John Davidson, Project Manager City of San José, Diridon Station Area Plan via email: John.Davidson@sanjoseca.gov

cc: Joe Horwedel, SJ Planning Director Michael Brilliot, SJ Planning Dept. Pierluigi Oliverio, SJ Councilmember, Dist. 6

re: Draft Program EIR for the Diridon Station Area Plan -- File No. PP09-163

## Dear Mr. Davidson,

I want to thank you and the City for extending the comment period for the Diridon Station Area Plan EIR Scoping comments, and for staff's participation in an additional public meeting. Whereas the original two meetings had poor public participation, this third meeting was very well attended: I hope that they all will provide worthwhile comments.

I wish to reaffirm the questions from my written comments dated October 10th. In addition, I would like to expand somewhat on my comments related to the "day-lighting" of the Los Gatos Creek within the Project Area.

**Figure 1** shows the current condition of the Los Gatos at the southern portion of the Project Area: the creek is routed through a culvert under the intersection of Montgomery/Autumn and Park. (I-280 is off the bottom of the graphic, Diridon Station and the proposed stadium are off the top, downtown is to the right.)

Figure 2 shows the proposed baseball stadium. (Graphic taken from the Stadium EIR.)

**Figure 3** shows a possible alignment of a day-lighted Los Gatos Creek: the green represents the restored creek channel, the blue the stream itself, and the yellow lines show possible trail alignments. The channel utilizes land that is to be acquired for the planned street realignment (the blue areas surrounded by red/white dashed lines), and it presumes that this intersection will be reconfigured according to the new City policy to remove the non-stop right-turn ramps.

**Figure 4** is a photo of the northern end of the creek culvert. (The culvert dimensions are from a study for the Diridon area.)

**Figure 5** shows an approximate vertical cross-section of the current street and culvert (top half), and of a restored creek channel (bottom). There appears to be adequate vertical clearance for trail well above normal creek-flow level and beneath an at-grade bridge.

**Figure 6** is a photo of the current habitat just downstream (north) of the culvert exit (near Park and Autumn).



The point of these charts is to show that it appears quite feasible to recreate a natural stream channel for the Los Gatos Creek. It will cost money: I would recommend that it be a part of the stadium construction, part of the supporting infrastructure – to be done when the intersection is reconfigured for the street realignments. If the stadium is not built, this could be part of whatever major project does get constructed on the stadium site.



The reason for writing this letter is that I want to see the environmental impacts of such a stream day-lighting be analyzed as part of the Diridon Station Area Plan EIR. There are sure to be positive and negative impacts:

## Negative:

- the disturbance to the stream habitat during construction.
- the impacts on the stream habitat by the adjacent trail-using public this could be mitigated by appropriate trail design.

## Positive:

- restored riparian ("streamside") habitat along that section
- improved non-motorized access to the Station Area, resulting in more people arriving by foot or bike rather than by car, which in turn results in less traffic and parking congestion



• by providing grade-separated crossing of Montgomery/Autumn and of Park, there will be less pedestrian/cyclist impacts on the vehicular traffic flow, resulting in improved traffic flow, less congestion, and less resultant air and noise pollution.

As this is within the defined area of the Project and it will have an impact on the environment, I request that it be included in the scope of the EIR and be studied as part of the Project.

Thank you,

Dr. Lawrence Lowell Ames







Fig. 6 – Existing Riparian Habitat at Project Site