



## **Community Workshop #1**

**May 16, 2009**

**Summary Report**

**Amended October 2009**

Plant Master Plan Outreach Team  
Environmental Services Department  
City of San José



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## Section 1

### Workshop Overview

The May 16, 2009 workshop was the first of three planned community workshops to engage the public in the process of developing a final master plan for the San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant (Plant). As shown in the timeline below, the Plant Master Plan involves a three-year process that began with a series of exploratory workshops to develop a set of alternatives for the Plant and site. In addition to the service area-wide community workshops, a robust public engagement process is offered that includes Plant tours, speaker presentations, stakeholder outreach, and an interactive project Web site.



The City of San José Environmental Services Department (ESD) hosted the first workshop at the San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant. Over 100 participants took a Plant tour at 1:30 p.m., followed by an open house, project presentation, and public input session. [Thirteen Community Advisory Group \(CAG\)<sup>1</sup> members and 84 members of the public participated in the public input session.](#)

Project staff and CAG members answered questions and informally presented project information during the open house. Project display boards, brochures, and handouts were available for participants to view at their leisure.

Jennifer Garnett, ESD Communications Manager, hosted the presentation. Bruce Wolfe, San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board Executive Officer, made opening remarks, and John Stufflebean, ESD Director, delivered a 30-minute overview, using a PowerPoint slideshow, which was followed by an open question and answer session with the audience.

After a short break, Julie Ortiz, facilitator, led an interactive public input session. Audience response keypads, or clickers, were individually distributed to each participant. A second PowerPoint slideshow presented attendees with a set of values-based questions, and clickers were used to select the option that resonated most with them. The responses were instantaneously compiled for participant viewing. CAG responses were tracked separately from the broader group, as their input is considered a benchmark throughout the entire Plant Master Plan process.

<sup>1</sup> The Community Advisory Group (CAG) was formed in fall 2008 to provide ongoing feedback and a community perspective throughout the three-year Plant Master Plan process. CAG members were appointed by the Plant's Technical Advisory Committee and are representative of all Plant service area cities – San José, Santa Clara, Milpitas, Cupertino, Campbell, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno and Saratoga. Members were selected to reflect a range of backgrounds in education, environment, business, recreation and community activism.



Comment cards were provided for participants to submit additional ideas and address issues not mentioned in the presentation.

For more information, visit [www.sanjoseca.gov/plantmasterplan](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/plantmasterplan) or email [plantmasterplan@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:plantmasterplan@sanjoseca.gov).

## Section 2

### Public Input Summary

Participants answered a series of values questions using interactive clickers. Questions were organized by the Plant Master Plan goals. The facilitator verbalized the questions as they displayed on screens. Data was collected and tabulated instantaneously and the results are summarized below. Graphs captured CAG input separately, compared to the total collective group input. It should be noted that the participant feedback provides insight into the opinions and perceptions of over 100 workshop participants, but is not representative of the broader population.

#### **Operational**

- Almost three-fourths of participants and CAG members feel that making the Plant a place people want to visit and learn about is a good or excellent idea.
- Over half of participants and two-thirds of CAG members feel some architectural elements visible to the community should be emphasized.

#### **Economical**

- About half of participants and three-fourths of CAG members feel it is a fair or good idea to emphasize developing clean tech businesses on the site.
- Almost two-thirds of participants and half of CAG members feel it is an excellent idea to dedicate some of the site to solar panels for power generation for the Plant and community.
- Over half of participants and almost half of CAG members feel it is a poor idea to add retail development and entertainment on the site.

#### **Environmental**

- Almost half of participants feel some of the site should be dedicated for wildlife habitat, while almost two-thirds of CAG members feel a large majority of the site should be dedicated for wildlife habitat.
- Over half of participants and over two-thirds of CAG members feel recreating sloughs, creating ponds, or restoring wetlands on the site is an excellent idea.
- Over two-thirds of participants and almost all CAG members would use viewing platforms and other features that allow people to watch the wildlife and habitat.

#### **Social**

- About two-thirds of participants and three-fourths of CAG members would use trails for walking, biking or horseback riding on this site.
- Over half of participants and three-fourths of CAG members would not use sports fields on this site.
- About half of participants and CAG members would use water recreation on this site.
- Almost two-thirds of participants and CAG members feel developing an educational facility is a good or excellent idea.

### **Priorities**

Participants indicated they would most like to see the site include community amenities such as an educational facility that draws more visitors. CAG indicated they would most like to see architectural features and aesthetic improvements on the site.

Participants encountered difficulties ranking the statements with the clicker technology. This question was repeated three times and data has a high margin of error. Following the workshop, this question was revised for better usability and use during the remainder of the public input collection period (see page 22).

Per discussion at the September 2009 CAG meeting, CAG members re-submitted their input using the revised question 15. Their results included:

#### Top preference (tie):

- Sustainable, "green" development on the site
- Recreational features such as trails, playing fields, or water activities

#### Least preference:

- Architectural features and aesthetic improvements

### **Evaluation**

Almost all participants and all CAG members understand the need to rebuild the Plant, understand that new wastewater treatment methods allow for new land uses on the site, and would participate in future Plant Master Plan workshops or activities. About two-thirds of participants and over three-fourths of CAG members understand how their input will be used to shape alternative land use scenarios for the Plant site.

### **Public Input Incorporation**

Additional public input opportunities are available through the 2009 Plant tour season, the Plant Master Plan Web site, and project presentations, upon request. Input will be collected through October 2009, using the same values questions presented at the workshop.

All input will be compiled into a final public opinion summary and will be used to develop evaluation criteria for the proposed land use alternatives at the Plant. Public input and expert consultation will determine the weight assigned to each aspect of the evaluation criteria. This process will produce a few land use alternatives for consideration for the final Plant Master Plan land use plan.

After the land use alternatives have been developed, opportunities will be provided for public input to continue to shape the final Plant Master Plan.

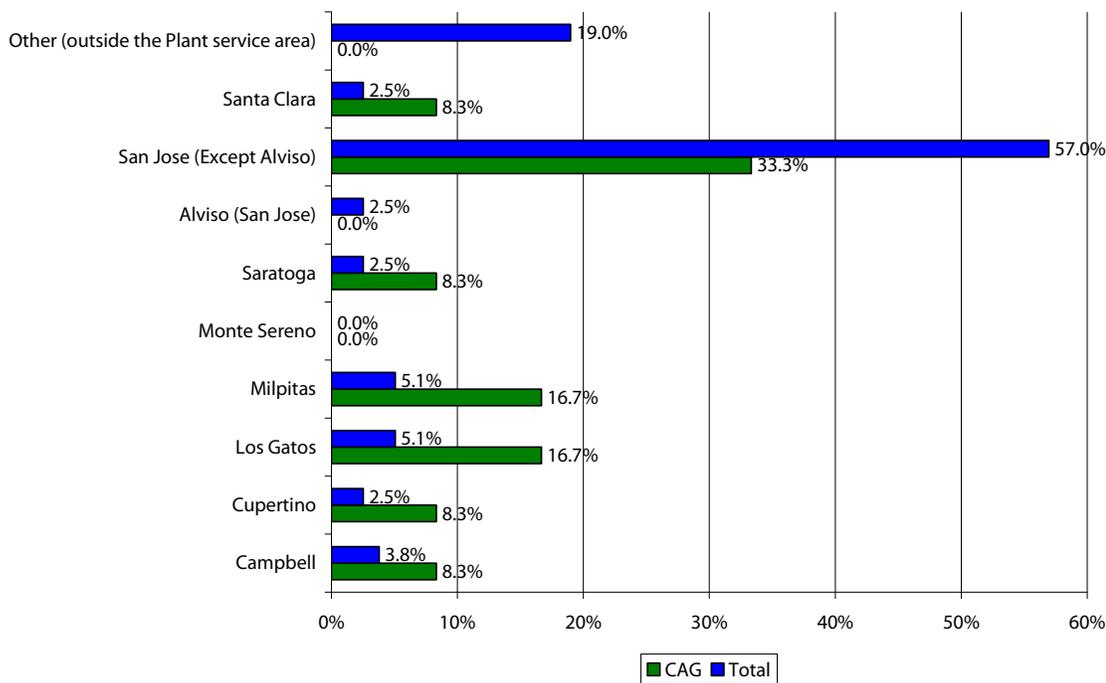
### Section 3

### Data: Questions & Responses

Q 1: What City/neighborhood do you live in?

- 1) Campbell
- 2) Cupertino
- 3) Los Gatos
- 4) Milpitas
- 5) Monte Sereno
- 6) Saratoga
- 7) Alviso (San Jose)
- 8) San Jose (except Alviso)
- 9) Santa Clara
- 0) Other (outside the Plant service area)

What City/neighborhood do you live in?

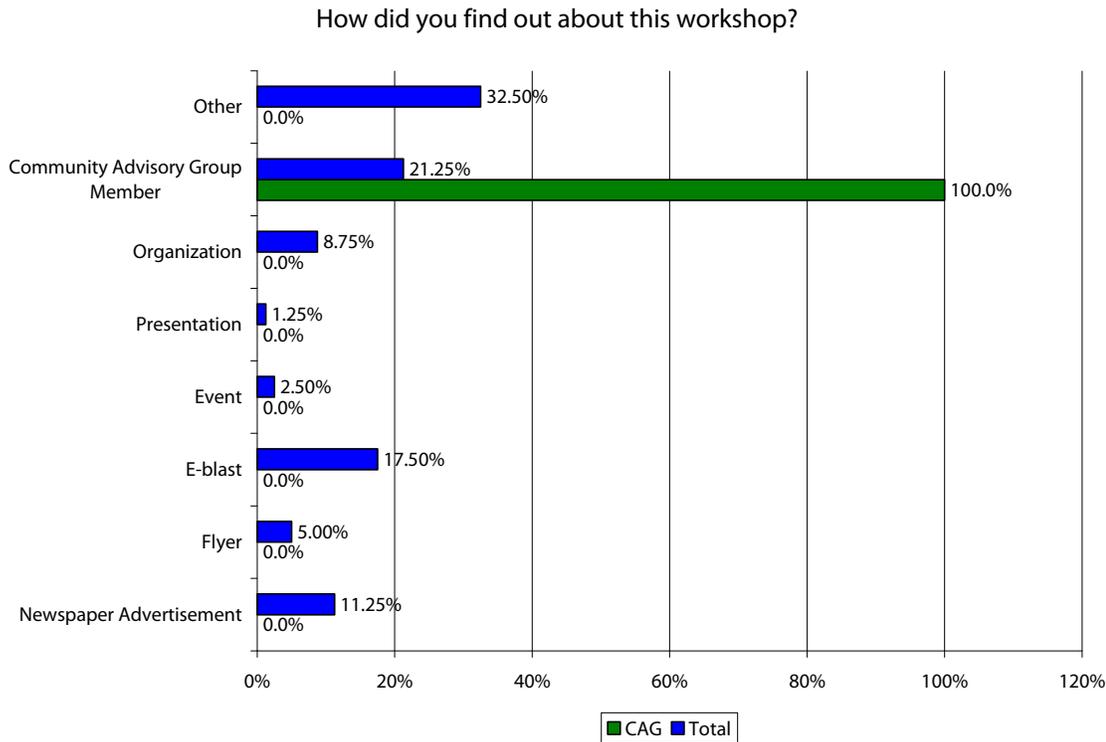


Number of participants for question 1:

- CAG = 12
- Total = 79

Q 2: How did you find out about this workshop?

