



**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** June 27, 2017

**To:** Deb Kramer, Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful and Coyote Meadows Coalition

**From:** Marcus Griswold, Ph.D., Skeo Solutions  
Akanksha Chopra, Skeo Solutions  
Miranda Maupin, Skeo Solutions

**Re:** Coyote Meadows – Existing Conditions and Stewardship Model Summary

**Overview**

The Coyote Meadows Coalition is focused on the future use of a 50-acre property along Coyote Creek between Story Road and Interstate 280. The City of San José owns the property, which is part of the former Story Road Landfill. The Coyote Creek Trail runs along the western edge of the area; the future Five Wounds Trail will run through the center. The area is envisioned as a community space known as Coyote Meadows.

This memo summarizes existing conditions, including potential barriers and opportunities, related to activating and using the site as a community amenity. Skeo reviewed the research database assembled by Coyote Meadows Coalition members and interviewed City of San José and Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) staff members. Interviewees include staff from several city departments, including Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, the Office of Cultural Affairs, the Environmental Services Division, and the Department of Transportation and Planning. Interviewees will serve as part of the project’s Technical Advisory Committee. The Committee will review draft project maps and plans and provide feedback on the feasibility of future use options and opportunities as well as potential challenges.

The memo has three sections. Section 1 documents current conditions and features of the former Story Road Landfill area. Section 2 summarizes surrounding neighborhood and regional characteristics. Section 3 highlights potential stewardship models for Coyote Meadows.

## **Section 1: Story Road Landfill Area Characteristics and Conditions<sup>1</sup>**

### **A. Overview**

The Ohlone Indians once used the land in the Coyote Creek area. Around 1776, Spanish explorers named the creek Arroyo del Coyote.<sup>2</sup> From the early 1900s to the 1960s, fruit and nut orchards were located throughout the Santa Clara Valley. In the 1960s and 1970s, high-tech office parks and new housing gradually replaced the orchards.<sup>3</sup>

Remillard-Dandini Brick Company used the landfill site to mine clay along Coyote Creek from 1891 to 1957. The company produced 10 million bricks a year. From 1957 to 1961, operators disposed of wastes in the clay pit. The City of San José used the pit as a landfill from 1961 to 1969. In total, the landfill contains about 500,000 cubic yards of waste; there are no records of the type or distribution of the wastes. The landfill was closed and covered with soil in 1970. Developers turned some of the land into the Remillard Court Business Park in the mid-1970s.

Today, the remaining portion of the property – about 50 acres – remains a closed, unlined landfill. Coyote Creek borders the area to the south and west. Interstate 280 borders the area to the north. The San Jose Water Company operates a municipal drinking water well field on the northwest corner of the project boundary. Two smaller, closed landfills – the Martin Park and Roberts Avenue landfills – are located nearby.

The landfill property includes three distinct, waste-filled areas, referred to as Parcel 1, Parcel 2 and Parcel 3. Parcel 4 consists of land located north of Interstate 280 and the areas between each of the parcels. No wastes are located on Parcel 4. The parcel, which is not part of the project study area, is the location of the landfill's extraction system. The system extracts landfill leachate and groundwater impacted by landfill wastes and discharges them to the City's sanitary sewer system for treatment. Waste chemicals in the landfill include petroleum hydrocarbons, dichloroethylene, vinyl chloride and benzene.

### **B. Property Features and Constraints**

A map showing current property features is attached. Key reuse-related features include:

- The stormwater drain at the center of the property that captures leachate.
- The property's trash collection system. Access will need to be maintained to this system.
- The limited availability of utilities; electricity is available only at the dog park north of 280 on Parcel 4, and generally outside of the project area.
- The railroad trestle crossing Coyote Creek near the intersection of the Coyote Creek Trail and proposed Five Wounds Trail. The trestle is not active. To access the site from Story Rd and Senter Rd., the trestle would need to be replaced.

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<sup>1</sup> California Regional Water Quality Control Board San Francisco Bay Region Order no. R2-2007-0049; Story Road Landfill, [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/rwqcb2/board\\_decisions/adopted\\_orders/2007/r2-2007-0049.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/rwqcb2/board_decisions/adopted_orders/2007/r2-2007-0049.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Coyote Creek Park Master Plan

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/documentcenter/view/93512008>

- Access considerations: Interstate 280, Remillard Court Business Park and residential areas border the property. Access currently is available under I-280 and Remillard Court. Access from Spartan/Keyes may be constrained by the General Plan, which may not allow access to the site through cul-de-sacs and potential site access challenges at the San Jose Water Company's property.
- Radio towers at the northwestern area of the site have a large footprint due to supporting wires that are anchored to the ground. These towers are currently leased.

### ***Radio Towers***

Four radio towers are located on the property. They are currently leased, with lease renewals coming up starting in 2018. The current lease states that City priorities for the property are primary and that the tower leases are secondary, meaning that if the City decides to reuse the site, the decision could override the lease. Additionally, according to the lease, guy-wire-supported towers should be replaced with flag-pole towers. Doing so could reduce the footprint of the towers and allow for greater use of the site. KVVN 1430 AM broadcasts in Vietnamese. The local KVVN 1430 AM license expires on December 1, 2021.

### ***Habitat Mitigation (Restoration) Sites***

The project area includes two habitat mitigation sites. Habitat restored at the sites replaced habitat lost elsewhere in San José. The sites include several native species of trees and plants, the only creekside wetland on the property, and an undetermined number of animal species. In general, these sites are off-limits to disturbance. However, they could provide opportunities for environmental education and awareness building as well as community maintenance activities. The City and Santa Clara County through the Habitat Conservation Plan would need to approve any actions that could impact these sites.

