

## Juri Commons Community 5/31 Meeting Summary

Now that funds and staff are in place, the Juri Commons renovation project is restarting the design process and gathering input from the community. A short online survey can be found [here](#), and a community meeting was held on May 31 to show the results to date, hear from neighbors, and convey the guiding principles behind the renovation. The full presentation, including survey results, may be found [here](#).

Rec & Park showed a brief history of the site as segment of a rail line that once connected San Francisco to San Jose, and which continues to influence unique character of the space. The redesign will be driven by three underlying concepts:

- Transparency in the long linear space
- Site's railroad history
- Nature in the City (greenery being the highest "must have" item from the survey)

The scope of work will include:

- Pathway upgrade (fully ADA accessible)
- Irrigation repair
- Fences / gates at each end
- Play area upgrades
- Misc. smaller items (utility box, benches, planting, etc...)
- Lighting (if budget permits)

Discussion focused largely on three topics: safety, kids & play, and nature. Those in attendance appreciated both the unique character of the park as a long, narrow, "secret" green oasis in the city, as well as the physical and social constraints that come with such a special park. As a result, many of the topics shared the common theme of the need for porous boundaries between uses and the usefulness of social and design cues for many users to share the limited space. These cues improve safety, as does keeping the space open and well used. Low, latchable fences at either end would enhance aesthetics, as well as safety by keeping small kids and dogs from running into the street, but would not be intended as barriers to keep users out. Park users generally feel safe at Juri Commons. While unknown strangers occasionally cause annoyances, they are not perceived as a safety threat, and the situation has been improving over the past year or so. Lighting is barely adequate, and upgrades would be welcome if budget allowed.

The group also confirmed that the lush, greenness of the space lends it a feeling of respite from the city and is highly valued by its users. This greenery, and the narrow confines of the park, help create a "nature in the city" feeling, opening possibilities to incorporate nature-based play alongside more traditional play equipment (like swings, overhead bars & slides). The play spaces also build community, as was evidenced by the absence of gathering space during recent repairs to the play equipment. Young teens also use the park, and though they have sometimes been observed to be messy and not behave as adults would like, their needs to gather should be addressed as well.

Some of the taller trees present a safety hazard (falling limbs as well as roots damaging the pathway) and may be replaced with lower, more ornamental trees suited to the tight spaces. Existing magnolia and poplar trees are currently slated to remain.

Existing art in the park was briefly discussed. The mural frame (behind the mural) will need to be removed because it has tested positive for toxics. The existing mosaic tile art (in three spots in the grass) could be relocated if the current locations conflict with the renovation plans and the community wishes to keep the pieces. More discussion to follow.

The next meeting will be in late June, where we will discuss design options reflecting these concepts and priorities.