

Memo

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council
Through: Will Kolbow, Finance Director/Acting City Manager *WK*
From: Bill Crouch, Community Development Director
Date: April 10, 2018
Re: Santiago Creek Vision Plan Update, Spring 2018

The Santiago Creek Vision Plan is agendized for discussion only. The plan was last provided to the City at the November 9, 2016, City Council Meeting but was not an item for Council discussion rather, it was submitted for review by staff.

Staff completed a review of the plan and provided a memo to the City Manager on July 19, 2017, with a summary review stating: "As a general comment, the Plan is aligned with the City's objective to promote Santiago Creek as a multi-purpose community amenity including recreation, flood protection, water supply, and natural habitat functions."

More recently, the Greenway Alliance has completed a Spring 2018 update to the Santiago Creek Vision Plan to revise awkward language, update nomenclature of property names, correct grammatical errors, make cosmetic changes, and update diagrams (such as recent and planned extensions to the Santiago Creek Bike Trail). Plan content remains unchanged from the prior document submitted for staff review and analysis, and the updated document maintains consistency with the City General Plan, as summarized by staff in the attached memo of July 19, 2017.

Attachments:

- A. November 9, 2016, City Council Minutes
- B. July 19, 2017, Memo Summarizing Staff Review of the Plan
- C. Updated Santiago Creek Vision Plan, Spring 2018

ITEM: 4.1 DATE OF MEETING: 4/10/18

4. REPORTS FROM MAYOR SMITH

4.1 Consider the removal of Craig Wheeler from the Design Review Committee and posting a Notice of Vacancy pursuant to the Maddy Act.

Mayor Smith reported that Mr. Wheeler has served on the Design Review Committee for 14 years. She requested that a Proclamation be prepared and presented to Mr. Wheeler at the December meeting.

MOTION – Smith

SECOND – Nichols

AYES – Alvarez, Whitaker, Smith, Murphy, Nichols

Moved to remove Craig Wheeler from the Design Review Committee and direct the City Clerk to post the Notice of Vacancy.

4.2 Santiago Creek Vision Plan.

Mayor Smith reported that the Santiago Creek Vision Plan is not an item for discussion but an item submitted for staff's review.

Public Speakers:

John Moore, Greenway Alliance – submitted a draft of the Santiago Creek Vision Plan and described the goals of the plan including the ones that have already been accomplished.

Pamela Galera, Greenway Alliance – spoke in support of the draft plan.

Mayor Smith recommends submitting this plan to staff for review and to have on file.

MOTION – Whitaker

SECOND – Smith

AYES – Alvarez, Whitaker, Smith, Murphy, Nichols

Moved to submit the Santiago Creek Vision Plan to staff and keep it on file.

5. REPORTS FROM COUNCILMEMBERS – None

6. REPORTS FROM BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND COMMISSIONS – None

Memo

To: Rick Otto, City Manager

Thru: Bill Crouch, Community Development Director
Bonnie Hagan, Community Services Director

From: Anna Pehoushek, Assistant Community Development Director

Date: July 19, 2017

Re: Draft Santiago Creek Vision Plan Review

Planning staff has conducted a review of the summer 2016 draft of the Santiago Creek Vision Plan for purposes of comparing the goals and objectives of the Plan with the City's General Plan, Trails Master Plan, and general City practices over time related to Santiago Creek and bike trail. As a general comment, the Plan is aligned with the City's objective to promote Santiago Creek as a multi-purpose community amenity including recreation, flood protection, water supply, and natural habitat functions. The goals and policies of the Plan are as follows:

Primary Goals

- Develop a continuous multi-purpose trail
- Create a greenway along the creek by resorting the creek bed
- Maximize groundwater recharge
- Maintain or improve flood protection
- Realize the recreational and scenic potential of the creek.