#### ***Story Road Mitigation Site No. 1 (City of San José Database ID No. 3046)<sup>4</sup>***

This site consists of a .36-acre seasonal wetland basin and a .65-acre upland riparian revegetation area east of Coyote Creek. The site provides wetland and riparian mitigation (habitat replacement) for two projects – the Trimble Road Bridge Widening Project and the Wooster Avenue Bridge Replacement Project – implemented by the City. The site was planted in the fall of 2003 with 554 riparian plants and 189 wetland plants. Additional wetland plants were later installed around the wetland basin – 194 plants in June 2004 and 100 plants in 2006. Plantings included Box elder, California buckeye, Coyote brush, Mule fat, Coast live oak, Blue elderberry, Creeping spikerush, Iris-leaved rush and Meadow barley. The site was damaged in 2013 during a wildfire and by homeless encampments. Infestations of invasive, non-native plants include patches of Bermuda grass and tree of heaven.

#### ***Old Oakland Road Habitat Mitigation Project at Story Road Mitigation Site No. 2***

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<sup>4</sup> Biotic Resources Group. 2013. Story Road Mitigation Site No. 1. Environmental Mitigation Monitoring Year 10 (2013) Monitoring Report.

This site encompasses 1.65 acres of riparian vegetation area immediately southwest of Coyote Creek. The site was planted in 2005 with 1,965 riparian plants. Species planted included Box elder, California buckeye, California sycamore, Coast live oak, Blue elderberry, Fremont cottonwood, Willow, Coyote brush, California blackberry, Snowberry and Mugwort.<sup>5</sup>

### **C. Park Reuse Design Considerations**

During interviews with City of San Jose staff, the following design considerations were voiced.

**Pilot Projects:** Passive recreation activities that do not penetrate the soil could work well on the property in the shorter term. The City may be more likely to approve pilot projects along the Coyote Creek trail corridor since land there has already been assessed. Garden plots are one possibility, preferably using raised beds. Educational signage could also be used to encourage visitors to return to the site. City staff interviewed recommended regularly changing and updating sign content.

**Longer-term Projects:** Open fields, concrete paving and trails are park-related reuse options that have been successfully implemented at former landfill sites. Permanent structures would require a post-closure landfill analysis. Any buildings would likely require venting systems to manage any gases coming from the landfill.

**Access:** Providing access to the property from 22nd Street is one option. Accessing the property from neighboring cul-de-sacs in the Spartan/Keyes neighborhood is another, although such access could require changes to the Santa Clara County General Plan. Access from Senter/Story Road is a third option; it would require removal of the railroad trestle. Interviewees noted that any new access to the property should avoid impacting the Coyote Creek Trail. The City also typically requires clearing of excess foliage during construction to provide clear sight lines for monitoring safety. Habitat considerations may need to be taken into account during any clearing activities.

**Maintenance:** City maintenance staff are not currently assigned to the property. Per existing policies, the City makes sure that trash does not enter Coyote Creek. For example, the City has stipulated that homeless encampments at three sites must not generate trash and other pollution that enter Coyote Creek and currently manages this through a multi-department task force. One of these sites overlaps with the proposed Coyote Meadows location.<sup>6</sup> In terms of future maintenance options for the property, the City uses its adopt-a-park approach for smaller sites, but none as large as Coyote Meadows. City staff interviewed indicated that maintenance activities led by community members would not be a safe option for the property.

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<sup>5</sup> Biotic Resources Group. 2015. Old Oakland Road Habitat Mitigation Project Story Road Mitigation Site No. 2. Year 10 (2014) Monitoring Report.

<sup>6</sup> City of San José. 2016. Direct discharge trash control program. Submitted in accordance with provision Section C.10.e.ii of NPDES Permit No. CAS612008.

**Story Road Landfill Solar Site Evaluation:**<sup>7</sup> Given the property's limited current access to utilities, solar panels on part of the property could provide power for future park-related needs. A U.S. Department of Energy study evaluated the potential and cost-benefits of placing solar technologies at several public facilities in San José. It identified Story Road Landfill as well-suited for fixed, south-facing solar arrays or single- or double-axis tracking systems. The back side of the solar panels would likely be visible from Interstate 280. The study suggested that land next to the highway could serve as a public art corridor to help conceal them, or the back side of the solar facility could be made as uninteresting as possible. The goal would be to avoid diverting the attention of motorists and slowing down traffic. Since a ground slope of less than 3 percent is desirable for solar power facilities, some parts of the property would likely have to be cleared and graded during project development. The study estimated that the property could support a 1.649-megawatt solar facility. The facility would cost an estimated \$12.4 million, and generate an estimated 2.93 million kilowatt-hours of electricity annually.

#### **D. Agency Roles**

**SCVWD** manages water flow in Coyote Creek and access to the creek for debris removal and flood control projects. SCVWD owns two access points in the project area and manages parts of the property for invasive plant species control. SCVWD's Coyote Watershed Aesthetic Guidelines provides guidelines for projects within water district boundaries.<sup>8</sup> SCVWD's Trails and Open Space Program works collaboratively with other agencies to increase public access to creekside trails through joint use agreements, capital projects, grants and partnership funding.

