



Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement  
801 North First Street, Room 400  
San José, California 95110-1795

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File Number:  
GP01-T-33

Council District and SNI Area:  
2

Project Manager:  
Michael Bills

## GENERAL PLAN REPORT

### 2001 Fall Annual Review

**TEXT REFERENCE:**

Chapter V, Land Use/Transportation Diagram, Urban Reserve, Coyote Valley Urban Reserve,  
pp. 201-203.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

Amend the General Plan text to modify the purpose of Urban Reserve triggers applicable to  
Coyote Valley.

**APPLICANT/OWNER:**

City Council/Various

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS:**

Addendum to the San Jose 2020 Environmental Impact Report certified by the City Council  
on August 16, 1994

**PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt the proposed Text Amendment.

Approved by:

Date:

**PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:**

**CITY COUNCIL ACTION:**

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**CITY DEPARTMENT AND PUBLIC AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED:**

None received.

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**GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE:**

None received.

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**ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:****BACKGROUND**

On June 26, 2001, the City Council initiated a General Plan text amendment to modify the purpose of Urban Reserve triggers applicable to Coyote Valley. The amendment stems from recommendations made by the Mayor's Housing Production Team (Recommendations Numbers 8 and 9) for review and consideration of revisions to the triggers. Current General Plan policy provides that the triggers are prerequisite to consideration of a Planned Community designation and preparation of a specific plan for the North and Mid-Coyote Valley. The Housing Production Team has suggested that the planning process should begin sooner and that the triggers should apply to the approval of actual development. With the initiation of the proposed amendment, Council requested that consideration be given to the triggers needing to be satisfied prior to the adoption of a specific plan and any zoning approvals in Mid-Coyote Valley.

**ANALYSIS*****Coyote Planning Process and the Triggers***

The General Plan currently sets forth a planning process for the Coyote Valley Urban Reserve, consisting of the adoption of a Planned Community designation and subsequently, a specific plan. Certain prerequisite conditions must be satisfied prior to the consideration of a Planned Community designation for North and Mid-Coyote Valley. Under the existing General Plan, the Planned Community is a land use designation that would broadly describe the area's development potential and it would become the basis for the specific plan.

The proposed amendment clarifies and streamlines this planning process. Fundamentally, the proposed amendment would allow preparation of the specific plan and Planned Community to occur prior to the satisfaction of the triggers instead of after meeting the triggers; however, the adoption of the Planned Community, specific plan, and other actions could not occur until the satisfaction of the triggers.

Under the existing General Plan, the triggers need to be satisfied before any planning occurs. This would result in planning for Coyote Valley under tremendous pressure due to the years of

waiting and pent up demand to build once the triggers are met. Such pressure could curtail the thoughtful planning needed for a world class, transit- and pedestrian-oriented, Smart Growth community. With the proposed text amendment, the planning process can commence without this added pressure since the triggers are not yet satisfied.

The planning process would involve a community task force representing a wide range of interest groups. The elements of the specific plan would include the location and intensity of land uses, circulation system, infrastructure, services, and financing plan as well as design guidelines and other implementation measures. During the development of the specific plan, the City Council would be provided with regular status reports so they can be fully informed as to the progress of the plan and any implications for the rest of the City. As with the City's other specific plans, at the time of adoption, the major policy features of the specific plan would be incorporated into the General Plan in the form of the Coyote Valley Planned Community designation. In addition, an Environmental Impact Report would be prepared, fully disclosing the potential environmental impacts of the specific plan and its implementation.

Under the proposed amendment, the triggers themselves would remain unchanged. Based on analysis completed in June 2001, the triggers have not yet been satisfied, and at this time, staff cannot predict when they will be met. Therefore, it is uncertain when the Council would be able to adopt the specific plan and Planned Community designation. Actual development in Mid-Coyote Valley is still beyond the time horizon of the San Jose 2020 General Plan.

### **Planning Boundaries**

Currently, the General Plan requires that the planning for Coyote Valley encompass both the North and Mid-Coyote Valley. The proposed text amendment would add South Coyote Valley, the Coyote Greenbelt, to the specific plan process. The intent is not to allow development within the Greenbelt, but rather to use the planning processes to identify sound implementation measures for the permanent protection of the Greenbelt.