Objectives:

- Construct trail to connect Santa Ana River trail to Santiago Oaks
- Create a greenway along the creek
- Restore the creek's role in groundwater recharge
- Maintain/improve flood protection

Purpose:

- Promote actions leading to completion of trail and greenway system.
- Augment City’s transportation system.
- Watershed value

General Plan Consistency

A consistency review with the City’s General Plan is attached to this memo. As presented in the attachment, the draft Vision Plan and specific improvement projects are consistent with a number of goals and policies contained in the Land Use, Circulation and Mobility, Natural Resources, Public Safety and Cultural Resources Elements of the General Plan (Attachment A).

The Circulation and Mobility Element contains the City’s Plan for Recreational Trails and Bikeways (Attachment B). The draft Santiago Creek Vision Plan is largely consistent with this plan, however the City’s plan only presents general trail alignment and classification information. Where the Vision Plan diverges from the City’s plan is in the vicinity of the Bond Pits. Here the Vision Plan improvements are primarily focused on the south side of the creek, while the City’s plan envisions the creek trail following an alignment on the north side of the creek to Santiago Oaks Park. This final segment of improvements presents the highest level of complexity due to the pattern of private property ownership, topography, and political sensitivity. The nature of the Vision Plan’s improvements in this area also carry with them significant costs related to geotechnical engineering and construction of facilities.

While a number of improvement projects contained in the draft Plan have already been completed and demonstrate operational success, a number of projects remain identified for future consideration as presented in detail in Attachment C. Each of these projects bring with it varying levels of complexity with respect to implementation as noted in the Attachment. A listing of “Projects for Future Consideration” by ease of implementation is provided below.

PROJECTS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION IMPLEMENTATION POTENTIAL	
Creek Segment	Project
<i>EASIER: RESTORATION OF NATIVE VEGETATION ON PUBLIC PROPERTY</i>	
1.2 Creek between SR-22 and Glassell	Remove non-native plants and restore native creek vegetation on City land
2.2 North side of creek east of Cambridge	Restore native vegetation on City and County land
2.2 North side of creek east of Cambridge	Restore native vegetation on City and County land
2.5 North side of creek east of Tustin	Restore native vegetation on County land
2.8 South side of creek between Arroyo Casa Apts. and SR-55	Restore native vegetation on County land
3.3 Chapman to Walnut	Restore native vegetation on County and City land

4.3 West side of creek northeast of previous item	Restore native vegetation on City land
6.5 Uplands on south side of creek from Villa Park Road to Cannon	Restore upland with native plants, and build trailhead near roadway on OCWD property.
MORE DIFFICULT: IMPROVEMENTS/FACILITIES ON PUBLIC PROPERTY	
1.1 Creek Under SR-22	Improvements to discourage loitering and camping on Caltrans land
1.7 North Side of Creek West of Cambridge	Restore native vegetation, remove construction fill and debris, install grate over drainage culvert to deter loitering, graffiti and vagrancy on City land
2.1 Creek bed east of Cambridge	Restore with native plants on City and County land
2.3 Creek bed west of Tustin	Remove soilcrete and restore groundwater recharge on City land
3.1 East side of creek from SR-55 to Chapman	Restore native vegetation on YMCA, County and City land
3.8 West side of creek at Walnut	Study area for potential neighborhood park and trail access point on City land
4.1 West side of creek north of Walnut	Build neighborhood park on former site of first orange grove in Orange on City land
4.2 West side of creek northeast of bike trail spur	Acquire property or work with owner to restore native plants on private land
5.4 Near Hewes/Villa Park Road Intersection	Construct bird watching platform on OCWD property
7.1 County owned land east of Cannon and north of Santiago Canyon Road	Develop closed landfill as a parking facility for adjacent open space and active park on County land.
7.3 Cannon Street bridge east and north to Mabury Ranch Trail	Restore land on both sides of trails with native plants as needed on public and privately owned land.
8.1 End of public maintenance road at Hidden Creek tract	Install pedestrian bridge to provide a safe crossing from the north to the south sides of the creek on OCFCD property.
MOST DIFFICULT: IMPROVEMENTS/FACILITIES ON PRIVATE PROPERTY AND SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS	
1.4 Hart Park Parking Lot:	Study options for groundwater recharge on City land
2.9 North side of creek west of SR-55	Restore native vegetation on private land
3.2 East side of creek from Chapman to Grijalva Park	Construction of a recreation trail and greenway linking Yorba and Grijalva Parks on private, County and City land
3.4 East side of creek from Chapman Medical to Grijalva	Obtain a 50-foot right-of-way for construction of a recreation trail and greenway and historical marker on private land
3.5 West side of creek at Palm	Study area for potential neighborhood park and trail access point on private land
3.6 West side of creek opposite Grijalva Park	Acquire and restore property that is private land
3.7 City property west of Grijalva Park	Expand Grijalva to include an aquatic center and other facilities on City land
4.5 Creek bed from Walnut to Prospect	Remove concrete lining from creek channel and restore creek bed on OCFD property