**City of San Jose:** The Parks Department *Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services* manages lands next to the creek to preserve the riparian corridor, provide habitat, maintain open space and provide recreation opportunities. The Department's Environmental Services Division manages landfill sites and requirements for any project that would occur at the property. The Department of Planning and Transportation would provide input regarding the status and use of the two habitat restoration sites. The Department of Cultural Affairs provides support for public art by reinvesting 1% of the capital costs for a project back into the site. The Real Estate Division is preparing to release a Request for Information (RFI) for potential reuse of the site. The RFI would include requirements to develop a post-closure plan for the landfill, required before any activities occur. Based on discussions with the City, there could be an opportunity to partner with potential developers or focus the community areas on the western portion of the site. Only industrial use or open space can occur at the site, such as solar panels or warehouse distribution space. Future discussions may need to occur with this department prior to embarking on additional community engagement activities.

**Valley Transit Authority** is collaborating with the City of San Jose on the Story Road Complete Streets project. A majority of the proposed work near the site is at the intersection of Senter Rd

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<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of Energy 2007 *Solar America Showcase City of San José, California Story Road Landfill Solar Site Evaluation, Final Report 2008*  
<sup>8</sup>[http://www.valleywater.org/uploadedFiles/Services/HealthyCreeksEcoSystems/WatershedInformation/Coyote/Coyote\\_Watershed\\_Aesthetic\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://www.valleywater.org/uploadedFiles/Services/HealthyCreeksEcoSystems/WatershedInformation/Coyote/Coyote_Watershed_Aesthetic_Guidelines.pdf)

and Story Rd. The Story/Keyes bus line going from east to west has a ridership of ~ 1,400 people per day. VTA also uses bus stop space to advertise Public Service Announcements.

**Caltrans** requires an encroachment permit for any activity other than normal transportation activities within its right of way. A maintenance agreement and encroachment permit would be required for construction of a trail and amenities underneath Interstate 280.

Project activities would also need to be coordinated with state and federal agency efforts to develop recovery plans for threatened and endangered species in the Coyote Creek corridor. The **California Department of Fish and Wildlife** must be notified of any activity that impacts riparian corridors and wetlands. The Department will conduct a site investigation to review potential project impacts on wildlife resources. For example, Steelhead trout and Chinook salmon are federally listed species known to migrate in Coyote Creek and are expected to be present in the creek between October 15 and June 15 each year.

The **Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency** leads the implementation of the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan. The Habitat Plan is a 50-year regional plan to protect endangered species and natural resources while allowing for future development in Santa Clara County. Potential project impacts would be addressed by complying with the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan, including required avoidance and minimization measures and fee payment for off-site compensatory habitat mitigation.

## **E. Major Components Needed Prior to Reuse Next Steps**

A California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis and permits would need to be in place prior to most major project construction. Prior to public use or construction projects at the property, the activities below would also need to occur as part of a Post-Closure Land Use Plan:

- Human and ecological health risk assessment
- Health and safety plan
- Post-closure landfill plan components:
  - Grading (soils, geology, hydrology, waste, settlement, cover design)
  - Final gas collection and control system
  - Proposed site improvements
  - Monitoring (construction and environmental)
  - Post-closure maintenance plans

## **Section 2: Neighborhood and Regional Characteristics**

### **A. Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI)<sup>9</sup>**

This partnership between the City of San José, the San Jose Redevelopment Agency and San José residents and business owners strengthens the community by building clean, safe and

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=1745>

strong neighborhoods with independent, capable and sustainable local organizations. The City coordinates resources with residents and business owners to understand and address community issues and goals. Four SNI neighborhoods are located adjacent to the Story Road Landfill property – Spartan Keyes, Tully-Senter, University and Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace. Summaries of the SNI reports for these neighborhoods are provided below.

### ***Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Improvement Plan<sup>10</sup>***

This Plan focuses on making the Spartan Keyes neighborhood a safer, more livable and unique neighborhood. Plan elements include preserving and enhancing the character of established residential areas, encouraging pedestrian circulation, enhancing the local business district and developing community-oriented open space. Reuse of the Story Road Landfill is listed as the neighborhood's top priority.

The neighborhood does not include public open space, a neighborhood school or community center, and does not have a concentration of neighborhood-oriented businesses such as dry cleaners or restaurants. Artists and San Jose State University art department faculty and students live in the area and work in local studios and campus facilities. The neighborhood connects San Jose State University and the SoFA District. The Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Association has promoted a variety of community improvement efforts and successfully engaged residents in local planning efforts. The Spartan Keyes Arts Coalition also works to address community needs.

Key Plan goals include:

- Creation of two new parks, one at Story Road landfill and one in East Gardner, that provide opportunities for local community events not available at Kelly Park. Specific recommendations for the Story Road Landfill include two distinct areas – one area for active recreation, including soccer and baseball fields and basketball courts, and a second area for passive recreation with enhanced landscaping, seating areas and walking trails for a more natural environment. Pedestrian access to the park could be gained from Martha Street, via an easement across the San Jose Water Company property on 12th Street.
- Residents have expressed interest in a community center for youth and teens in the neighborhood. This center could provide recreation opportunities and education programs as well as space for general community activities and functions.
- A trail along Coyote Creek to connect the neighborhood to Kelly Park and Happy Hollow Zoo.
- Traffic calming efforts to reduce traffic speeds on neighborhood streets, encouraging pedestrian and bicycle circulation. On-street parking is preserved for residents.
- Maintenance and expansion of the community garden network.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/33443>

- Improved conditions beneath and adjacent to freeways to increase safety and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment.
- Reduced number of homeless encampments under and along Interstate 280, Keyes Street and the rail spur.
- Encouragement of development of public facilities within walking distance of the neighborhood as well as improved access to elementary schools.

