

Honorable Nai Hsueh
Chair Valley Water Board
Valley Water
5750 Almaden Expressway
San Jose, CA 95118

Dear Chair Hsueh,

Subject: Request for CEQA/EIR Study for Proposed Homeless Encampment Near Guadalupe River-Southwest Corner of Willow/Lelong Streets

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the proposed use of the property adjacent to the Guadalupe River, which was originally acquired for the construction of a flood control project.

It has come to our attention that Valley Water is now collaborating with the City of San Jose to repurpose this land for a sanctioned homeless encampment.

This significant change in land use warrants a thorough review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), necessitating an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to evaluate potential environmental repercussions. We as San Jose residents, are entitled to a full CEQA/EIR report under California Law due to a change in use of the parcel in question.

The initial acquisition of this property from tax-paying businesses was aimed at mitigating flood risks associated with the Guadalupe River. Repurposing the land for a homeless encampment introduces a host of new environmental variables that were not considered in the original project scope.

As such, it is imperative that a CEQA/EIR study be conducted to thoroughly assess the following potential impacts:

- **Water Quality and River Ecosystem:** An encampment adjacent to the river poses substantial risks to water quality. Increased waste, both solid and human, could result in contamination of the river, adversely affecting aquatic life and potentially impacting downstream water users.
- **Flood Management:** The original purpose of the land purchase was flood control. A change in land use could undermine flood mitigation efforts, particularly if the encampment infrastructure interferes with water flow during heavy storms.
- **Public Health and Safety:** The proximity of a homeless encampment to residential communities raises public health and safety concerns. Issues such as increased waste, air quality from open fires, potential for disease transmission, and heightened demand for emergency services must be carefully evaluated.
- **Environmental Degradation:** The establishment of an encampment may lead to significant environmental degradation, including soil erosion, vegetation loss, and habitat destruction

for local wildlife. An EIR would provide a detailed analysis of these impacts and propose mitigation measures.

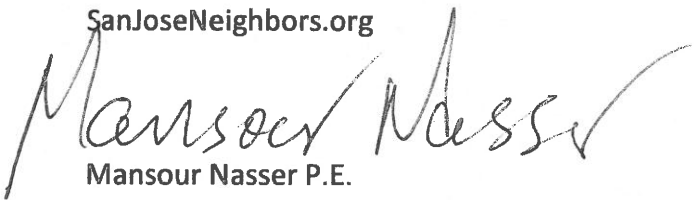
- **Cumulative Impacts:** It is crucial to consider the cumulative environmental impacts of this land use change in conjunction with other ongoing and proposed projects in the area. This comprehensive analysis will help ensure that the cumulative effects do not result in significant environmental degradation.

Given these concerns, we urge Valley Water and the City of San Jose to initiate a CEQA/EIR study before proceeding with the proposed encampment. This due diligence is not only a legal obligation but also a moral one, ensuring that we protect our natural resources and the well-being of our community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We trust that you will give this request the serious consideration it deserves to ensure a sustainable and responsible approach to land use in our community.

Sincerely,

SanJoseNeighbors.org

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mansour Nasser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a checkmark at the end.

Mansour Nasser P.E.

Richard Zappelli
Past President WG Neighbors Association (WGNA)
Board Member WGNA (14 years)
Co-Founder of Save Our Trails
Co-Founder of Stakeholders Safe Green Village (SGV)

cc:

Honorable Matt Mahan, Mayor
City of San Jose
Omar Passons, Deputy City Manager
City of San Jose