6.2 Upland on South side of creek from Villa Park Road to Cannon Street Bridge	Construct Class I bike path from Villa Park Road to Cannon Street at upland location on OCWD and private property.
6.4 Hurwitz property west of Cannon	Reclaim gravel pit for safe trail passage and eliminate unsafe slopes. Stabilize wetlands and restore uplands with native plants on private property.
7.2 Cannon Street bridge to Santiago Oaks Regional Park	Construct Class I bike path from Cannon to Santiago Oaks Regional Park and public and privately owned land.

Summary – Guidance, Funding, and Partnership:

In summary, the environmental and recreational improvements the Santiago Creek Corridor has experienced in recent years demonstrate the role a vision plan plays in fostering community support, leveraging funding, and mobilizing volunteers to bring about changes that benefit the community. As land uses incrementally transition along the creek, and the public agencies involved with the creek manage the corridor with greater sensitivity to environmental concerns, the updated Santiago Creek Vision Plan could continue to serve a valuable purpose as the City works to complete the Santiago Creek Bike Trail link to Santiago Oaks Regional Park, community groups work to re-establishing native vegetation, and the City reviews development proposals.

Ultimately, whatever enhancements can be accomplished along the creek corridor will benefit quality of life in Orange. The Vision Plan positions the City and non-profit organizations to be ready to pursue grant funding for project implementation. Planning staff has also found that discussing the General Plan guidance and community’s vision for the creek creates energy and enthusiasm for treating the creek as an amenity for new development.

Certainly, there are a number of projects identified in the updated draft Vision Plan that bring with them a level of complexity and expense that makes implementation quite challenging. However, as noted in the project discussion above, there are also a number of projects that could be implemented in a fairly straightforward manner and involve the use of relatively modest resources.

By receiving and filing the draft Santiago Creek Vision Plan, the Council would be recognizing that the document plays a role in shaping the recreational and environmental vitality of the City. Rather than functioning as a binding policy document, the updated Vision Plan could continue to be used as a tool for encouraging positive change along the creek, whether that comes in the form of completion of trail connections, private development that incorporates features that respond to the creek in the form of building design, landscaping, or outdoor amenities. Perhaps most importantly, recognition of the updated Vision Plan demonstrates the City’s commitment to being a partner of the Santiago Creek Greenway Alliance, and having a guidance document that positions the City competitively in pursuit of grant funding.

ATTACHMENT A

General Plan Consistency Review

General Plan

LAND USE ELEMENT

- Goal 6.0: Advance development activity that is mutually beneficial to both the environment and the community.
 - Policy 6.3: Establish and maintain greenways, and pedestrian and bicycle connections that complement the residential, commercial and open space areas they connect.
 - Policy 6.4: Create and maintain open space resources that provide recreational opportunities, protect hillside vistas and ridgelines, and conserve natural resources.
 - Policy 6.7: Integrate natural amenities and connections, including waterways and wildlife corridors, within the design of urban and suburban spaces.
 - Policy 6.11: Recognize the value of natural and cultural resources in the undeveloped portions of the planning area.