### **Initiation of the Specific Plan for Coyote Valley**

The General Plan currently requires that the Coyote Valley area property owners initiate the specific plan and enter into a binding agreement with the City stipulating that the owners would pay the full costs of preparing the specific plan. Staff is recommending the deletion of this language to provide the City greater flexibility in the timing and initiation of the specific plan. The proposed deletion does not preclude the City from asking or requiring the property owners to participate in the funding of the specific plan based on the Municipal Code provisions for specific plans; however, the removal of the language would allow the City to initiate the specific plan when appropriate.

### **Preliminary Scope of Coyote Valley Planning Process**

If the City Council approves this text amendment, then it could consider initiating the specific plan process for Coyote Valley. This would entail the establishment of a community task force, the selection and hiring of consultants, and identification of staff resources to administer the planning process. Staff from throughout the City organization, as well as outside agencies,

would need to participate in a Technical Advisory Committee to ensure a collaborative, well-integrated plan.

Consultant assistance is needed for the development of the specific plan, identification of associated infrastructure, environmental analysis, and other technical studies. Planning staff would also recommend "kicking off" the planning effort with a panel from the Urban Land Institute to generate a variety of innovative ideas from land use, planning, urban design, and architectural experts from around the nation.

Coyote Valley presents a tremendous opportunity for San Jose to demonstrate and plan for Smart Growth for this virtual "new town." A thoughtful process with adequate resources is essential to meet this challenge. At the City Council's request, staff could prepare a detailed budget and work plan for the first phase of this effort.

### **Conclusion**

There is growing community interest in the planning of Coyote Valley. The proposed Text amendment provides clarification of the planning process, clear reporting to the Council on the progress of the specific plan, and an opportunity to begin the initial planning phase before the horizon year of the General Plan, 2020.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

Information on this amendment was presented at three community meetings that were held on September 11, 17, and 20. In addition, the Department's web site contains information regarding the General Plan process, amendments, staff reports, and hearing schedule. This site is used by the community to keep informed with the status of the amendments. No community comments have been received to date.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Planning staff recommends adoption of the proposed Text Amendment.

## PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT

Amend Chapter V, Land Use/Transportation Diagram, Urban Reserve, Coyote Valley Urban Reserve, pp. 201-203, as follows:

The Coyote Valley Urban Reserve generally encompasses the area between the Coyote Greenbelt and the North Coyote Campus Industrial Area. The Urban Reserve includes the Valley floor on both sides of Monterey Highway west of Coyote Creek, northwesterly of Palm Avenue and the prolongation of Palm Avenue to Coyote Creek. The Coyote Valley Urban Reserve (CVUR) allows only agricultural and rural residential land uses which are the existing, predominate uses in the area.

This area is not required to accommodate growth but may be considered for development in the future when the City needs additional housing resources. Future urban development is expected outside of the timeframe of this General Plan and ~~can only be is~~ considered conceptually in this Plan. Given these factors, the ~~preparation-establishment~~ of a plan for the Coyote Valley Urban Reserve area is beyond the scope of this General Plan. ~~however, this Plan, however, can~~ provides the vision and the broad parameters which should be the basis for the form and nature of any future planning efforts in this area. More detailed planning may not proceed until, and if, ~~the City Council approves a General Plan amendment to establish Planned Community land use designation for the area which would broadly describe its development potential and the development concepts that would be used to guide the preparation of a specific plan.~~

The Coyote Valley is relatively isolated from the rest of San Jose, therefore, any future development will need to be in the form of an independent community with jobs, housing, commercial facilities, schools, parks and other residential service facilities, infrastructure, and public transit—in effect, a new town. As described in more detail later in this section, the vision for the Coyote Valley Urban Reserve includes the creation of a very urban, pedestrian- and transit-oriented mixed use community with a minimum of 25,000 housing units. The planning for such a new town should include; the North Coyote Valley Campus Industrial Area, as the key job center in the area, and the Coyote Valley Urban Reserve (Mid-Coyote Valley), as the primary new residential area. Future development; of the Urban Reserve, therefore, should be considered only in conjunction with the North Coyote Valley. The planning for Coyote Valley should also include sound implementation measures for the permanent protection of Coyote Greenbelt located in the southern portion of the Valley.