### **Tully-Senter Neighborhood Improvement Plan<sup>11</sup>**

The Tully-Senter neighborhood is located south of downtown, near the center of San José. Its boundaries are the intersection of Story Road and Highway 101 as well as Tully Road and Senter Road. The neighborhood has access to parks, schools and a soon-to-be-completed cultural center. Key Plan goals include:

- Achieve an attractive and orderly looking neighborhood with tree-lined streets and clean front yards for homes and businesses.
- Promote accessibility, parking and safety for residents on local streets while reducing the adverse impacts of cut-through traffic by creating complete streets, alternative forms of transportation and improving connectivity to open space.
- Retain the wide variety of housing and commercial retail shopping opportunities by creating community in retail spaces and allowing for cultural facilities.
- Enhance and improve neighborhood connections and community use of Kelly Park and Coyote Creek open space and trails while expanding close-to-home, neighborhood-serving parks by creating schools as gathering spaces and enhancing opportunities at Kelly Park and Coyote Creek open space.
- Celebrate the rich ethnic and cultural diversity of the area while fostering neighborhood communication, unity and inclusion.
- Improve community facilities and services on all community levels by creating schools as community hubs and addressing safety issues.

Community-recommended projects relevant to Coyote Meadows include improved pedestrian crossing and traffic calming at Story Road and Roberts Avenue.

### **University Neighborhood Improvement Plan<sup>12</sup>**

The University neighborhood extends from Santa Clara Street in the north to Interstate 280 in the south and from South 3rd Street in the west to Coyote Creek to the east. The University Neighborhoods Coalition (UNC) represents area residents, property owners, business owners, several neighborhood associations, including the South University Neighborhood Association, the Horace Mann Neighborhood Association, the Campus Community Association, and the San Jose Downtown Residents Association, as well as representatives from San Jose State University, campus Greek organizations and other interested citizens. Most of the University neighborhood area is significantly underserved<sup>12</sup> by parks and open space. The Plan states that

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/33444>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4863>

development of a multi-purpose trail along Coyote Creek is a top priority for the neighborhood as well as for the 13th Street, Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace and Spartan Keyes neighborhoods.

## **B. Trail Master Plans**

The Coyote Meadows project fits well with nearby trail networks and community recreation plans. Regional trail connections next to the Story Road Landfill property build on San José's Greenprint, the Santa Clara County Countywide Trails Master Plan Update, and the Bay Ridge Trail Council and Association of Bay Area Government's (ABAG) connector to the San Francisco Bay Trail Plan.<sup>13</sup> The City is currently updating the Greenprint; recommendations are due in the fall of 2017. The Greenprint is the City's 20-Year Strategic Plan for parks, recreation facilities and programs. The Coyote Meadows project also fits well with the Santa Clara County General Plan's vision of "a necklace of parks" that includes major streamside park chains passing through urban areas.

In the 1960s, the City of San José and Santa Clara County envisioned a linear parkway along Coyote Creek. The Coyote Creek watershed is one of the largest watersheds in the county; from its origins in the Diablo Range, it covers over 320 square miles. As the two entities acquired land along the creek, they developed the "Coyote River Policy Statement":

...[T]he continuity of riding, hiking, and bicycle trails through the park would be assured, park design would be coordinated with the Santa Clara Flood Control and Water Conservation District [now the Santa Clara Valley Water District], and [...] all outdoor recreation would be compatible with the natural resources of the area.

The City and County developed the Coyote Creek Park Master Plan in 1972.<sup>14</sup> The goal was to create a comprehensive equestrian, bicycle and walking trails system with motorized tram circuits and carriage rides to move families and groups of visitors to recreation areas throughout the park while minimizing traffic congestion. The parkway would provide opportunities for recreation activities such as canoeing, rafting, fishing, hiking, riding, nature study and wildlife watching. Other features included a mini-bike course, an ecology and education lab, and a cultural center. The localities have proceeded with implementation of the Master Plan as resources have allowed. In 2003, the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department completed a Strategic Plan that called for integrated recreation and resource management planning for all county parks. The section below summarizes the status of trails areas planned for the Coyote Meadows area that are highlighted in the Master Plan and Strategic Plan.

### ***Coyote Creek Trail***

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/parks/PlansProjects/Pages/countywide-trails-mstr-pln.aspx>

<sup>14</sup> Coyote Creek Park Master Plan

Planning and construction of the Coyote Creek Trails are in various periods of the planning and construction process.

### ***Olinder Park to Story Road***<sup>15</sup>

This section of the trail will go under Interstate 280 and cross Coyote Meadows. Trail construction is expected to begin in 2017.

### **Story Road to Lower Silver Creek**<sup>16</sup>

This 3-mile section of the trail would start immediately south of Coyote Meadows. The trail would include opportunities for interpretation, education and physical fitness for trail users and school groups.

### **Story Road to Tully Ballfields**<sup>17</sup>

The trail would be a 2.5 mile segment connecting Kelly Park to Tully Ballfields. Construction funding is not yet in place.