CIRCULATION & MOBILITY ELEMENT

- Goal 1.0: Provide a safe, efficient, and comprehensive circulation system that serves local needs, meets forecasted demands, and sustains quality of life in neighborhoods.
 - Policy 1.1: Plan, build, and maintain an integrated, hierarchical, and multi-modal system of roadways, pedestrian walkways, and bicycle paths throughout the City.
- Goal 4.0: Provide efficient and accessible modes of pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian transportation and improved facilities and amenities.
 - Policy 4.1: Create a comprehensive bicycle network that is integrated with other transportation systems by establishing complementary on-street and off-street facilities as identified in the City of Orange *Bikeways Master Plan* and *OCTA Commuter Bikeways Strategic plan*, including Santiago Creek, the Santa Ana River, and the Tustin Branch Trail.
 - Policy 4.4: Encourage use of the bikeway system by providing adequate signage, trail markings, and other amenities.

NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

- Goal 1.0: Provide recreational use, scenic enjoyment, and the protection of natural resources and features in open space areas.
 - Policy 1.3: Promote development of additional open spaces and access points adjacent to waterways and planned trails.

- Goal 2.0: Protect air, water, and energy resources from pollution and overuse.
 - Policy 2.11: Protect the ecological integrity and overall health of Orange’s watersheds.
- Goal 4.0: Conserve and protect wildlife habitat, plant and animal species of concern, and general biodiversity.
 - Policy 4.1: Preserve and protect native and habitat-supporting plan resources throughout the City.
 - Policy 4.2: Work with agencies, including the Orange County Flood Control District, to identify opportunities to enhance the natural qualities of Santiago Creek to protect habitat and reintroduce native plants and animals.
 - Policy 4.4: Repair or improve ecological and biological conditions in the urban and natural environments when reviewing proposals for site development and redevelopment, as well as public improvements.
- Goal 5.0: Provide recreational facilities and programs that adequately serve the needs of residents.
 - Policy 5.2: Provide a range of high quality recreational facilities and programming to serve a broad cross section of residents, including youth, seniors, young adults, mature adults, and people with disabilities.
 - Policy 5.3: Establish joint recreational use of open space land and facilities owned by school districts and/or the City.
- Goal 6.0: Provide for alternative modes of transportation and access to recreational resources through a multi-use trail system that links the City’s parks and regional open space amenities.
 - Policy 6.1: Complete multi-use trail links throughout the City that serve recreational and circulation purposes as funding is available.
 - Policy 6.2: Ensure consistent, safe, and efficient maintenance of trails, and minimal impacts to the environment.
 - Policy 6.5: Ensure that the trail system has a safe interface with existing development.
 - Policy 6.6: Encourage an integrated relationship between trails and developed areas.

PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

- Goal 2.0: Protect the City from flood-related risks and hazards.
 - Policy 2.1: Cooperate and work with the Orange County Flood Control District to ensure District flood control facilities are well maintained and capable of accommodating, at a minimum, 100-year storm flows.
- Goal 7.0: Improve community safety and reduce opportunities for criminal activity.

- Policy 7.4: Ensure that community areas and amenities such as transit stops, sidewalks, plazas, parks, trails, and bike paths are appropriately lighted, free of hiding places, and frequently patrolled.
- Policy 7.5: Maximize security of public spaces, recreation facilities, and new development by encouraging complementary uses that support a safe environment.
- Goal 9.0: Provide safe pedestrian and bicycle environments.
 - Policy 9.1: Enhance and maintain safe pedestrian and bicycle movement through the integration of traffic control devices, crosswalks, and pedestrian-oriented lighting, in the design of streets, sidewalks, trails, and school routes throughout Orange.
 - Policy 9.3: Identify and attempt to remove impediments to pedestrian and bicycle access including those associated with rail, street, freeway, and waterway crossings and poorly marked or maintained pathways and sidewalks.

CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

- Goal 1.0: Identify and preserve potential and listed historic resources, including buildings, structures, objects, sites, districts, and archaeological resources citywide.
 - Policy 1.2: Promote community education and awareness of the significance of Orange's potential and listed historic resources.
 - Policy 1.6: Promote the preservation of cultural and historical resources controlled by governmental agencies, including those related to City, School District, and other agencies.
- Goal 4.0: Identify and preserve archaeological and cultural resources.
 - Policy 4.1: Identify, designate, and protect historically and culturally significant archaeological resources or sites.
 - Policy 4.2: Recognize the importance of Santiago Creek as an archaeological resource.
 - Policy 4.4: Celebrate the cultural history of the community by increasing community awareness through the design features of public projects and facilities such as parks, plazas, and community building.