- 1) Newspaper Advertisement
- 2) Flyer
- 3) E-blast
- 4) Event
- 5) Presentation
- 6) Organization
- 7) Community Advisory Group Member
- 8) Other



Number of participants for question 2:

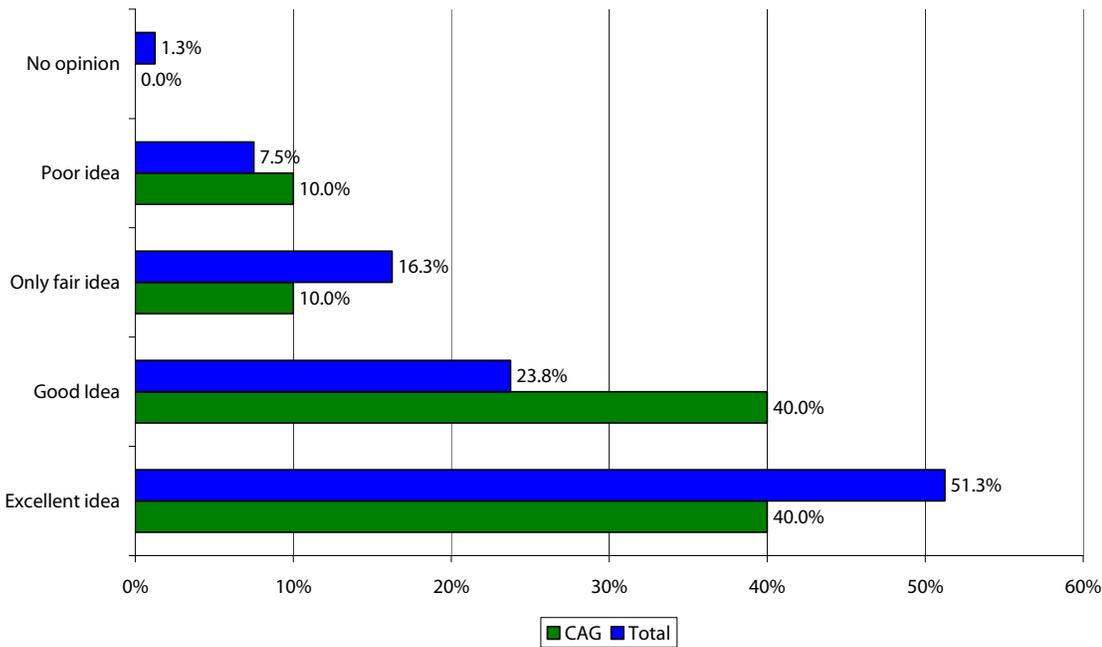
- CAG = 13
- Total = 80



Q 3: As part of upgrading the Plant, how do you feel about making it a place people want to visit and learn about, for example, including a visitors center?

- 1) Excellent idea
- 2) Good idea
- 3) Only fair idea
- 4) Poor idea
- 5) No opinion

As part of upgrading the Plant, how do you feel about making it a place people want to visit and learn about, for example, including a visitor center?



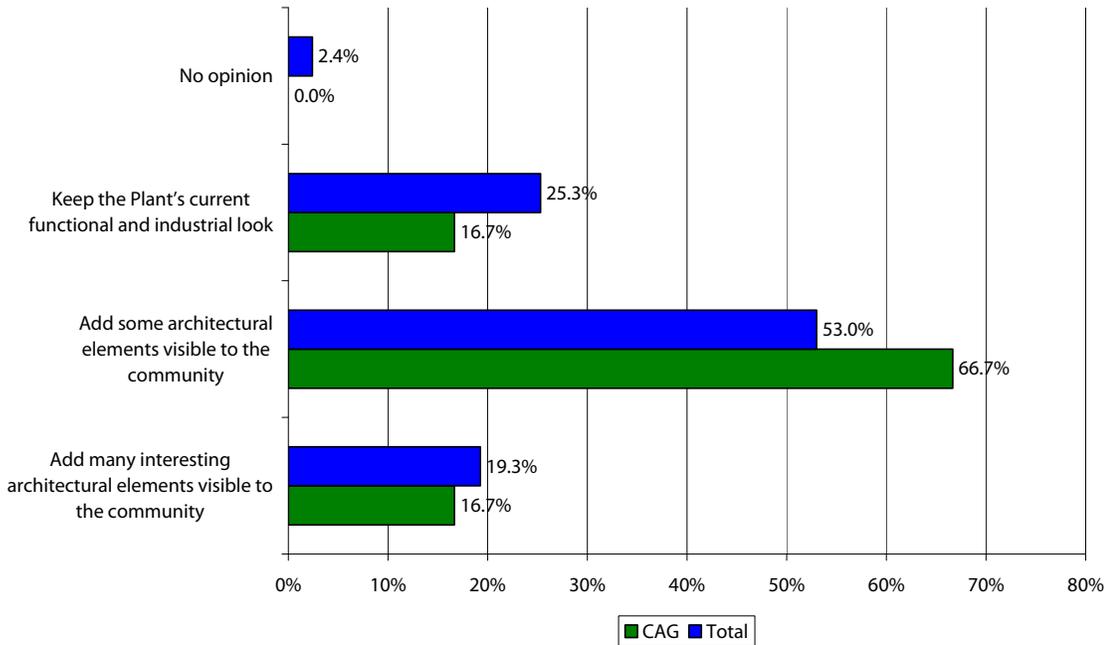
Number of participants for question 3:

- CAG = 10
- Total = 80

Q 4: How much emphasis should we put on how it looks in areas visible to the community?

- 1) Add many interesting architectural elements
- 2) Add some architectural elements
- 3) Keep the Plant's current functional and industrial look
- 4) No opinion

How much emphasis should we put on how it looks in areas visible to the community?



Number of participants for question 4:

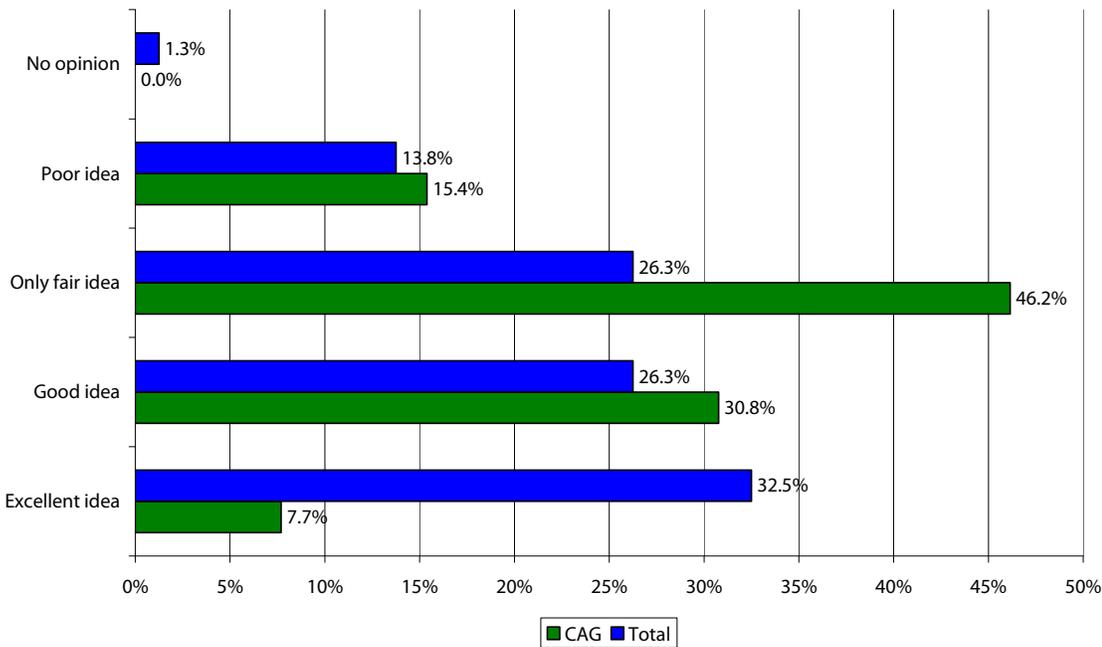
- CAG = 12
- Total = 83



Q 5: How important is it to emphasize developing clean tech businesses, such as those that make solar panels and electric cars, on the site?

- 1) Excellent idea
- 2) Good idea
- 3) Only fair idea
- 4) Poor idea
- 5) No opinion

How important is it to emphasize developing clean tech businesses, such as those that make solar panels and electric cars, on the site?



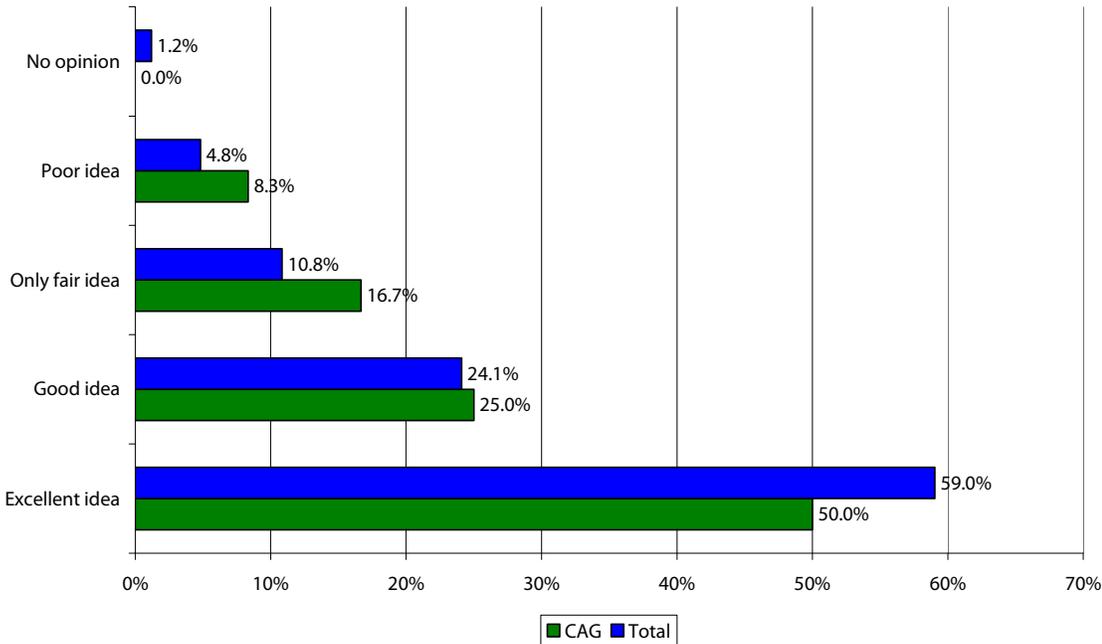
Number of participants for question 5:

- CAG = 13
- Total = 80

Q 6: How do you feel about dedicating some of the site to solar panels for power generation for the Plant and community?

- 1) Excellent idea
- 2) Good idea
- 3) Only fair idea
- 4) Poor idea
- 5) No opinion

How do you feel about dedicating some of the site to solar panels for power generation for the Plant and community?