### **Summary of Coyote Creek Trail Community Goals:**

The City of San José conducted community outreach as part of developing plans for the Coyote Creek Trail. Key community goals identified include:

- **Accessibility** through use of ADA-compliant furniture, sidewalks, signs and design standards.
- **Adjacent neighbor stewardship** by mitigating traffic, creating design guidelines for screening and encouraging use of public transit.
- **Creek connections** by creating a creek experience, constructing overlooks and trails adapted to flooding, and limiting access in ecologically sensitive areas.
- **Amenities** such as meditation areas, bike racks, mutt mitts and trash cans, community gardens, public art, bird watching, skating, and environmental education.
- **Neighborhood connections** to schools and businesses and improving connectivity with new bridges.
- **Safety measures** such as bike parking in visible areas, call boxes, lighting, safety signage, Adopt-a-Trail and other regular trail events, targeted plantings, plans for maintenance, police enforcement or citizen-based reporting, and timed lighting for commuters.
- **Signage** focused on environmental education, cultural history, natural history and safety. Ecology themes included identification of common birds, migratory birds, wildlife, Steelhead trout, plant life and creek hydrology. History-related themes included brick manufacturing along the creek, previous use of the creek as a shipping route for produce, the area's Native American history, and bridge history.
- **Environmental stewardship and protection** by providing viewing opportunities, preserving the riparian buffer and creating school programs.

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9349>

<sup>16</sup> Coyote Creek Trail, Story Road to Lower Silver Creek Master Plan. 2008. <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/documentcenter/view/9351>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/23492>

- **Opportunities for public art** such as a coyote sculpture, a river system mosaic under Interstate 280, involving youth in storytelling, including cultural history and the “gold rush” in the creek.

***Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace BART Station Area Community Concept Plan (includes Five Wounds Trail)***<sup>18</sup>

The Five Wounds and Brookwood Terrace neighborhoods are located immediately north of the Story Road Landfill property. CommUniversity studies envision the area’s future as a public plaza located next to the Alum Rock BART station. The City is also working with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority and developers to convert a former rail line into a bicycle-and-pedestrian corridor that passes through the area. The trail would link the Berryessa BART station with the Lower Silver Creek Trail and the Coyote Creek Trail between Story Road (at Coyote Meadows) and Highway 101.

Key goals identified during community outreach efforts included:

- **Strengthening community bonds** by creating outdoor gathering space with regular events and strengthening local businesses.
- **Promoting a strong community identity** in the built environment with architecture representing Portuguese, Mexican and Vietnamese cultures, adding gateways and banners, adding information plaques on history and embedding local art into the design.
- **Accommodating the needs of seniors and children** including activities and programs that seniors and children can do together and recreation facilities and activities that accommodate youth and seniors.
- **Emphasizing art** by providing studio space, integrating art into projects and providing art education programs.

***Three Creeks Eastern Alignment (formerly Willow Glen Spur)***

The Three Creeks Trail would connect to the Five Wounds Trail at Coyote Meadows, then extend southwest through the Spartan Keyes neighborhood. It would serve as a major connector between the Guadalupe River and Coyote Creek. The City’s 2015 visioning study for the Three Creeks Trail focused on areas west of Kelly Park.<sup>19</sup> The portion of the eastern alignment that would connect to Kelly Park is in the planning stages. The City has acquired some of the easements needed to move forward with the trail.

***Martin Park Expansion (former landfill)***<sup>20</sup>

Martin Park was a source of clay for brick and pipe manufacturing in the mid-1900s and later became a landfill for construction debris. The area is located immediately north of Coyote Meadows, across Interstate 280. Park development included landfill closure work as well as

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9352>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/58152>

<sup>20</sup> <http://sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/33963>

construction of a natural turf soccer field, turf area, small group picnic area, walkways and concrete retaining/seatwalls.

## Section 3: Stewardship Models for Coyote Meadows

### A. Overview

This section shares information about successful stewardship models from other projects from across the country. As planning for Coyote Meadows moves forward, customized stewardship concepts could be developed based on priority community interests, project types and City of San Jose constraints.

#### Questions to consider when developing a stewardship plan:

- What challenges or needs are you addressing?
- What are the goals of the stewardship work?
- What volunteer, fundraising, organizational and management systems are in place?
- What are your anticipated sources of funding?
- What types of stewardship activities need to occur and how often?

**Why stewardship?** The needs and priorities below led to community interest in stewardship plans for other sites.

- Community cohesion
- Safer space and less vandalism
- Education
- Relaxation
- Improved maintenance and less trash

**Stewardship benefits:** Successful stewardship plans for community open space enable a range of benefits, including:

- Beautification
- Habitat
- Recreation
- Income generation
- Positive youth experiences
- Community cohesion and capacity building
- Training and knowledge transfer
- Cost savings for local governments
- Ripple effects for other spaces

#### City of San José Stewardship Recommendations for Trails and Parks\*

- Develop maintenance and management plan to identify required maintenance tasks and their frequency.
- Provide park concern hotline information.
- Promote the Adopt-a-Trail and Adopt-a-Creek programs.
- Promote special events to encourage greater trail use.
- Provide dog waste dispensers and signs.
- Post rules and hours of operation.
- Maintain lines of sight for safety.

\* based on Coyote Creek Trail Master Plan, Strong Neighborhoods Initiative

**Typical stewardship activities** for open spaces improve community services at sites, enhance existing funding and improve site conditions. Community stewards provide site support for the following activities:

- Fundraising from a diversity of sources, including donors, sponsorships, private-public partnerships, grants, events and fee-based services.
- Providing and guiding volunteer services.
- Assisting with resource management and preservation. High-quality maintenance attracts visitors and mitigates landscape impacts. It also increases perceptions of safety and quality, creating value for private partners.
- Developing specific projects such as flower and vegetable gardens, pocket parks, playgrounds, playing fields, natural places/woodlands, tree nurseries, and rainwater collection and plant irrigation systems.
- Publicizing important issues and serving as a voice for the community or locality.
- Developing programming based on arts, youth, cultural and educational resources. Programming is a core role of most park stewards. The typical organization sponsors about 60 programs each year, or more than one program per week.

