



<http://mv-voice.com/news/print/2015/12/14/city-aims-to-extend-stevens-creek-trail>

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## City aims to extend Stevens Creek trail

First priority is to connect popular trail to Mountain View High School

by Mark Noack

After decades of planning, Mountain View officials hope to reach a new milestone for the Stevens Creek Trail by connecting it to Mountain View High School.

Extending the trail to the high school emerged as city officials' top priority last week during a study session to discuss the trail's future. Currently, the Stevens Creek Trail stretches about 5 miles through Mountain View, running from the Bay wetlands to Heatherstone Avenue near Highway 85.

From there, the trail effectively ends for about 3 miles before picking up again in Cupertino at Blackberry Farm.

The four cities that share jurisdiction over the trail have agreed to work together to complete the route, and there was a consensus they would all help shoulder the cost. A study commissioned by the cities split the project into four segments.

For Mountain View officials, their main interest is in the study's first segment, a stretch running south from the terminus at Heatherstone Avenue to Fremont Avenue in Los Altos. City staff said this area has the advantage of having about 22 acres of open space, but it could require constructing several bridges and other infrastructure to extend the trail along a narrow creek corridor. A sound wall built alongside the Heatherstone Apartments might need to be moved to make way for the trail. In any case, the segment would require a lengthy study and environmental review before any construction could begin.

To say the trail is a big deal for local residents would be an understatement, said Councilwoman Pat Showalter, who represented Mountain View in the discussions with other cities. Holding up a thick binder of correspondence, she pointed out that the project had received more than 900 comments.

"Everyone likes the existing trail -- they view this as a fabulous regional amenity," she said. "But people had some strong feelings about this that's a nice way of saying it."

Of those comments, safety was a major theme, particularly for students getting to school, she said. Local residents wanted the trail to stay as close to the creek, and away from city streets as much as possible.

Echoing that priority, city officials last week gave direction to focus on extending the trail to the high school. The city needs to find a way to prioritize this goal while also studying the entire segment, said Councilman Mike Kasperzak.

"Our goal has always been to get to the high school and I'd like to see that as an ultimate focus, but we have to do that in the context of this first segment and overall plan," he said. "I'd hate to say we're not going to get to Mountain View High School until we can figure out the whole thing."

Where the project goes from here depends on the funding. Mountain View officials said that other

cities should carry some of the costs. The price won't be cheap -- city staff estimates that getting the trail to the high school will run about \$15 million. How this cost should be split will likely be a major topic in upcoming meetings.

Mountain View Public Works staff indicated the trail could be added to the city's capital-improvement project list next year. Grant funding is also a possibility through agencies such as the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, California River Parkway or the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

## Comments

Posted by **parent**, a resident of Old Mountain View  
4 hours ago

We've been waiting decades for the Stevens Creek Trail to be extended through Sunnyvale. Will it be finished before our kids grow up?

Posted by **Let's do it**, a resident of Old Mountain View  
3 hours ago

The original vision was that the trail would go to the high school. Let's find the funds and get it done!

Posted by **parent**, a resident of Old Mountain View  
3 hours ago

Is the problem money or NIMBYs? The article talks about money, but my understanding is that was never the real problem.

Posted by **Jim**, a resident of Gemello  
3 hours ago

The problem in MV is money since the trail will follow 85 on the Sunnyvale side where there are no houses. The problem in Sunnyvale and particularly Los Altos is NIMBYs.

Posted by **NIMBY mine field**, a resident of Another Mountain View Neighborhood  
1 hour ago

I know Sunnyvale used to have a rule to not even study the idea of the trail, but they are slowly warming to the idea.

Los Altos, Sunnyvale and Cupertino are all Sc trail NIMBY hot spots, but only the people who's property is adjacent to any proposed trail. They'll bring up any/all excuses as to why it should not move fwd.

Posted by **Jay Ess**, a resident of another community  
9 minutes ago

This area has been obstructed by nimbys in Los Altos for at least 40 years. I have a hard time understanding it. I live very near a trail in Los Altos Hills and see nothing to object to. We did have one youngster who had a motor bike and was stopped by a small barrier for a period of time...until he grew up. It is mainly used by the women taking morning walks, no problem.

this trail is a very needed recreational connection for non motorized travel from the Baylands to Stevens Creek county park and on up to skyline. With the traffic increasing on roads and expressways we need to have places for bikes and hikers off road. There have been just too many bicyclists killed on our roads recently.

Posted by **parent**, a resident of Old Mountain View  
0 hours ago

This is not just a recreational trail. As the article states, kids want to use it as a safe route to school. This also reduces car traffic for kids who are too scared to bike on existing routes. Many adults also bicycle commute on the trail to various companies along the trail including Google. Investing in this bike trail will reduce car traffic in the area, which is good for everyone.