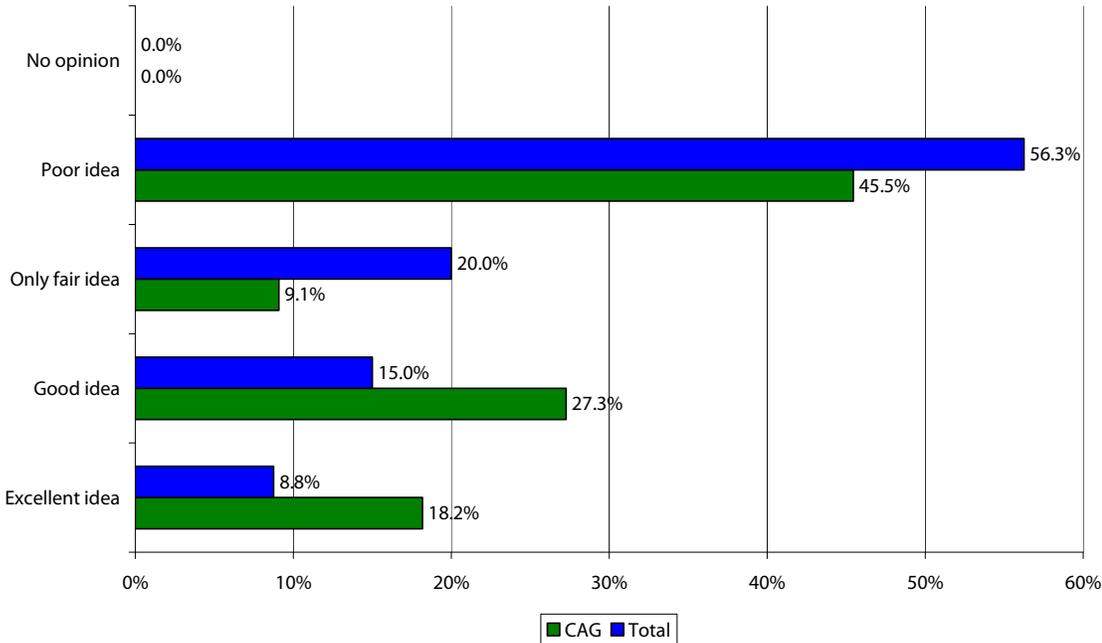
Number of participants for question 6:

- CAG = 12
- Total = 83

Q 7: Given that retail can generate significant revenues, how do you feel about retail development and entertainment, such as shopping, on the site?

- 1) Excellent idea
- 2) Good idea
- 3) Only fair idea
- 4) Poor idea
- 5) No opinion

Given that retail can generate significant revenues, how do you feel about retail development and entertainment, such as shopping, on the site?



Number of participants for question 7:

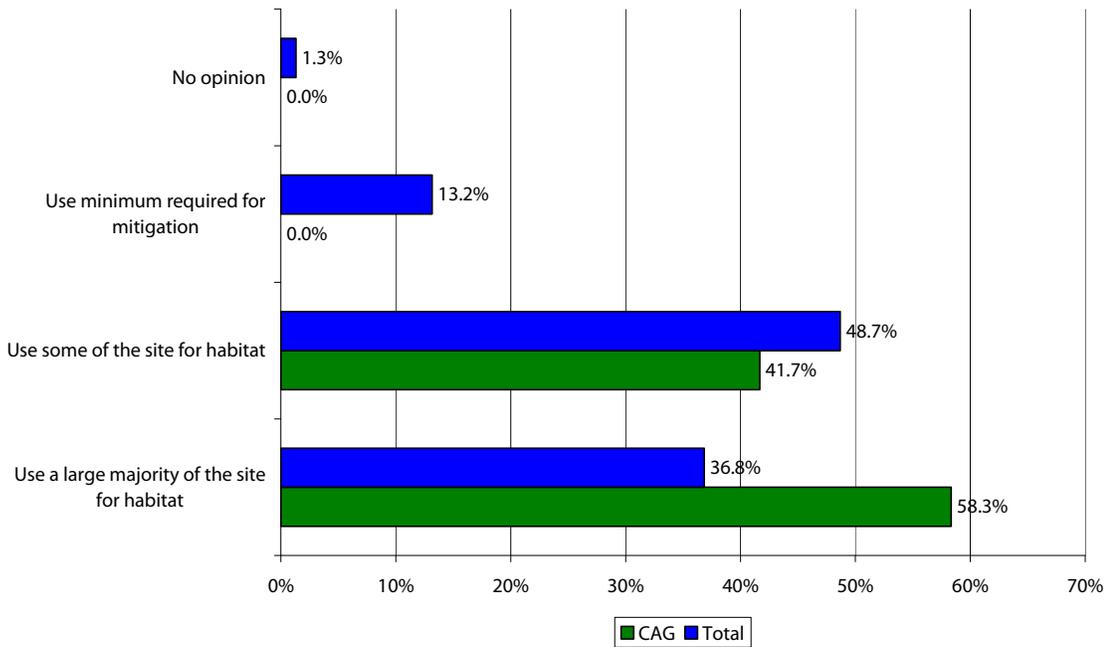
- CAG = 11
- Total = 80



Q 8: The Plant is already a site for a number of habitats. How do you feel about dedicating more open space for wildlife habitat?

- 1) Use a large majority of the site for habitat
- 2) Use some of the site for habitat
- 3) Use minimum required for mitigation
- 4) No opinion

The Plant is already a site for a number of habitats. How do you feel about dedicating more open space for wildlife habitat?



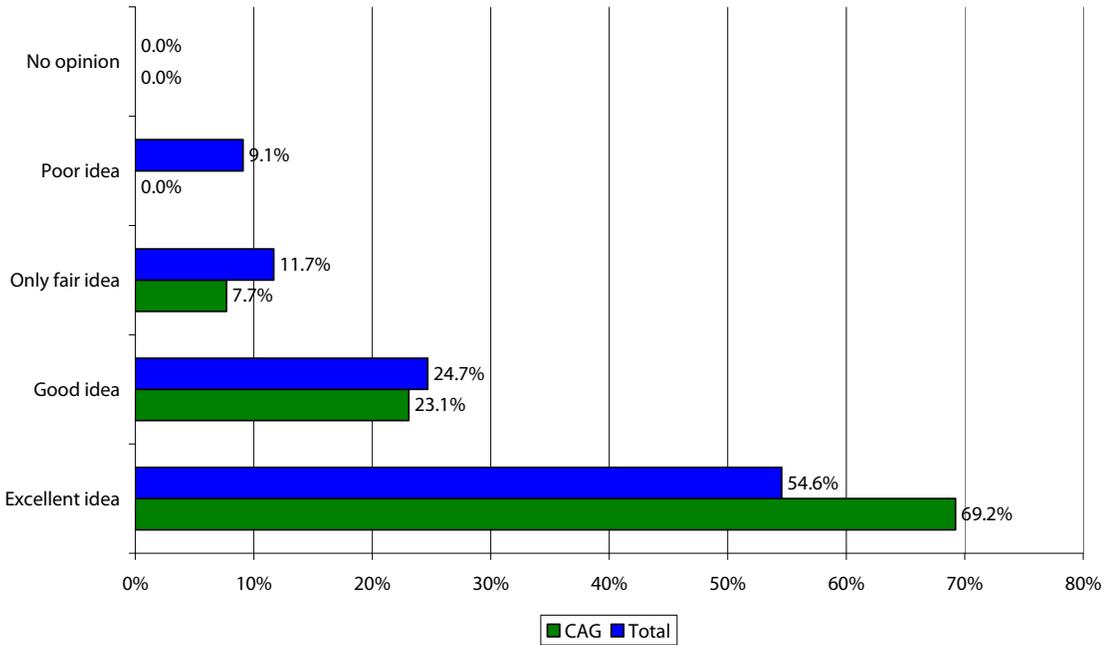
Number of participants for question 8:

- CAG = 12
- Total = 76

Q 9: We could have more water on and around the site. How do you feel about re-creating sloughs, creating ponds or restoring wetlands on the site?

- 1) Excellent idea
- 2) Good idea
- 3) Only fair idea
- 4) Poor idea
- 5) No opinion

We could have more water on and around the site. How do you feel about re-creating sloughs, creating ponds, or restoring wetlands on the site?



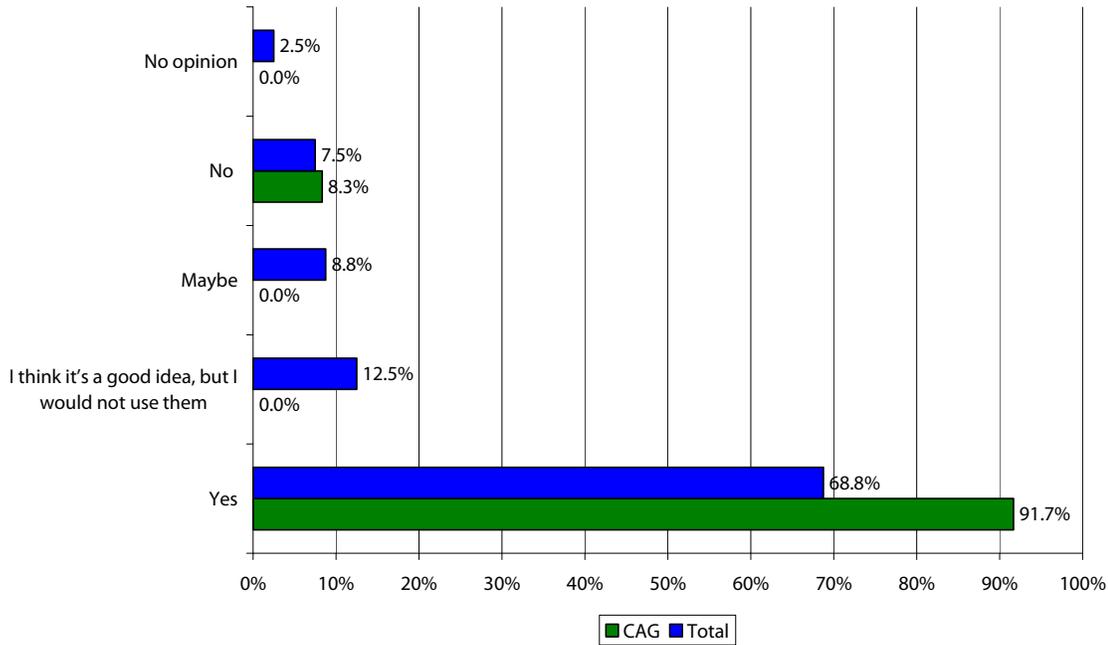
Number of participants for question 9:

- CAG = 13
- Total = 77

Q 10: Would you use viewing platforms and other features that allow people to watch the wildlife and habitat?

- 1) Yes
- 2) I think it's a good idea, but I would not use them
- 3) Maybe
- 4) No
- 5) No opinion

Would you use viewing platforms and other features that allow people to watch the wildlife and habitat?