### **Characteristics of Successful Stewardship Programs**

- Local government support – most land stewards receive oversight from park owners.
- A dedicated project coordinator.
- A lead organization that provides technical, training and logistical assistance.
- A robust and committed volunteer base.
- Placement of communities first (recognizing local knowledge, addressing social issues, economic incentives and job skills).
- Sustainment of community leaders (training, youth mentoring, lists of doable activities and networking opportunities).
- Provision of a “Master Stewards” program:
  - Training program that commits volunteer to period of volunteer leadership after receiving master steward certificate.
  - Topics could include native and invasive plant identification, trail maintenance, first aid, and city programs and policies.

### **B. Types of Stewardship Models**

The San Francisco Department of Planning’s 2016 Public Space Stewardship Guide highlights the strengths and weaknesses of several stewardship models. Its findings are summarized below.

*Event-based models* are driven by groups seeking to activate a site and attract people there for an array of purposes. Strengths: create social connections, help leverage funding, encourage partnerships, easier for small organizations to lead. Challenges: tied to events-only focus, events can be time consuming, and events can impact the health of open space and increase maintenance costs.

*Grassroots models* are led by small, sometimes volunteer-led community groups responsible for site management, improvement and stewardship. Strengths: size allows for nimbleness, groups

can have large impacts with few costs, and a broad base of stakeholders can build a strong foundation and build capacities. Weaknesses: reliance on institutions for maintenance and often have minimal organizational infrastructure, difficult to maintain consistency of time and people, and high-resource groups are often able to do more, creating inequities. People often drop in and out and it can be a challenge to commit to maintenance beyond monthly cleanup days.

*Special Assessment Districts* are areas where neighborhood property owners pay a special assessment fee to support community amenities such as parks. Example: San Francisco's Green Benefit Districts. Strengths: effective at planning for open spaces, a steady and reliable source of funding to support community goals, and responsive to specific community needs. Weaknesses: equity issues, district management can become unwieldy.

*Maintenance or Technical Assistance Partnerships* are approaches where organizations partner to provide services they are most effective at, in coordination with a local agency. Example: New York's Neighborhood Plaza Program. Strengths: opportunities for learning and sharing best practices between organizations, broadened community involvement. Weaknesses: management of multiple organizations and roles can be challenging, requires a long-term plan.

*Public/private models* rely on partnerships with government agencies and private companies, and can include community-based organizations. Example: Chicago's Make Way for People Program. Strengths: resources available for programming and maintenance and formal roles and agreements in place, especially when working with a group of businesses. Weaknesses: no standard model, need to have system in place for community involvement, can be time consuming, need to ensure inclusiveness.

### **C. Stewardship Models in Action**

***Chicago's Make Way for People Program*** creates a framework for the creation of new "People Spots" – parklets, plazas, activated alleys and more. The Chicago Department of Transportation's Make Way for People initiative aims to create public spaces that cultivate community and culture in Chicago's neighborhoods through placemaking. Make Way for People supports innovation in the public way by opening Chicago's streets, parking spots, plazas and alleys to new programming and market opportunities via public and private partnerships. In addition to improving street safety and promoting walkable communities, this initiative supports economic development for Chicago's local businesses and Chicago's neighborhoods. The goal is to activate "People Plazas" by mid-2018. Community partners, consultants and volunteers participate in a range of activities to maintain momentum. Design volunteers develop structural and program design and conduct outreach, interviews and research. Communications volunteers develop a variety of communication elements, including press releases, infographics, website, flyers, event themes and research around public space and placemaking. Sponsorship volunteers develop and implement sponsorship activities, including determining return on investment, developing relationships and developing materials.

**The Neighborhood Plaza Partnership (NPP)**<sup>21</sup> is a Horticultural Society of New York program that supports plaza managers in high-need neighborhoods. NPP provides subsidized maintenance service using a workforce training model, organizational capacity-building, marketing advisory services and other approaches.

**Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) Pop-up Spaces:** Since 2011, PHS has activated vacant spaces with pop-up garden installations. During the 2014 season, PHS pop ups attracted over 52,000 people. Recent pop-ups were beer gardens with temporary landscaping, cafe-style seating, and beverages and food for sale. Each beer garden also featured space for food trucks and other mobile vendors. PHS implemented the beer gardens in partnership with local bars and mobile food vendors. Maintenance of the garden spaces is a collaborative effort. PHS volunteers and interns provide daily upkeep services for each garden, while restaurant and bar staff assist with cleanup of food and beverage areas. In 2014, Philadelphia's local business associations stated that the pop-up beer gardens inspired by PHS's work generated a substantial economic boost for nearby restaurants, bars and shops.

