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Cities to study big trail extension

by Daniel DeBolt

With Sunnyvale and Los Altos finally stepping up to extend the Stevens Creek Trail closer to the Stevens Creek reservoir, the City Council approved a bit of money Tuesday to help study the trail extensions.

The city will now contribute \$5,000 to the \$100,000 study, which will determine the feasibility of extending the trail from Mountain View High School to the city's southern border and beyond.

Council member Laura Macias was the only member to vote against the funding.

"We have spent \$33 million on the trail," Macias said. "We did receive \$11 million in outside grants. That's for our 4.75 miles. Cupertino has done .75 miles. I'm so glad they (Sunnyvale and Los Altos) are on board, but I am not sure why we are being asked to sponsor it. I am really torn on this."

Other members agreed with Aaron Grossman, director of Friends of the Stevens Creek Trail, who said the benefits to Mountain View were worth \$5,000. "The trail won't continue without this feasibility study," he said. "We will benefit to some degree. Our people will use the trail."

Council member Tom Means, the city's trail representative in meetings with the other cities, said there was a piece of property on the east side of the creek that could be used to connect Mountain View High School to the city's southern border. From there, Sunnyvale and Los Altos would continue the trail to Cupertino. Avoiding the difficulties in finding space for the trail along the creek, Los Altos had previously studied using city streets to make the connection but is now moving away from that, Means said. Sunnyvale has taken the lead in conducting the study.

Eventually the trail would connect to Stevens Creek Reservoir, where numerous trails cover the hills.

The \$5,000 for the study came from a \$50,000 city fund from the Valley Transportation Authority to help start such projects.

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