Number of participants for question 10:

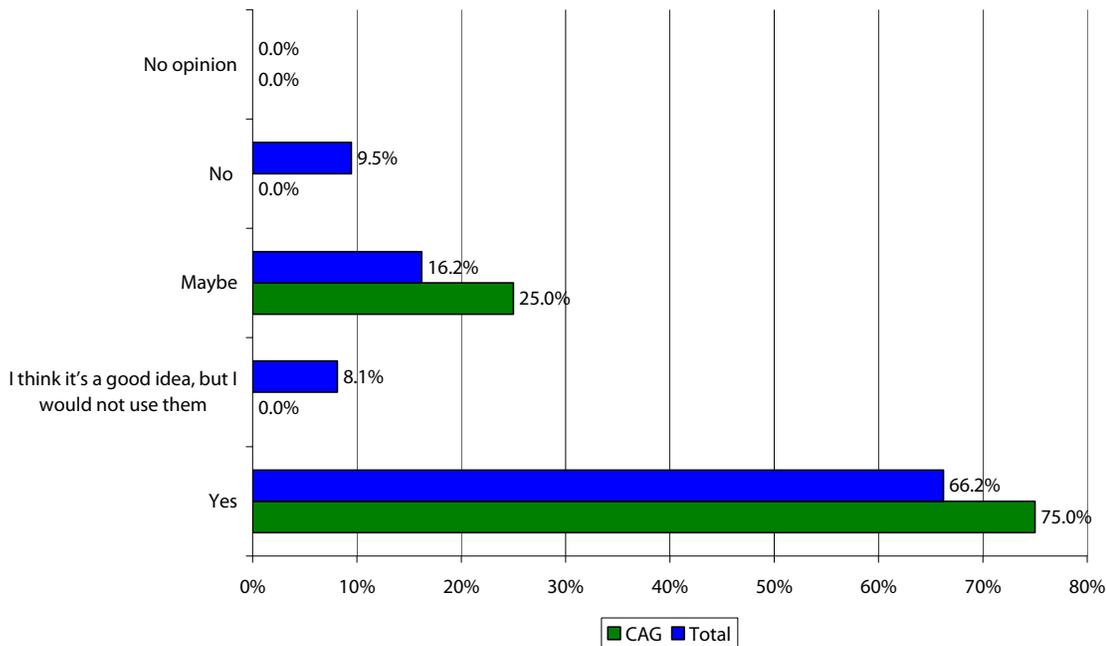
- CAG = 12
- Total = 80



Q 11: The site can accommodate recreational opportunities. Would you use trails for walking, biking, or horseback riding on this site?

- 1) Yes
- 2) I think it's a good idea, but I would not use them
- 3) Maybe
- 4) No
- 5) No opinion

The site can accommodate recreational opportunities. Would you use trails for walking, biking or horse back riding on this site?

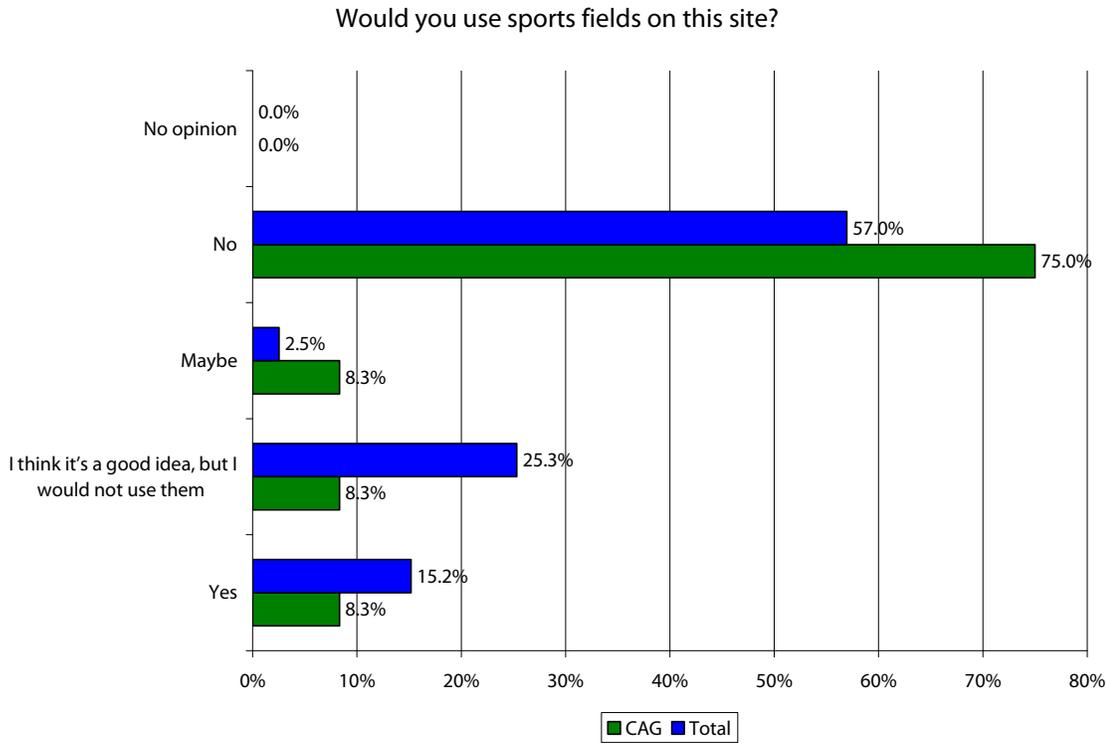


Number of participants for question 11:

- CAG = 12
- Total = 74

Q 12: Would you use sports fields on this site?

- 1) Yes
- 2) I think it's a good idea, but I would not use
- 3) Maybe
- 4) No
- 5) No opinion



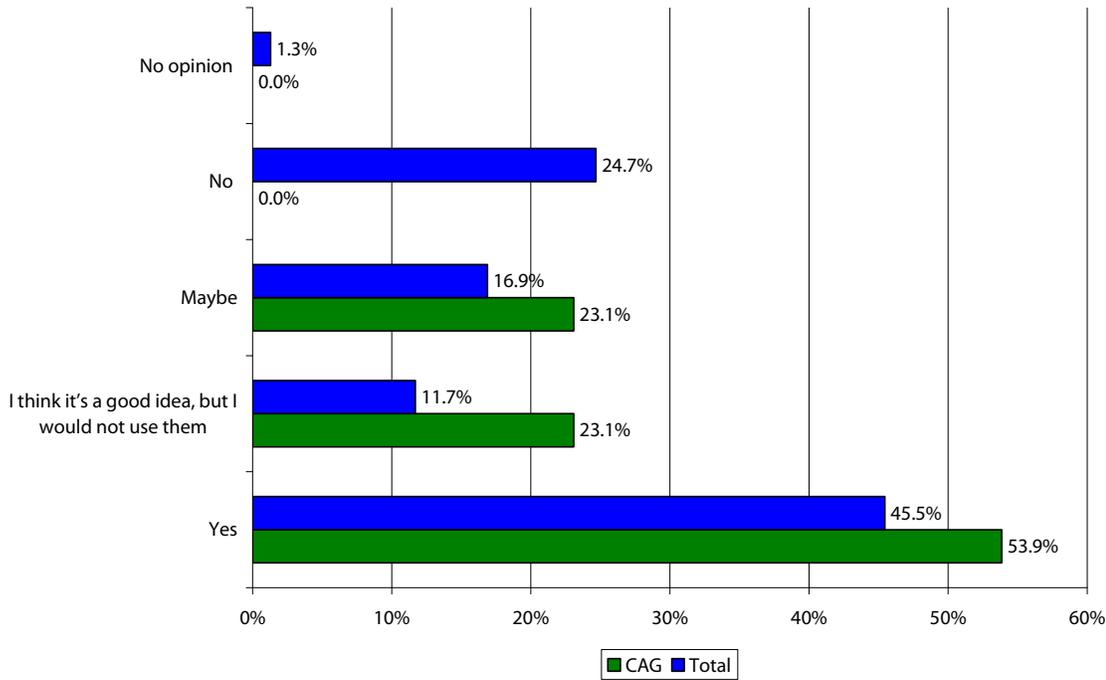
Number of participants for question 12:

- CAG = 12
- Total = 79

Q 13: Would you use water recreation, such as canoeing and kayaking, on this site?

- 1) Yes
- 2) I think it's a good idea, but I would not use it
- 3) Maybe
- 4) No
- 5) No opinion

Would you use water recreation, such as canoeing and kayaking, on this site?



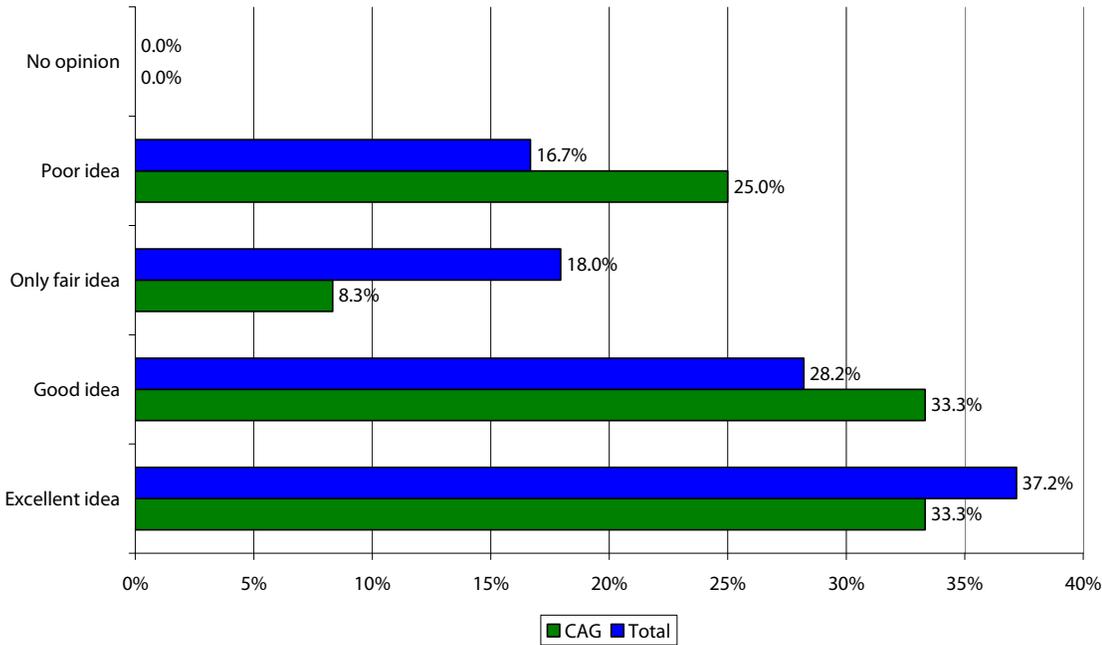
Number of participants for question 13:

- CAG = 13
- Total = 77

Q 14: How do you feel about developing an educational facility such as a living or natural museum that demonstrates the native habitats?

- 1) Excellent idea
- 2) Good idea
- 3) Only fair idea
- 4) Poor idea
- 5) No opinion

How do you feel about developing an educational facility such as a living/natural museum that demonstrates the native water and land habitats?



Number of participants for question 14:

- CAG = 12
- Total = 78



## Priorities

Q 15: Recognizing that we do not yet know the costs, which of the following would you most like to see at this site? (Participants were asked to rank these statements in order of preference.)

- 1) Architectural features and aesthetic improvements
- 2) Sustainable, "green" development on the site
- 3) Habitat restoration
- 4) Recreational features such as trails, playing fields, or water activities
- 5) Community amenities such as an educational facility that draws more visitors

Due to this question's high margin of error, only most and least preferred selections are shown:

	<b>Top preference</b>	<b>Least preference</b>
<b>Total</b>	Community amenities such as an educational facility that draws more visitors	Habitat restoration
<b>CAG</b>	Architectural features and aesthetic improvements	Habitat restoration

Combined top preference data was calculated by applying increasing weight to each participant's ranked preferences to find the cumulatively most and least ranked selection. For example, the first ranked statement was given a weight of 5, the second ranked statement was given a weight of 4, etc.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Total ranked responses</b>	<b>CAG ranked responses</b>
1) Architectural features and aesthetic improvements	259	45
2) Sustainable, "green" development on the site	229	33
3) Habitat restoration	189	24
4) Recreational features such as trails, playing fields, or water activities	220	36
5) Community amenities such as an educational facility that draws more visitors	226	41

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Number of participants for question 15:

- CAG = 12
- Total = 84

Participants encountered difficulties ranking the statements with the clicker technology. This question was repeated three times and data has a high margin of error. Following the workshop, this question was revised for better usability and use during the remainder of the public input collection period:

15a. Which of the following would you most like to see at this site?