**Forterra Green City Partnerships**<sup>22</sup>: Green Cities began in 2004, when staff at Forterra and the City of Seattle committed to restoring and maintaining Seattle's 2,500 acres of forested parkland over a 20-year period. Building on the success of the Green Seattle Partnership, Forterra has partnered with eight more cities in the Puget Sound region, expanding the Green Cities Network to include Kirkland, Tacoma, Redmond, Kent, Everett, Puyallup, Snoqualmie and Tukwila. The partnership works with local non-profits, community groups, city agencies, neighborhood leaders and local businesses. Forterra provides templates for community organizations to use for their open space resources. These materials include the Steward Annual Plan Workbook, a roadmap for stewardship activities, and the Forest Steward Field Guide, a guide to creating a shared vision for city and community stewards.<sup>23,24</sup>

**Bay Youth for the Environment (BYE):** In 2004, the California State Parks Foundation launched the BYE Program in partnership with the youth empowerment and advocacy group Literacy for Environmental Justice (LEJ). BYE's goals are to provide local youth with rigorous environmental training and work opportunities, build community involvement, and create a successful urban park stewardship model that can be adopted by urban communities and state parks throughout California.

BYE gives high-school youth and community volunteers the opportunity to be part of a wetland restoration project at the Candlestick Point State Recreation Area. The 34-acre project is restoring the largest contiguous wetlands area in San Francisco County. Under the guidance of trained staff, students collect native plant seeds and are growing up to 10,000 plants for the restoration at an on-site community greenhouse and nursery that LEJ maintains in partnership with California State Parks. The youth team works year-round, up to six hours a week. Members

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<sup>21</sup> <http://www.neighborhoodplazapartnership.org>.

<sup>22</sup> <http://forterra.org/service/green-cities-toolbox>

<sup>23</sup> <http://forterra.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Steward-Annual-Plan-Workbook.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.greeneseattle.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/GSP-Forest-Steward-Field-Guide.pdf>

of the youth team learn about horticulture and wetlands ecology, group decision-making, public speaking and other skills. Students are paid \$12 an hour for their work.

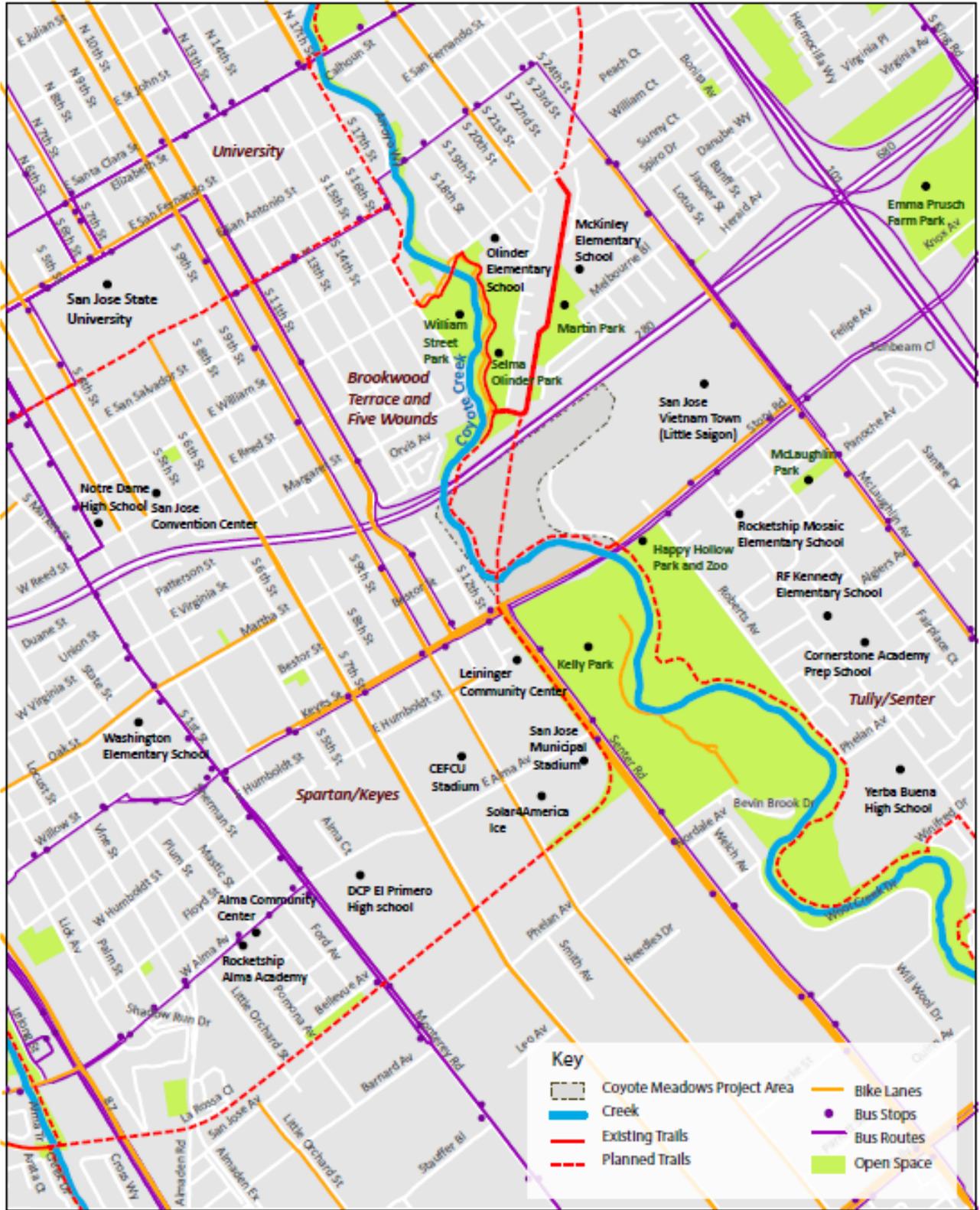
#### **D. Stewardship Plan Characteristics**