ATTACHMENT B

City of Orange Plan for Recreational Trails and Bikeways

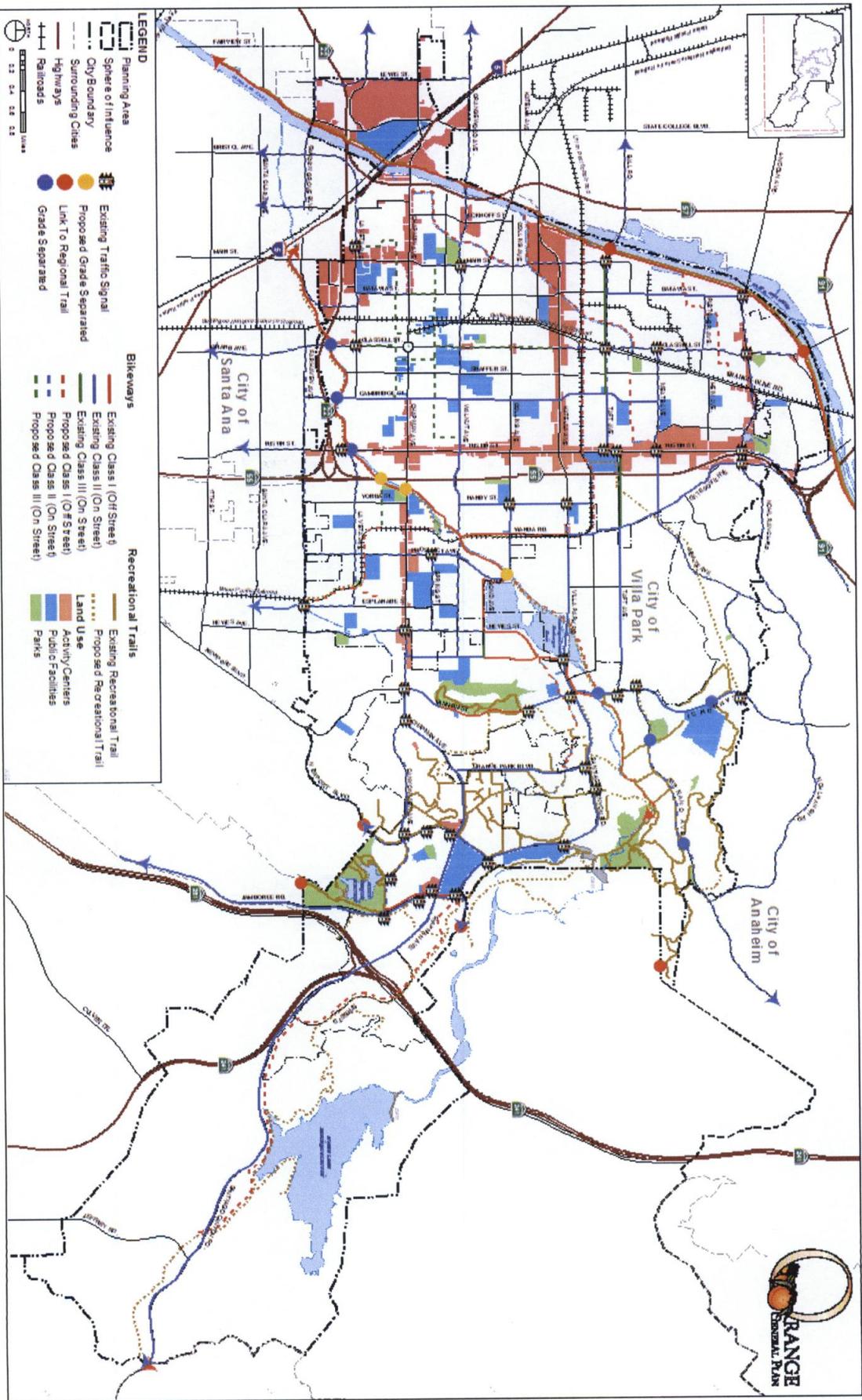


Figure CM-3 Plan for Recreational Trails and Bikeways

ATTACHMENT C

Detailed Assessment of Projects for Future Consideration

PROJECTS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION			
Creek Segment	Project	Ease of Implementation	Issues
<i>Mile 1: Santa Ana/Orange City Limit to Cambridge Street</i>			
1.1 Creek Under SR-22	Improvements to discourage loitering and camping on Caltrans land		<p>Need to explore Caltrans interest and willingness/ ability to design and implement improvements.</p> <p>Need to identify funding source.</p>
1.2 Creek between SR-22 and Glassell	Remove non-native plants and restore native creek vegetation on City land		<p>Assumes plant material would be donated or obtained through grant funding.</p> <p>Work to be performed by volunteers or Conservation Corps.</p> <p>Need to determine how plants will be watered and how the area will be maintained on an ongoing basis.</p>
1.4 Hart Park Parking Lot:	Study options for groundwater recharge on City land		<p>Displacement of parking at Hart Park presents a significant problem.</p> <p>Potential for disruption of access between the north and south sides of park.</p> <p>County of Orange needs to take the lead and City needs to be willing to participate.</p>

1.6 South Side of Creek West of Cambridge	Restore native vegetation on City land		<p>Assumes plant material would be donated or obtained through grant funding.</p> <p>Work to be performed by volunteers or Conservation Corps.</p> <p>Need to determine how plants will be watered and how the area will be maintained on an ongoing basis.</p>
1.7 North Side of Creek West of Cambridge	Restore native vegetation, remove construction fill and debris, install grate over drainage culvert to deter loitering, graffiti and vagrancy on City land		<p>Complexity of this project involves the cost of removal of construction fill and debris, and installation of drainage culvert grate.</p> <p>Restoration of vegetation would be presumably be performed by volunteers or Conservation Corp.</p> <p>Need to determine how plants will be watered and how the area will be maintained on an ongoing basis.</p>
<i>Mile 2: Cambridge Street to SR-55</i>			
