

Government

Stevens Creek Trail Plan Advances Despite Budget Gap

Council approves Phase II of the Stevens Creek Corridor Project, although budget is currently short by \$1.6 million.

By [Pam Marino](#) | [Email the author](#) | January 20, 2011



Stevens Creek near Stevens Creek Boulevard. Credit [Pam Marino](#)

How do you feel about the Stevens Creek trail plan? [Tell us in the comments.](#)

The vision of a completed trail along Stevens Creek from McClellan Road to Stevens Creek Boulevard took a step closer to reality with a unanimous vote by the Cupertino City Council on Tuesday night.

About a dozen residents and community group representatives stepped forward at the meeting—and more in letters and e-mails before the meeting--encouraging the Council to continue the success of Phase I of the Stevens Creek Corridor Project, completed in 2009, by extending the trail from [Blackberry Farm](#) all the way to Stevens Creek Boulevard.

“We’ve really got moon and stars aligned,” said Marianne Cali of the Stevens and Permanente Creeks Watershed Council, noting that environmentalists, naturalists, recreationalists, and trail enthusiasts, were all in favor of a staff recommended plan to extend the trail.

Not aligned as of yet is the money for the \$3.5 million project, the Council learned Tuesday. The city is short by \$1.6 million according to city staff.

Public Works Director Timm Borden said it was possible to use savings from other capital improvement projects completed under budget, or defer other projects until later budget years. He also said the city is seeking grants from a variety of regional and state agencies.

Other options for trimming costs explored Tuesday included taking out a proposed bridge across the creek into the neighboring Stocklmeir orchard, owned by the city.

As the plan stands now, the trail would begin where the Phase I trail concludes at the end of the Blackberry Farm parking lot, hugging the east side of the creek, then crossing over the creek at about the eighth hole of the golf course. The trail would then wind its way through the orchard, and come out on Stevens Creek Boulevard.

The creek restoration begun in Phase I, would continue to Stevens Creek Boulevard, further naturalizing the creek and making it welcoming to native

wildlife, especially steelhead coming from San Francisco Bay to spawn.

Tuesday's vote authorizes \$200,000 to begin the design phase of the project, and allows staff to pursue further grant monies. The project is expected to take two years, with completion slated for September 2013.

Although no golfers showed up to the meeting Tuesday night, council members said they had heard plenty from Blackberry Farm Golf Course enthusiasts, who were concerned that the creek restoration plan would negatively impact the adjacent course.

Originally it was feared that the new creek bank would cut into the ninth hole fairway by 35 feet, Borden said. However, a hydrologist and a golf course design expert helped city staff figure out a way to trim that number to around 20 feet.

Borden said they fully expect the course to remain open during construction. He told the Council that the course pulls in \$111,000 net profit for the city annually.

In related news, the Council learned that bids went out Tuesday for the Scenic Circle Access project, which is estimated to cost around \$140,000 and should begin construction this spring.

The Council approved the access last year at the urging of families in the Scenic Circle neighborhood who wanted a safer route for students traveling to Monta Vista High School, Kennedy Middle School and Lincoln Elementary.

The new access will allow them to use a bridge over Stevens Creek in Blackberry Farm, thereby avoiding steep, narrow and winding McClellan Road.

Comments (5)

Gary E. Jones

9:23am on Saturday, January 29, 2011

Love Phase I. Is it possible to get a breakdown of the estimated \$3.5 million cost of Phase II?



Pam Marino

1:33pm on Saturday, January 29, 2011

I'm not sure the city has given a breakdown yet, Gary. I rechecked the staff report and a staff presentation from November. Here's a link to the city's web page about the project: <http://www.cupertino.org/index.aspx?page=1040>. It doesn't have the latest meeting, however. Here's the link to that staff report: http://cupertino.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=14&clip_id=1065&meta_id=55329

Debi Jamison

11:22am on Tuesday, February 15, 2011

Once again – It's not all about the trail!!! In fact, in this meeting, what was on the line was creek restoration and every speaker advocated for restoring the Stockmeir section of Stevens Creek. The trail was not in doubt. It was included in every budgetary option presented (except for the "do nothing" option. So reread the article and substitute the words "creek restoration" for "trail" and you will have an accurate account of this city council meeting.

Gary E. Jones

9:17am on Thursday, February 17, 2011

A call for transparency; do not get me wrong, I'm all for the trail and creek restoration. Big fan of Phase I. I have been advised, by City staff, that there is no line item summary for publication of the \$3.5 million budget yet. I for one would like to know the total amount being budgeted for consultants? My recall of the Mary Street Bridge cost was around \$8 million and it ended up at \$14 million - I could be wrong. Someone correct me on this recall, if it is wrong. Transparency is critical for government/community spending if taxpayers are going to approve tax initiatives in the future.

Gary E. Jones

9:24am on Thursday, February 17, 2011

"The City Council awarded a \$7.3 million construction contract to Golden State Bridge, Inc. on November 20th to build a newly designed steel bridge. .
." <http://www.cupertino.org/index.aspx?page=118>

"It may have cost more than \$14 million, but the bicycling and jogging experience across it is free." The Cupertino Patch