Creating a detailed stewardship plan is an essential step toward successful public space management. Key plan components include:

- A detailed list of services and activities that includes:
  - Parties responsible for maintenance and type of maintenance.
  - Programs, events and activities, including outreach, partners and roles, and frequency of events.
  - Funding and financing mechanisms, including costs and profits and capital projects.
- Service frequency tables.
- Roles and responsibilities of City and SCVWD staff.
- Supplemental services provided by other entities, including professional management/maintenance/fundraising services, property owners and businesses.
- Memoranda of understanding (MOUs) from agencies to assist with the coordination of services.
- A budget, including the process by which funds will be raised, collected, monitored and spent by the community steward. This section includes funding sources and current and future costs.
- Timelines for community engagement, including background information, goals, and meetings held and planned.
- Organizational background information, including staff and board member activities and responsibilities, organizational structure, and financial statements.

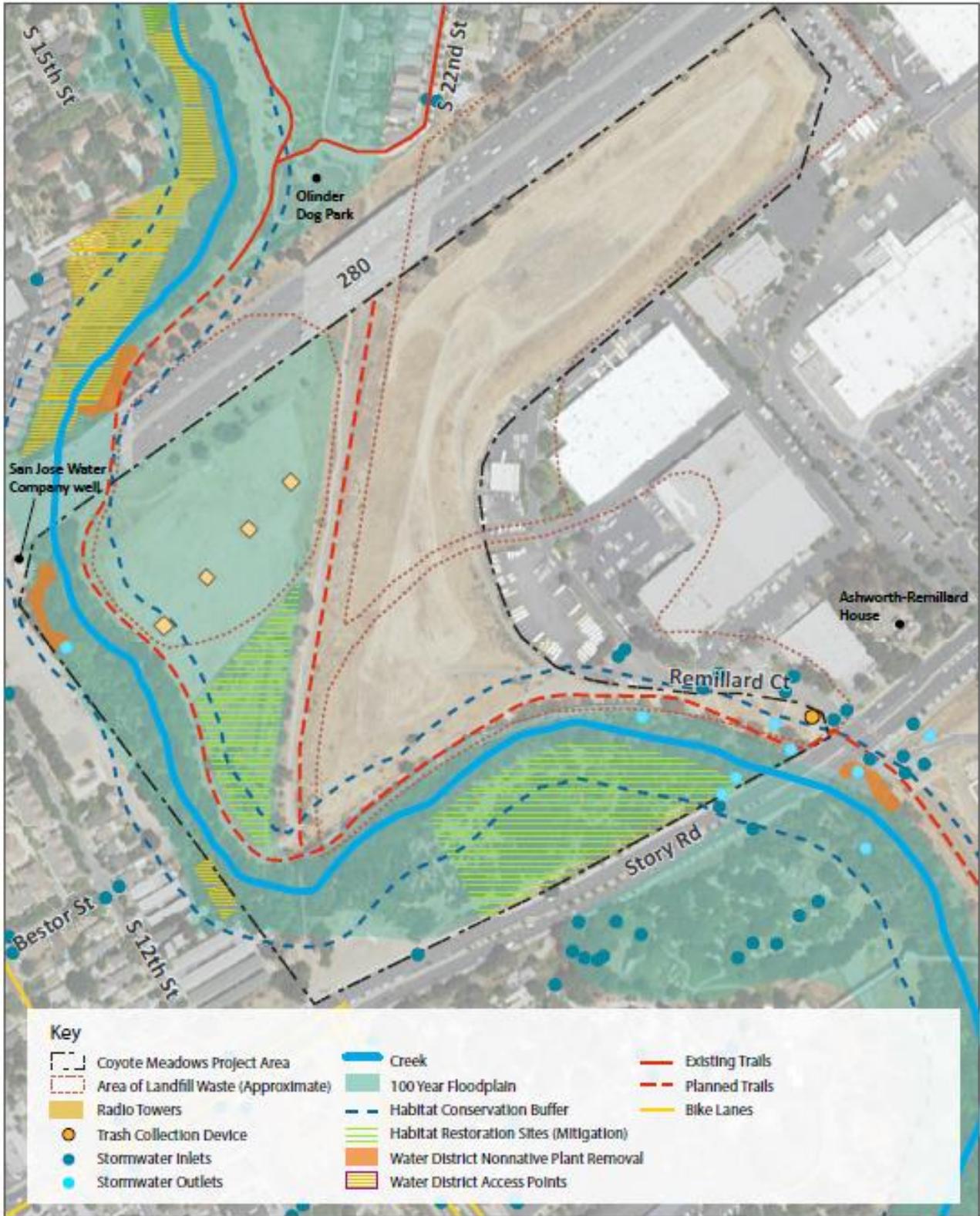
#### **E. Additional Stewardship References**

- Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Friends of the State Parks Toolkit.
- Parks and People Foundation. 2003. Neighborhood open space management: community greening survey and land trust strategies for Baltimore city.
- Seattle-Tacoma Regional Urban Forest Restoration Project: Phase 3 Objective 2: Engage youth and families in urban forest management. Best practices guide for engaging diverse communities in urban forest and natural area restoration.
- Philadelphia Park Friends Toolkit. 2017.
- Signature Park Stewardship. Results of a Survey of Dedicated Park Managers. 2011.



Coyote Meadows  
(Story Road Landfill) Context Map





Coyote Meadows  
(Story Road Landfill) Site Map