1. Habitat restoration
2. Recreational features such as trails, playing fields, or water activities
3. Community amenities such as an educational facility that draws more visitors
4. Architectural features and aesthetic improvements
5. Sustainable, "green" development on the site

15b. Which of the following do you find least important?

1. Habitat restoration
2. Recreational features such as trails, playing fields, or water activities
3. Community amenities such as an educational facility that draws more visitors
4. Architectural features and aesthetic improvements
5. Sustainable, "green" development on the site

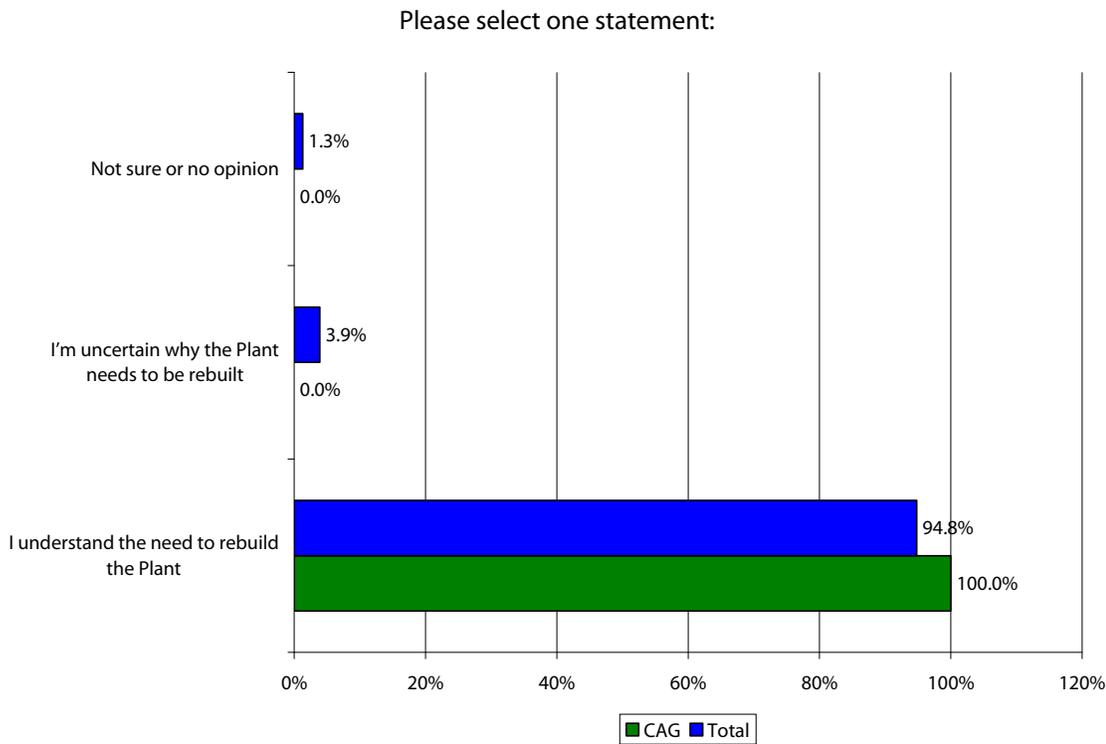
Per discussion at the September 2009 CAG meeting, eleven CAG members re-submitted their input using the revised question 15. Their results included:

<u>Statement</u>	<u>15a. Which of the following would you most like to see at this site?</u>	<u>15b. Which of the following do you find least important?</u>
<u>1) Architectural features and aesthetic improvements</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>2) Sustainable, "green" development on the site</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>3) Habitat restoration</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>4) Recreational features such as trails, playing fields, or water activities</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>5) Community amenities such as an educational facility that draws more visitors</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>

## Evaluation

Q 16: Please select one statement:

- 1) I understand the need to improve and upgrade the Plant
- 2) I'm uncertain why the Plant needs improving or upgrading
- 3) Not sure or no opinion



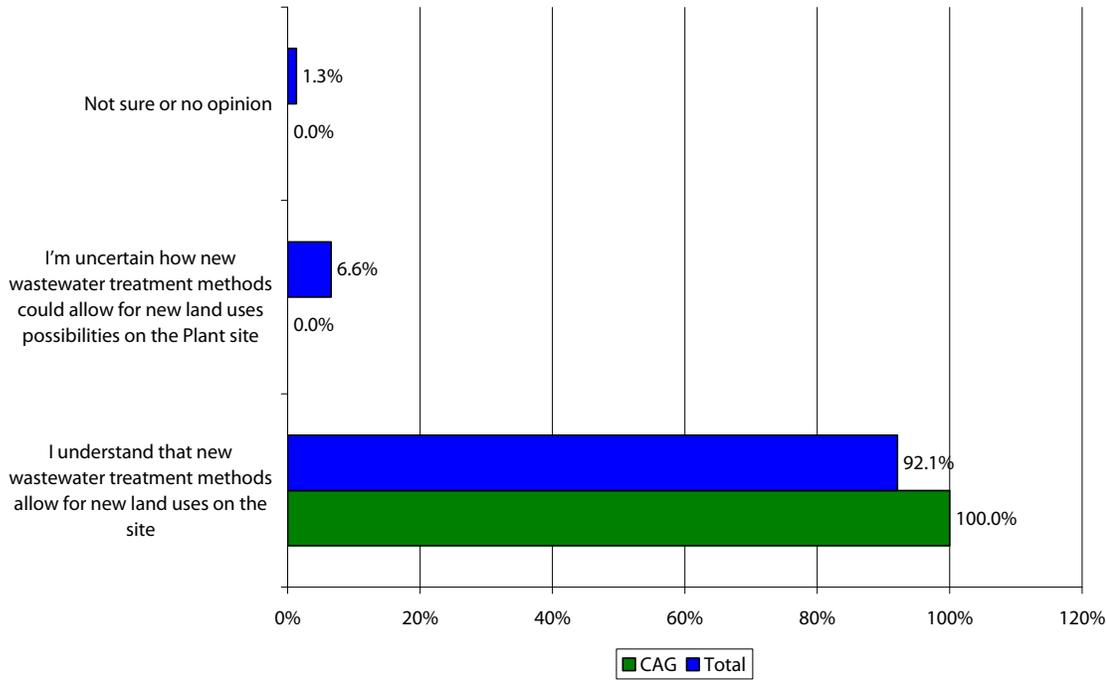
Number of participants for question 16:

- CAG = 11
- Total = 77

Q 17: Please select one statement:

- 1) I understand that new wastewater treatment methods allow for new land uses on the Plant site
- 2) I'm uncertain how new wastewater treatment methods could allow for new land uses on the Plant site
- 3) Not sure or no opinion

Please select one statement:

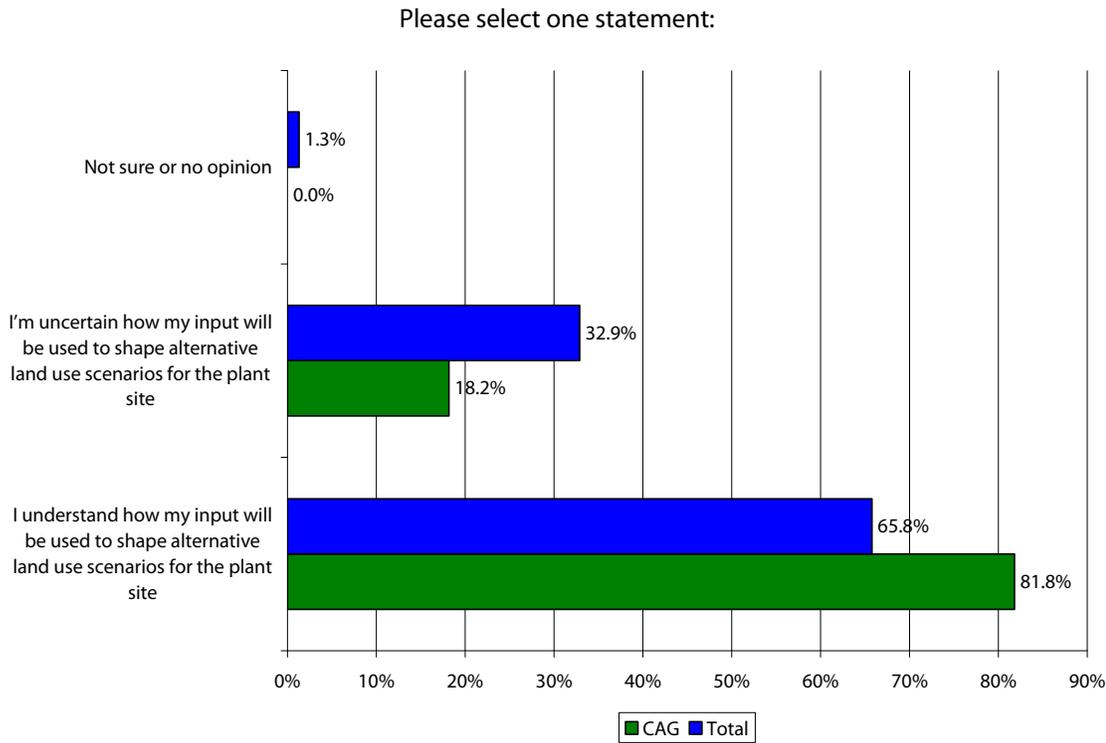


Number of participants for question 17:

- CAG = 11
- Total = 76

Q 18: Please select one statement:

- 1) I understand how my input will be used to shape alternative land uses for the Plant site
- 2) I'm uncertain about how my input will be used to shape alternative land uses for the Plant site
- 3) Not sure or no opinion



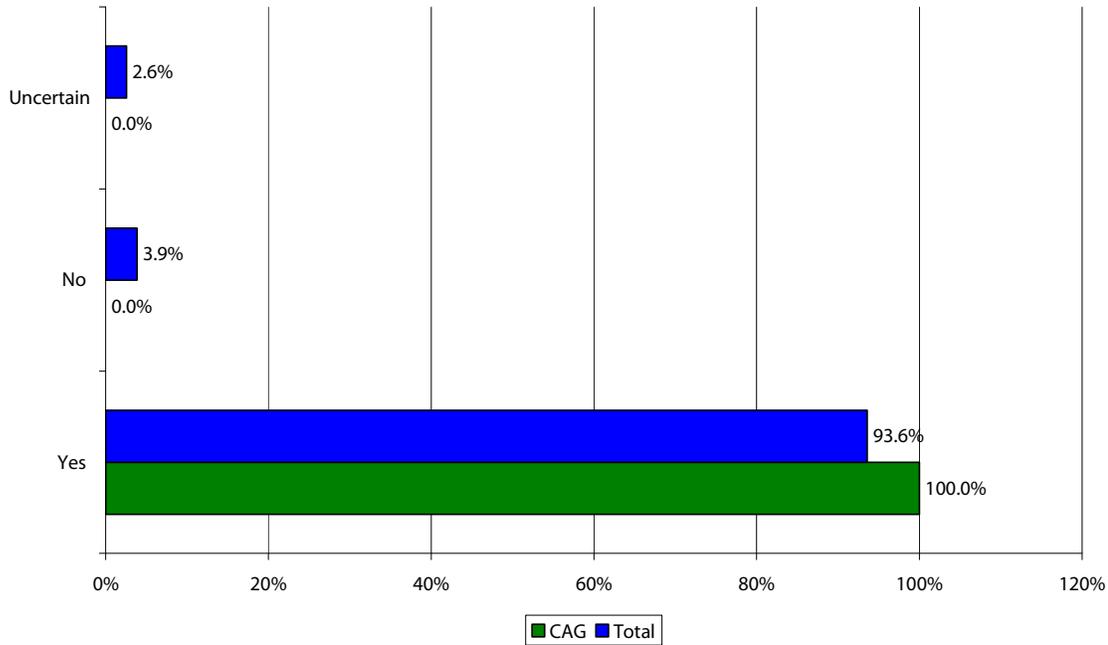
Number of participants for question 18:

- CAG = 11
- Total = 76

Q 19: Based on what you learned today, would you participate in future workshops or activities on the Plant Master Plan?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No
- 3) Uncertain

Based on what you learned today, would you participate in future workshops or activities on the Plant Master Plan?