A thorough planning process is needed to address these issues and involve a wide variety of interested parties. For Coyote Valley, it is envisioned that the planning process would consist of the development of a detailed specific plan for the area, involving a community task force. The specific plan would guide development in North and Mid-Coyote Valley, and the preservation of South Coyote Valley as a permanent greenbelt. The elements of the specific plan would include the location and intensity of land uses, circulation system, infrastructure, services, and financing plan as well as design guidelines and other

implementation measures. During the development of the specific plan, the City Council should be provided with regular status reports so they can be fully informed as to the progress of the plan and any implications for the rest of the City. As with the City's other specific plans, at the time of adoption, the major policy features of the specific plan would be incorporated into the General Plan in the form of the Coyote Valley Planned Community designation.

### **Prerequisite Conditions**

The following conditions are prerequisite to the ~~consideration~~ City Council's adoption of a specific plan, the Planned Community designation, and any zoning approvals for property in the North and Mid-Coyote Valley:

1. Five thousand (5,000) new jobs are added, as evidenced by the issuance of building permits sufficient to accommodate such growth, to the 2,000 existing jobs (1990) in the North Coyote Valley Campus Industrial Area as part of a continuing demonstrated interest in North Coyote Valley as a location for industrial development.
2. The City's fiscal condition is stable, predictable and adequate in the long term. This determination should be based on:
  - A five year economic forecast for the City which projects a balanced budget or budget surplus for each of the forecast years.
  - City services must be at least at the same level as they were in 1993, throughout the City. At least the following quantifiable services should be considered in this assessment: police response time, police personnel per capita, fire response time, fire personnel per capita, library books per capita, library floor space per capita, hours open at Main and branch libraries, and community center floor space per capita.
  - Reasonable certainty that the City's basic fiscal relationship with the state or other levels of government will not be significantly altered during the period of the five year economic forecast.

These prerequisite conditions should only be modified during a comprehensive update of the General Plan involving a community task force similar to the San Jose 2020 General Plan update process.

No urban residential development will be allowed in these the North and Mid-Coyote Valley areas until the City Council has adopted the detailed specific plan, covering both the North, and Mid-Coyote Valley is prepared. ~~The specific plan process will be initiated only upon the request of area property owners and upon completion of a binding agreement stipulating that these owners will pay the full costs of preparing the specific plan.~~

Until such time as the Specific Area Plan is effective, allowed land uses in the Urban Reserve are those of the Agriculture land use designation west of Monterey Highway and those of the Rural Residential and Private Recreation land use designations between Monterey Highway and the Coyote Creek Park Chain, provided that such Private Recreation uses are rural in character, are developed under Planned Development zoning and are compatible with both the Coyote Creek Park Chain and the image of the North Coyote Campus Industrial Area.

# COYOTE VALLEY SUMMARY

## NORTH COYOTE VALLEY CAMPUS INDUSTRIAL AREA

- Planned for Campus Industrial uses since 1983
- *Master Development Plan* calls for:
  - ✓ Large, single-user industrial sites within a high prestige industrial area
  - ✓ High quality development which is sensitive to the area's environmental features such as the hills, views, existing trees, and agricultural history
- Development capacity of 50,000 jobs based on planned infrastructure

## COYOTE VALLEY URBAN RESERVE

- Background
  - ✓ Established in 1984, the Urban Reserves may be appropriate for urban development and inclusion in the Urban Service Area in the future after the satisfaction of specific prerequisite conditions.
- Prerequisite Conditions
  - ✓ 5,000 new jobs are added to the North Coyote Campus Industrial Area.
  - ✓ City's fiscal condition is stable based on a five-year economic forecast projecting:
    1. A balanced budget or budget surplus for each of the five years.
    2. City service levels throughout San Jose projected to be the same or better as 1993.
    3. Reasonable certainty that the City's fiscal relationship with the State or other governmental levels will not be significantly altered during the forecast period.
      - Difficult condition to meet; even in current economic "good times," San Jose is not fiscally stable.
- Vision
  - ✓ A very urban, pedestrian oriented and independent community with high density housing, supportive businesses and services, and Campus Industrial land uses.
  - ✓ A minimum of 25,000 dwelling units, 20% of which would be affordable.
  - ✓ 50,000 jobs in the Campus Industrial area.
  - ✓ Jobs and housing phasing plan to pace housing development with job growth.
  - ✓ Extension of light rail.
  - ✓ New development to provide all capital improvements.

## COYOTE GREENBELT

- Overlay designation depicting a permanent, non-urban buffer between San Jose and Morgan Hill.
- Allowed land uses are consistent with the base land use designations of Agriculture.