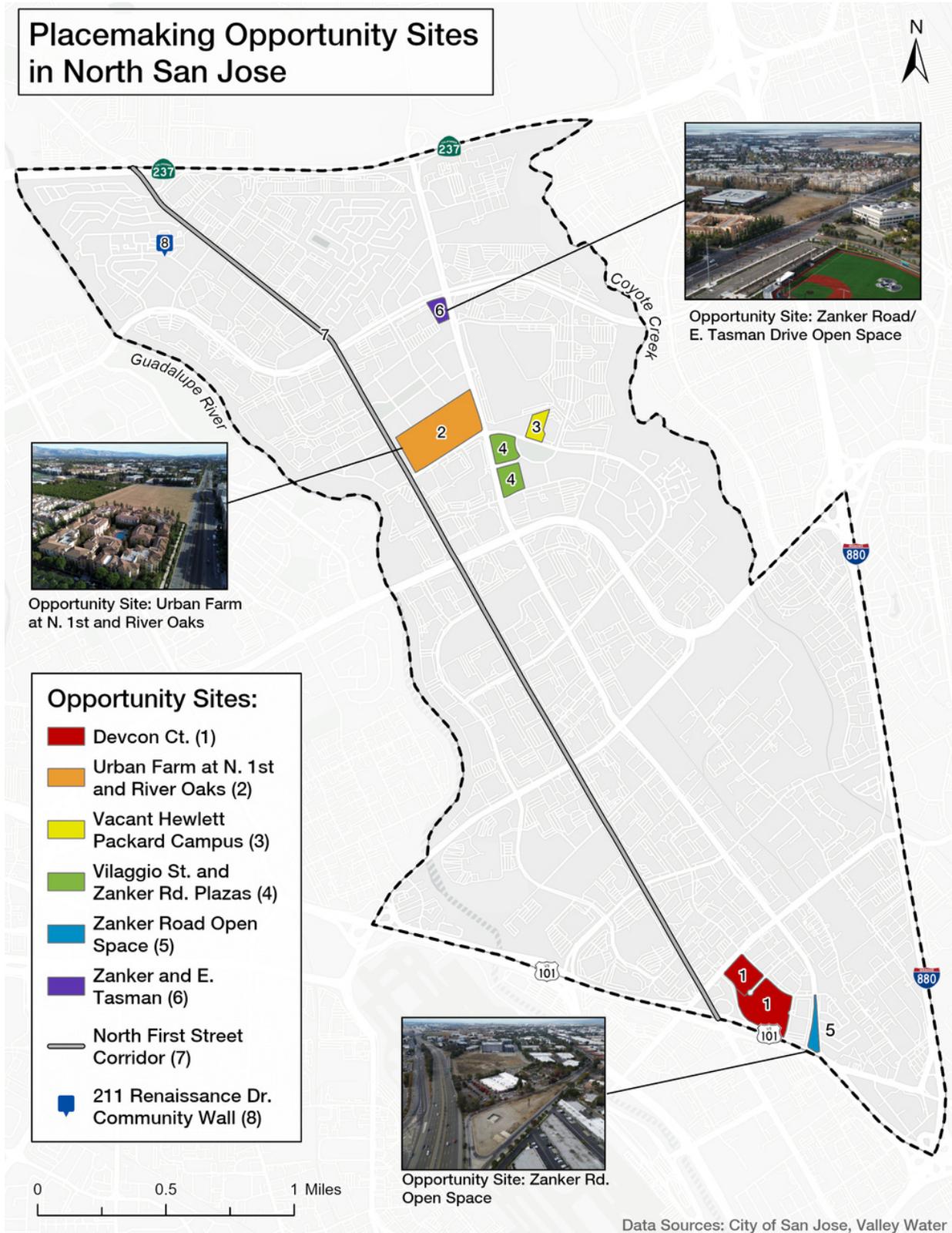


Figure 32: Map of Opportunity Sites in North San José

Map produced by Scott Karoly, Fall 2023, City of San Jose Open Data Portal: [Parcel](#), [Valley Water Open Data Portal](#): [Rivers for Study Area Boundary](#). Self-Created: Highway Shields.