2.1 Creek bed east of Cambridge	Restore with native plants on City and County land		<p>Work to be performed by volunteers or Conservation Corps.</p> <p>Need to determine how plants will be watered and how the area will be maintained on an ongoing basis.</p>

			Project complexity involves need to coordinate with County.
2.2 North side of creek east of Cambridge	Restore native vegetation on City and County land		Assumes plant material would be donated or obtained through grant funding. Work to be performed by volunteers or Conservation Corps. Need to determine how plants will be watered and how the area will be maintained on an ongoing basis.
2.3 Creek bed west of Tustin	Remove soilcrete and restore groundwater recharge on City land		Need to identify funding source for soilcrete removal and any engineering work or physical improvements related to restoration of groundwater recharge. This effort would involve significant costs. Coordination with County also needed with respect to flood control and groundwater recharge.
2.5 North side of creek east of Tustin	Restore native vegetation on County land		Assumes plant material would be donated or obtained through grant funding. Work to be performed by volunteers or Conservation Corps. Need to determine how plants will be

			watered and how the area will be maintained on an ongoing basis.
2.8 South side of creek between Arroyo Casa Apts. and SR-55	Restore native vegetation on County land		Assumes plant material would be donated or obtained through grant funding. Work to be performed by volunteers or Conservation Corps. Need to determine how plants will be watered and how the area will be maintained on an ongoing basis.
2.9 North side of creek west of SR-55	Restore native vegetation on private land		This would involve property acquisition or the granting of an easement or other form of participation by the private property owner.
<i>Mile 3: SR-55 to Walnut</i>			
3.1 East side of creek from SR-55 to Chapman	Restore native vegetation on YMCA, County and City land	 	Assumes plant material would be donated or obtained through grant funding. Work to be performed by volunteers or Conservation Corps. Need to determine how plants will be watered and how the area will be maintained on an ongoing basis. County and YMCA need to agree to this activity on their property.