Number of participants for question 19:

- CAG = 11
- Total = 78



- Look at new technologies with smaller footprint. Convert previous use to habitat parks with trails and walkways/picnic areas. What are the levees made of and can reclaimed dirt be used to shore them up?
- Make recycled water drinkable, battle is sell – educate children in school setting for recycled water uses and why it is necessary to use water carefully. Land uses:
  1. Recycle Plant
  2. Lake with parkway (Japanese plant)
  3. Small lake for fishing using water from plant
  4. Put in solar energy system large enough to service Plant and sell to grid
  5. <<illegible>> golf course
- Sports fields are not as good a recreational use as trails. I don't believe the results in ranking the priorities are accurate; the question needs to be asked a different way.
- Like – burrowing owl sanctuary, solar panels, increased recycled water, educational opportunities. Dislike – using land for businesses, manufacturing solar panels, sports fields bad idea, educational facility not necessary. Q5 poorly worded and I think misunderstood. I hate to say it, but facilitator needs to do dry run – many responses misrepresented. Presentation great. Connecting to audience great. Reading the graph not so great.
- Build San Francisco Bay Trail. Kayaking on sloughs. Restored habitat on northern half. High-impact level (manufacturing, etc.) only near Highway 237. No retail – too close to McCarthy Ranch would fail or would kill large portion of Milpitas.
- Remote control airfield and R/C car track. I dislike shopping idea.
- Future greenhouse structures for solid waste treatment: recover from greenhouse heat and generated gasses, turn them into energy or gas pressure to aerate secondary tanks. Use water-use issues to apply political pressure – discourage future population growth, encourage re-equilibration of the Bay Area's natural resources to a balanced eco-environment.
- Please consider utilizing Arzino Ranch location as Burrowing Owl habitat viewing area. Could utilize educational kiosks, platform with mounted telescopes, public access and involvement could be fostered by access via Bay Trail spot. Consultation with Santa Clara Valley Audubon on educational content, docent, interpreters, school group coordination. Management of owl habitat zone is needed by moving/grazing. Continuity with owl populations in adjacent parcels valuable (e.g. Cisco #6 Disk Dr.).
- Make a long range (20-50 years) goal of closed cycle that is no water, no energy input and no pollutant output. This idealist goal will make it easier to set short term goals. I am a retired civil engineer and system analyst and am willing to volunteer some time at the Plant.
- Attendees were asked to rate ideas without any economic feasibility information. For example, we were asked to rate whether manufacturing electric vehicles on the site is a good idea. With manufacturing trending off shore for decades, domestic automobile plants closing for extended periods this summer, one of three domestic automobile manufacturers in bankruptcy and a second at risk of bankruptcy, attendees voted favorably. Installing an electric motor instead of an internal combustion engine is not going to change the economics of domestic manufacturing vs. foreign manufacturing.
- The event was planned and conducted extremely well.
- How many tours come from schools? Making young people aware of the whole process would help in conservation and pollutant removal. Every student should have at least one, if not more, during school years. Are dikes the only answer to future increases in water levels? Can existing sewer (street) lines be used to run new piping for recycled water to other parts of valley? (inside those pipes by strapping it to wall)



- Bad idea: team sports with large parking lots.
- Q2 - Staff member. Q11 - No horses please. Pooper scoopers for dogs. Q14 - Needs to differ from Don Edwards environmental center.
- I think part of the land (not 700-acres near the wildlife area so much) would be well used if it were used as a model farm to encourage aquacultural use of recycled water (obtain approval from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). Then some of the land could be leased to tenant farmers to show the practicality, so that use could be expanded to community gardens, where food crops are grown. Eventually, I think water will become so pricey that the farms in Gilroy, Morgan Hill, and Coyote Valley (if applicable) will be willing to pay for piped recycled water. Water is California gold. Would not need reverse osmosis (RO) for this use (should probably have some RO for direct injection also). I believe this is preparation for the future. Someday, there will be a recycled water line to Gilroy! One consideration - Gilroy may eventually recycle its own water.
- We are Bayside R/C Club currently located on land that is to be developed as the Warm Springs BART station. We are a dedicated model aviation with minimal land impact – we just need the air! We could be located in the non-desirable part of the area to be developed with an over-fly area over water/swamp/etc. We currently exist with protected owls, coyote, foxes, squirrels and birds with everybody getting along. We have a complete presentation that we could provide to you. Please let us know how we can answer further questions. Thanks for your consideration.
- Not enough waste recycling into sustainable fuels. Raising water table level. Restore wetland to natural before man was here. Solar cells over structures or green roofs.
- Bufferlands proposed usages.
- Would like to recommend to City of San José to provide for smaller recycling hook up uses – ex: new education part for 2001 to be employ a recycle line to Gold Street half-mile from a main hook up. Two hours providing education uses to our younger generation and beyond. Small project approximately 1/3-acres – any type of grants etc. available?
- What Plant improvements, repairs are planned in years 2010, 2011, and 2012?
- I am from the Bayside R/C Club and am interested in utilizing part of the land for a flying field for our club. We are presently located on the Warm Springs site to be changed to be a BART station. We must leave by 2010 in March. We have a large membership from the greater Bay Area.
- Eco-tourism/agricultural-tourism, innovative environmental business development, environmental research and development, open space critical. As a City staff member - was this in payroll flyers? Importance of multi-lingual educational opportunities and community outreach to further understanding of conservation and reduction of pollutant usage. Are there enough equestrian facilities nearby to justify cost of accommodation?
- Please identify what new technologies will be used for this Plant and make sure wastewater to generate 100 percent clean.
- Thank you, great job. Working farm in 100 acres. No to new housing. Multiple use fields. Trails. wetland preserve. Get landfill out of way. Energy self-sufficient. Byproduct recovery to sale. Fringe City's having "<<illegible>>" area/park-small upscale restaurant. Overnight campsite?

## Specific comments

### **Operational**

- Why so long before actually getting started on multi-year?
- The use of green solar power and less harmful materials.
- Equipment should blend with landscape permeable surfaces for reads and other paved areas.
- (Increase demand for) how do we expand use of purple pipe.
- No need to add too many architecturally pleasing elements. That will only add costs from maintenance, designing, etc. Not about aesthetics, it's about efficiency and functionality.
- Upgrade/update Plant.
- Keep the Plant function. Add some development to increase treatment efficiency i.e. UV disinfection.
- Put solar on roof of retail/commercial. Before removing nitrates, feed algae for energy production.
- View WPCP as a freshwater resource, focus on capacity and reusability, use of discharge for groundwater recharge and irrigation - as close to 100 percent as possible and as soon as possible.
- Provide models for sustainable landscaping for others to follow (commercial and residential), sponsor a nursery that sells demo plantings.
- Efficiency, create amusement will generate more revenue to help the budgeting without jeopardizing security.
- The "new" Plant should take an integrated design approach to maximize utility, efficiency, resources and sustainability.
- Low rumbling noise – could be from the secondary blower building or other building, wasting air has been reduced but it could be treated to that.
- Make it visually interesting to come here or be adjacent.
- Why does rain quadruple flow to Plant if storm drains are separate?
- Can improve the energy efficiency of the Plant operation through variable frequency drive (VFD) and new control technology.

### **Economical**

- Any possibility of public input/grants/ <<illegible>>?
- Gather other organizations, that way everyone gathers one voice and it will bring more benefits to the Plant.
- The area is in the usual take-off pattern and visible from planes.
- Plant rebuild should be managed with <<illegible>> containment in mind. The surrounding land should not be developed based on economic reasons.
- Adding retail/commercial building would be counterproductive to our "green" mission of conserving energy and preserving nature.
- Lease some land, solar power generation.
- Create jobs. Generating revenues.
- Solar/wind farm funded by individuals of businesses in exchange for kilowatt hours (kWh) credit on their individual bills (requires Public Utilities Commission (PUC) tariff changes).
- I'd like to see food produced at WPCP via about one to five-acre commercial truck gardens worked by small scale organic farmers.
- The sanitary sewer and user connection fund should stop funding the recycled water system program.
- The question 5 assumed that development would happen.

- An educational center, such as the Academy of Sciences, could also generate revenue while still meeting environmental, operational and social goals. Other example: Monterey Bay Aquarium retail can be included with this kind of education center.
- Adequate water supply and wastewater treatment are crucial to our economic development and quality of life.
- Not new building commercial or residential, create steady income stream and sell power (photovoltaic, biofuels, farming products).
- Solar panels on settling ponds/solids area only – not unused bufferlands.
- The output should be better than 1,120! How about job opportunity? Alternate energy that will give some revenue.
- Solar panels are a good idea, but you have to wait until the technology matures.
- Limited development a possibility at Highways 237 and 880 but should not encroach on wetlands unless part of an educational or research facility.
- Is this a non-profit or profit utility company?
- Maximize 2,600-acres, harvest methane, grow algae for biofuel on reduce hormones, other organic compounds.

### **Environmental**

- What impact will the master plan have on the neighboring Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge?
- Use of green materials, that way it won't affect the ecosystem. Create a part that way the people are more aware of the animals in danger and the water use. We need more open space at the habitat.
- Plant more trees – incorporate them into area developments to have natural features/pattern/symbol/words visible.
- Primary use for bufferland should be protection of endangered and threatened species, reduce energy usage – increase use of recycled water materials.
- Important to preserve wildlife. The world is too human-centric. This isn't only our world. We have to share with other life systems.
- Green/sustainable buildings, habitat restoration (partial).
- Combine landscaping and function of WPCP.
- More habitat = climate change hedging.
- More landscaping ground facility – use recycled water, show off the capabilities. Don't waste money on fancy architecture – this won't be a tourist draw.
- Stop dumping fresh water into salt! Save Alviso harbor and marine life, use effluent to recharge groundwater supply.
- Solar and wind farms (not manufacture). Keep this open space, this area is a rarity in the Bay Area, don't even think about infringing on it with building.
- Burrowing Owl habitat management area preservation within master plan is the most important issue. Other species use untouched grassland too, need intact bufferlands for foraging.
- Not too much for wildlife habitat, waste too much land that might be more benefit for other use.
- Habitat restoration should consider rising sea levels displacing existing wetlands – can we mitigate this? Can the new Plant enhance or recreate habitat?
- Manufacturing wastewater has decreased (IBM/Hitachi/etc.). How much has usage changed in gallons in the past 15 to 20 years? High density housing might need to be restricted; City population might need a cap.
- Promote water and wetlands for native species, flood control.
- Save open space – you can't get this back and with rising water levels if seems sensible.