			maintained on an ongoing basis.
3.4 East side of creek from Chapman Medical to Grijalva	Obtain a 50-foot right-of-way for construction of a recreation trail and greenway and historical marker on private land		<p>Implementation is challenging due to the need to obtain an easement from the private property owner. There is also a need to determine who will be responsible for the trail (presumably the City), and for the design and construction of the trail, greenway, and historical marker.</p> <p>There are also costs associated with the improvements.</p> <p>Should the property be redeveloped, the City could work with the developer to incorporate a native vegetation planting scheme along the property's interface with the creek and trail. This would be consistent with General Plan policies.</p>
3.5 West side of creek at Palm	Study area for potential neighborhood park and trail access point on private land		<p>Implementation is challenging due to the need to acquire private property. There is also a need to determine who would be responsible for the design, construction, and ongoing maintenance of the park and trail access point.</p>
3.6 West side of creek opposite Grijalva Park	Acquire and restore property that is private land		<p>Implementation is challenging due to the need to acquire private property.</p>

4.2 West side of creek northeast of bike trail spur	Acquire property or work with owner to restore native plants on private land		<p>Implementation is challenging due to the need to acquire private property.</p> <p>Work to presumably be performed by volunteers or Conservation Corps.</p> <p>There is also a need to determine who would be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the area.</p>
4.3 West side of creek northeast of previous item	Restore native vegetation on City land		<p>Work to be performed by volunteers or Conservation Corps.</p> <p>Need to determine how plants will be watered and how the area will be maintained on an ongoing basis.</p>
4.5 Creek bed from Walnut to Prospect	Remove concrete lining from creek channel and restore creek bed on OCFD property		<p>Effort would involve the need for the City and County to agree to concrete removal, as well as permitting related to various agencies involved with creek channel modifications.</p> <p>Removal of the concrete and restoration of the creek bed would also be dependent upon funding availability for design, construction, and ongoing maintenance.</p>
<i>Mile 5: Prospect-Collins Curve to Villa Park Road</i>			
5.4 Near Hewes/Villa Park Road Intersection	Construct bird watching platform on OCWD property		Construction of the bird watching platform would be

			funding availability for design, construction, and ongoing maintenance.
6.5 Uplands on south side of creek from Villa Park Road to Cannon	Restore upland with native plants, and build trailhead near roadway on OCWD property.		Construction of the bike trail would be dependent upon funding availability for design, construction, and ongoing maintenance. Implementation is dependent on OCWD participation.
<i>Mile 7: Cannon Bridge to east end of Sully-Miller Property</i>			
7.1 County owned land east of Cannon and north of Santiago Canyon Road	Develop closed landfill as a parking facility for adjacent open space and active park on County land.		Construction of the parking facility would be dependent upon funding availability for design, construction, and ongoing maintenance.
7.2 Cannon Street bridge to Santiago Oaks Regional Park	Construct Class I bike path from Cannon to Santiago Oaks Regional Park and public and privately owned land.	 	Construction of the bike trail would be dependent upon funding availability for design, construction, and ongoing maintenance. Implementation is complicated by the need to acquire or obtain easements from private property owner.
7.3 Cannon Street bridge east and north to Mabury Ranch Trail	Restore land on both sides of trails with native plants as needed on public and privately owned land.	 	Implementation is complicated by the need to acquire or obtain easements from private property owner.

			(<i>Note:</i> Figure 44 in draft Vision Plan doesn't seem to show this as described)
<i>Mile 8: East Sully-Miller site to Santiago Oaks Regional Park</i>			
8.1 End of public maintenance road at Hidden Creek tract	Install pedestrian bridge to provide a safe crossing from the north to the south sides of the creek on OCFCD property.	 	<p>Implementation is dependent upon City-County coordination.</p> <p>Construction of the bridge would be dependent upon funding availability for design, construction, and ongoing maintenance.</p>