## **Social**

- Any possibility for baseball/sport teams in Santa Clara County?
- Is a good idea at recreational open space but now will the people take advantage of it unless there is a really primitive area. Also be aware of the wildlife.
- Separate bikes, hikers and equestrians.
- Approve Bay Trail but not for sports that disturb environment – 11. Hiking, biking, natural museum – other areas around Bay already provide should not duplicate.
- Horseback riding is not a good idea. Any trails for hiking/biking should be built around wildlife and solar panels.
- Recreational activities like Shoreline Park.
- Location.
- No horseback, Bay access/canoe-kayak especially from Milpitas is excellent.
- A museum/Plant history and education and training center would be a fine addition.
- No horses. How about a recycled water park (sp<<illegible>> pool, etc.).
- Recreational – soccer and lacrosse fields, architecturally interesting and visit worldly cities for how enlightening this is to a society.
- Land/water museum could be valuable but modest. Educational signage and collaboration with the Don Edwards Refuge enough.
- Wetlands provide an opportunity to build accessible trails and viewing sites not possible in local parks in surrounding hills.
- Develop low-impact, low-maintenance recreational opportunities or none. Don Edwards Refuge is already next.
- Simple presentation materials (bilingual) for neighborhood associations.
- Wetlands.
- Recreational – hiking, biking, birding, landscape art and architecture.
- More information regarding the use of the Plant and what it is.

## **Priorities**

- The protection of land, wildlife, water and <<illegible>>. The more the technology the more use of harmful materials that could harm.
- Operational and environmental efficiency of course.
- Architectural aesthetic/sustainable green, habitat.
- This part of the survey was confusing to the audience to perform and the two results varied as an outcome which is questionable.
- 1) Recycled water for groundwater augmentation 2) Habitat
- Consider WPCP and important fresh water supply resource.
- Important that land be divided into a multi-use area.
- Efficiency, green development, get the best budgeting system so it depends less than outside sources.
- Operational, operational, operational.
- Sustaining environment.
- Clean the water, restore wetlands, harvest.
- I have some doubts that priority inputs took properly.
- Sustainable "green" development, restoration of habitat.

## Section 5

### Post Presentation Questions & Answers

Following the project overview presentation, attendees participated in an open question and answer session with John Stufflebean, ESD Director.

**Question: Are you planning on replacing the five out of service or use a different anaerobic digestion process to enhance the throughput of the existing plant?**

**Answer:** We did an advanced study of what we should do with the digesters and concluded that we will be able to make use of all 16 digesters for a variety purposes. As we rebuild them, we'll make them more efficient. For example, we'll be improving the heating systems and mixing systems. We'll also keep the main concrete tanks, but update the internal system.

**Question: You said economic considerations are fundamental. Does that mean you're expecting to break even or make money on the site? Are the tradeoffs going to be environmental, social or other things?**

**Answer:** Breaking even or making money may be too aggressive a goal. As we proceed and develop alternatives, we'll compare these alternatives from different metrics. One of them will be how much money it might contribute. One alternative might be more focused on revenue, and another more focused on environmental improvements. That's why we are seeking community input to gauge what is more important. There will be revenue-generating elements in all the alternatives, some more than others. I don't think we would look at complete tradeoffs among our core goals.

**Question: Is there any interest in building an upstream satellite facility to take the load off this system?**

**Answer:** We have looked at this. This treatment facility is designed to handle a high volume of waste and is actually able to handle high volumes of waste for many years to come. Many treatment plants are driven by the fact that they can't handle the volume. What's driving our need to upgrade this plant is that it is old and needs to be replaced, so there isn't the same driving force for building an upstream facility. Any need for upstream facilities would be to flow upstream, to flow back down, and flow back upstream. Our initial study showed that there's not a lot of potential for satellite plants with respect to a good location, so we probably won't be looking for a satellite plant and will keep this plant as our main location.

**Question: What are your plans for recycled water? Are you considering a separate line for gardening? How are you going to expand the recycled water district?**

**Answer:** We absolutely are considering recycled water. In fact, one of the City's ten green vision goals is to quadruple the use of recycled water. The goal is to at least get up to 40 percent and ultimately, maybe 100 percent recycled water use. To do that, we have to work closely with the water district (the wholesale water supplier for the area). Our goal is to develop a strong relationship with them so we can go beyond industrial and irrigation uses for recycled water. We are making sure that this goal for recycled water is connected to the Plant Master Plan.

**Question: This is a huge area serving a million people. Do other major cities have the ability to use less land to process water?**

**Answer:** All cities have big treatment plants somewhere; some are just crammed in more tightly, but certainly all U.S. cities have them. Our Plant is unique because of the extensive bufferland around it that happens to be in a high real estate market. Our Plant is also more advanced than others. For example, our Plant includes primary treatment, biological treatment, and infiltration and tertiary, whereas lots of cities only have primary treatment and some, a little more.

**Question: I have a few economic suggestions for use of this huge parcel of land:**

- **Consider energy farms (solar) that could sell power back to the City.**
- **Use the land for farming.**
- **On a high-tech note, one of the impediments for living here is the odor and high sulfide level. Consider using that to resale.**

**Answer:** We are definitely exploring solar and wind farms and these are strong possibilities, depending on public input. Farmland is also a possibility, though not as high a one. The Plant has actually improved control over odors; we now hardly get any complaints. Our challenge right now is to remove odors even more. Odor comes mainly from the biosolids drying. If we move biosolids into greenhouses, we could capture and treat the odor.

**Question: Any thoughts about selling the land?**

**Answer:** Probably not. We think the best opportunity can come from maintaining ownership and leasing the land.

**Question: With all the land that you have, right now the Plant is very concentrated and uses chemicals. Would you consider a biological purification system, especially using the salt ponds?**

**Answer:** We have a technical advisory group that looked at use of the salt ponds as a top opportunity. Because we have such a large Plant, wetlands treatment would have to be very large, which would limit possibilities. Having the whole Plant replaced by wetlands probably isn't feasible.

**Question: Would reverse osmosis be considered for treatment of recycled water?**

**Answer:** Yes, we are looking at this design with the water district. Some of you may have heard about the Orange County plant that is the first major one built that treats wastewater like we do with an extra step of reverse osmosis. Reverse osmosis is essentially desalting the water. At the Orange County plant, they take the water and inject it with the groundwater, which becomes part of their drinking water system. We're exploring the same possibility with our water district.

## Appendix A

### Workshop Publicity

Workshop publicity was distributed through multiple communication channels, including:

#### **Newspaper advertisements**

Advertisements of the workshop ran between Thursday, April 30 and Friday, May 15 in these publications:

- *Almaden Resident*
- *Berryessa Sun*
- *Cambrian Resident*
- *Campbell Reporter*
- *Cupertino Courier*
- *El Observador* (Spanish language)
- *Los Gatos Weekly-Times/Los Gatos Weekender*
- *Milpitas Post*
- *Rose Garden Resident*
- *San Jose Mercury News*
- *Saratoga News*
- *Silicon Valley Business Journal*
- *VTimes* (Vietnamese language)
- *West San Jose Resident*
- *Willow Glen Resident*

#### **Fliers**

Fliers announcing the workshop were distributed in English and Spanish at local events and point-of-service counters, including:

- Cinco de Mayo festival – 1,000 copies distributed on Sunday, May 3, 2009
- City of San José libraries – 1,000 copies distributed to 19 locations
- Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge – 75 copies for the front desk
- Environmental Services Department – 75 copies for the front desk
- Industrial Users Academy – distributed to about 30 attendees
- Milpitas homeowners and neighborhood associations – mailed to 46 groups
- One Voice event booth – 50 copies distributed at one event
- San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant – 75 copies for the front desk
- Tuesday Market – 100 copies distributed over the four Tuesdays prior to the workshop
- Watershed event toolkit – 200 copies distributed at seven different events



### **Emails**

Workshop information was emailed to stakeholder groups through to various list serves:

- ESD-wide email from John Stufflebean – sent to 483 employees
- Councilmember Kansen Chu's District 4 list serve – sent to about 2,000 residents
- Development News list serve – sent to over 5,000 people
- Green Building Users Group list serve – sent to 400 people
- Green Vision list serve – sent to 25 people
- Neighborhood Development Center/Strong Neighborhoods Initiative list serves – sent to over 600 neighborhood association contacts
- Project stakeholder list – multiple emails sent to about 215 project stakeholder contacts
- Santa Clara Basin Watershed Management Initiative list serve – sent to about 70 people

### **Web sites**

Workshop information was posted to various Web sites:

- City of San José
- City of Santa Clara
- Councilmember Kansen Chu's District 4 site
- Plant Master Plan project site

### **Articles**

Groups without a list serve or Web site included an informational workshop article in their hard-copy publications.

- *Pipeline*, City of San José Public Works newsletter

### **Presentations**

Project team members made presentations to various stakeholder groups:

- Alviso Collaborative – reached about 20 stakeholder groups and community members on Tuesday, May 12, 2009
- Green Building Users Group – reached about 20 people on Tuesday, April 21, 2009
- Industrial Users Academy – reached about 30 businesses on Wednesday, May 13, 2009
- Milpitas City Council – Tuesday, March 17, 2009

### **Television bulletins**

A workshop information slide was developed to air on select channels.

- City of San José facility bulletins
- City of Santa Clara's channel 15

### **Direct mail**

A personalized workshop invitation letter and flyer was sent to interested groups.

- Plant Master Plan stakeholder list – sent to 215 people/groups
- Plant tour wait list – sent to 447 people

## Publicity Examples

Workshop advertisement/flyer

### New technologies...



### New opportunities...



Reservations  
Required

## Attend a community workshop

**Saturday, May 16, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.**

- **Tour** the wastewater treatment facility by bus.  
1:30 - 2:00 p.m. (optional)
- **Meet** the project staff at an open house.  
2:00 - 2:30 p.m.
- **Learn** about your wastewater treatment facility, why it needs improvements, and the master planning process.  
2:30 - 3:30 p.m.
- **Submit** your ideas to shape the master plan.  
3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

**Location:**  
San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant  
700 Los Esteros Road, San Jose (near Alviso)

**Workshop and bus tour reservations:**  
Call 408-975-2556 or visit  
[www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan)  
by Wednesday, May 13, 2009.

Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese-language services will be available at this event. To request accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act for City-sponsored events or printed materials, please call 408-975-2606 no later than three business days before the event.

## Plan the future of your South Bay shoreline and wastewater facility

Do you know where your water goes after showering, washing dishes, or flushing a toilet? No matter the answer, aren't you glad you can rely on your wastewater system?

A three-year master plan process has been launched to make sure you can rely on your wastewater treatment facility for years to come.

The San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant Master Plan addresses how to best rebuild the 53-year-old wastewater treatment facility and use the 2,600-acre property. Implementing new treatment technologies creates the opportunity to envision new land uses, such as jobs-based development, a clean tech center, expanded habitat protection areas, and community amenities such as trails.



Plant Master Plan

SAN JOSE/  
SANTA CLARA  
WATER POLLUTION  
CONTROL PLANT



CITY OF  
SAN JOSE  
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

*Imagine. Plan. Explore.*



Workshop email

Last modified on: April 13, 2009 10:03:43 PST

May 16 Plant Master Plan Workshop – Save Date!

Plan the future of your South Bay shoreline and wastewater facility

Wastewater facility renovation includes planning new land uses

A three-year master plan process has been launched to make sure you can rely on your wastewater treatment facility for years to come.

The San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant Master Plan addresses how to best rebuild the 53-year old wastewater treatment facility and use the 2,600-acre property. Implementing new technologies creates the opportunity to envision new land uses, such as kayaking, trails, a clean-tech center, and/or jobs-based development.



Attend a community workshop on Saturday, May 16 to:

- **Tour** the wastewater treatment facility by bus (optional) 1:30 – 2:00 p.m.
- **Meet** the project staff at an open house 2:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- **Learn** about your wastewater treatment facility, the planning process and why the facility needs improvements. 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.
- **Submit** your land use ideas to shape the master plan 3:30 – 4:45 p.m.

Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese-language translation services will be available.

Workshop and bus tour reservations:

Call 408-975-2556 or visit [www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan).

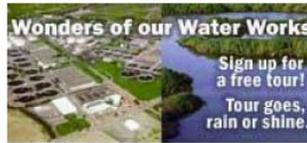
San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant – 700 Los Esteros Rd., San Jose (near Alviso)

To request accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act for City-sponsored events or printed materials, please call 408-975-2606 no later than three business days before the event.

## **FREE Wonders of Our Water Works bus tour is back!**

### **Experience your wastewater treatment facility**

Find out where your wastewater goes on a **free Wonders of Our Water Works** bus tour. Explore the San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant and learn about the adjacent Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge on this two-hour tour.



**When:** May 2009 through October 2009, first and third Thursdays and Saturdays

**Where:** San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant – 700 Los Esteros Rd., San Jose, CA

**Tour reservations:**

Call 408-975-2556 or visit [www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan) for more information. Participants must be at least 10 years old.

---

### **Questions?**

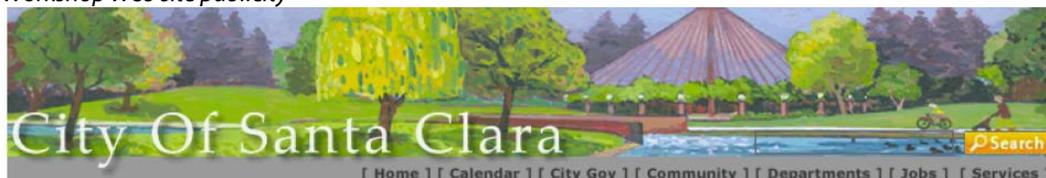
For more Plant Master Plan information, visit [www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan) or contact [Matt Krupp](#), project planner:

City of San José  
200 E. Santa Clara St., 10th Floor  
San Jose, CA 95113  
408-945-5182



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## Wastewater Facility Renovation Includes Planning New Land Uses

A three-year master plan process has been launched to make sure you can rely on your wastewater treatment facility for years to come.

The [San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant Master Plan](#) addresses how to best rebuild the 53-year old wastewater treatment facility and use the 2,600-acre property. Implementing new treatment technologies creates the opportunity to envision new land uses, such as jobs-based development, a clean tech center, expanded habitat protection areas, and community amenities such as trails.



Attend a community workshop on Saturday, May 16 to:

- ▶ Tour the wastewater treatment facility by bus (optional) 1:30 – 2:00 p.m.
- ▶ Meet the project staff at an open house 2:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- ▶ Learn about your wastewater treatment facility, the planning process and why the facility needs improvements 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.
- ▶ Submit your land use ideas to shape the master plan 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese-language translation services will be available.

Location:  
San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant – 700 Los Esteros Rd., San Jose (near Alviso)

Workshop and bus tour reservations:  
Call 408-975-2556 or visit [www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan) by Wednesday, May 13, 2009.

[Print the Flyer \(PDF\)](#)

To request accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act for City-sponsored events or printed materials, please call 408-975-2606 no later than three business days before the event.

FREE Wonders of Our Water Works bus tour is back!

Experience your wastewater treatment facility.

Find out where your wastewater goes on a free Wonders of Our Water Works bus tour. Explore the San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant and learn about the adjacent Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge on this two-hour tour.

When: May 2009 through October 2009, first and third Thursdays and Saturdays  
Where: [San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant](#) – 700 Los Esteros Rd., San Jose, CA

Tour reservations:  
Call 408-975-2556 or visit [www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan) for more information.  
Participants must be at least 10 years old.



**Plan the future of your South Bay shoreline and wastewater facility!**

Wastewater facility renovation includes planning new land uses  
Do you know where your water goes after showering, washing dishes, or flushing a toilet? No matter the answer, aren't you glad your wastewater system is reliable?

**A three-year master plan process has been launched to make sure you can rely on your wastewater treatment facility for years to come.**

The San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant Master Plan addresses how to best rebuild the 53-year-old wastewater treatment facility and use the 2,600-acre property. Implementing new technologies creates the opportunity to envision new land uses, such as water recreation, trails, a clean-tech center, and/or jobs-based development.

**Attend a community workshop on Saturday, May 16 to:**

- Tour** the wastewater treatment facility by bus (optional) 1:30 – 2:00 p.m.
- Meet** the project staff at an open house 2:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- Learn** about your wastewater treatment facility, the planning process and why the facility needs improvements. 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.
- Submit** your land use ideas to shape the master plan 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

*Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese-language translation services will be available at this event.*

**Workshop and bus tour reservations:**

Call 408-975-2556 or visit [www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan).  
San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant – 700 Los Esteros Rd., San Jose (near Alviso)

**Questions?**

For more information, visit [www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan) or contact Matt Krupp at [matt.krupp@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:matt.krupp@sanjoseca.gov) or 408-945-5182.

*To request accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act for City-sponsored events or printed materials, please call 408-975-2606 no later than three business days before the event.*

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*Participants must be at least 10 years old.*

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## **Appendix B**

### **Media Coverage**

The Plant Master Plan workshop was covered in local print and online media outlets.

#### ***Workshop announcements***

- *Baked* by Kailin Chou – May 11, 2009
- *Los Gatos Weekly Times* – May 12, 2009
- *Aquaforia* by the Water Education Foundation – May 13, 2009
- *Milpitas Post* – May 13, 2009

#### ***Workshop coverage***

- *Baked* by Kailin Chou – May 2009
- *Running Water* by Diana Foss – May 16, 2009
- *San Jose Mercury News* – May 28, 2009
- *Sunnyvale Sun* – May 28, 2009

## Media Coverage Examples

Baked by Kailin Chou



◀ SOUPSTOCK!!

HOT & FRESH Updates! ▶

## Plant Master Plan Workshop

📅 lished May 11, 2009 1 🗨️ Give a Comment



Did you know that [San Jose 's Water Pollution Control Plant](#) is one of the largest and most advanced in the country? I shore didn't, which is why I'm attending the [Plant Master Plan Workshop](#) on Saturday, May 16th.

**The Story:** The plant receives, processes, and treats the wastewater from residents and businesses in San Jose, Santa Clara, Saratoga, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Milpitas, and a few other neighboring cities. Wastewater that comes from doing laundry, flushing the toilet, doing the dishes, and taking a shower go to this treatment plant.

**The Issue:** Now more than 50 years old, its infrastructure is aging and needs to be addressed. If you are interested, you can still sign up by this Wednesday for the free workshop or you can always go on a bus tour of the plant (which goes from May to November). Not only will this be extremely informative about the facility and its processes themselves, I guarantee you'll go away being more environmentally aware of things you've never thought of before. **Warning:** it may smell a little gross when you first get there...but then (according to a very credible source) you get used to it 😊 Hope to see you there! (thinking of bringing Baked. cookies, though not sure how that'll pan out w/ the smells haha)

**UPDATE:** When I was there it actually didn't smell at all, only at one particular spot we stopped very **briefly** at. You're actually on a very nice tour bus the whole time and even when walking around the parking lot, I didn't notice anything foul.

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  3. Sheriff's report: Fremont landscaper killed Cupertino woman over...
  4. California Layoffs Database: See if your company is planning big...
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## Meeting set on \$1 billion rebuild of the aging valley water pollution plant

By Cody Kraatz  
Sunnyvale Sun  
Posted: 05/12/2009 10:08:40 PM PDT  
Updated: 05/12/2009 10:08:44 PM PDT

The 53-year-old San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant is aging and badly needs to be rebuilt.

Operated by the city of San Jose and co-owned by San Jose and Santa Clara, the plant — which serves more than 1.4 million people in San Jose, Santa Clara, Milpitas, Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Saratoga and Monte Sereno — is embarking on a planning process to create a master plan, and is seeking public input about what should be included.

All told, operators expect the rebuilding to cost about \$1 billion. The plant processes raw sewage through a complex system that transforms it into fresh water that is discharged to San Francisco Bay. It also produces recycled water that can be used for landscaping and industrial purposes.

Plant operators say that the new master plan creates many possibilities because it sits on 2,600 acres of buffer land. A number of creative ideas for how to use that land have been suggested already:

- Turn the plant into an energy supplier by using the methane produced there and at the adjacent landfill as well as tapping fats, grease, discarded food, solar and wind power;
- Generate revenue through farming, cash crops, food production and plant nurseries;
- Found a research institute focused on renewable energy and clean technologies and draw businesses that use the plant's byproducts to the site, creating an engine of economic development;
- Build in recreational uses such as trails and a recycled water course for boating;
- Restore marshland habitat and creeks to their natural state.

Advertisement



A community workshop to gather public input will be held on May 16, 1:30-4:45 p.m., at the plant, 700 Los Esteros Road, San Jose (near Alviso). The workshop will include a tour of the plant, and also an overview of the wastewater treatment process and why the facility needs improvement. There will be time for the public to submit land use ideas.

Call 408-975-2556 or visit [www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/plantmasterplan).



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## Meeting set on \$1 billion rebuild of the aging Santa Clara water pollution plant

Posted by: Aqua Blog Maven on May 13, 2009 at 6:22 am

From the San Jose Mercury News:

The 53-year-old San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant is aging and badly needs to be rebuilt.

Operated by the city of San Jose and co-owned by San Jose and Santa Clara, the plant — which serves more than 1.4 million people in San Jose, Santa Clara, Milpitas, Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Saratoga and Monte Sereno — is embarking on a planning process to create a master plan, and is seeking public input about what should be included.

All told, operators expect the rebuilding to cost about \$1 billion. The plant processes raw sewage through a complex system that transforms it into fresh water that is discharged to San Francisco Bay. It also produces recycled water that can be used for landscaping and industrial purposes.

Plant operators say that the new master plan creates many possibilities because it sits on 2,600 acres of buffer land.

Read more from the San Jose Mercury News by [clicking here](#).

May 13, 2009 · Filed Under [Bay Area](#)



## Workshop this weekend at water treatment plant

by Ian Bauer

Posted: 05/13/2009 01:10:28 PM PDT

Milpitas residents are invited to take part in the future of the San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant. A land use workshop and bus tour will be held Saturday at the plant at 700 Los Esteros Road on the San Jose-Milpitas border to gain community input over the long-term use of 2,600 acres of plant lands near the San Francisco Bay that could potentially accommodate a mix of development, habitat restoration and recreation.

"In the future, we could do some great things with this land," Cheryl Wessling, a San Jose Environmental Services Department spokesperson, said.

Since its opening in 1956, the Los Esteros Road plant has worked around the clock to clean the South Bay's wastewater before it flows into the San Francisco Bay.

Co-owned by San Jose and Santa Clara, the plant serves 1.4 million people across eight cities and treats about 110 million gallons every day, with 10 percent of that amount receiving further treatment and being recycled for irrigation and industrial uses.

The largest advanced wastewater facility on the West Coast, the plant either directly or through sanitation districts also serves the cities of Milpitas, Cupertino, Campbell, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno and Saratoga.

But City of San Jose states the water pollution control plant is aging and much of its infrastructure needs rebuilding. The cost of rebuilding the plant is estimated at about \$1 billion, making it one of the region's largest public investments. How to best rebuild the plant and best use its surrounding property is the focus of a plant master plan.

"The plant master plan is both a very important and very exciting project for our region," San Jose Environmental Services Director John Stufflebean said. "We can rebuild this facility so that it continues to protect bay water quality and the public health, and we can make the plant site a treasure

for the region. Public participation is vital to determining what happens on this unique site, so I hope many residents will join us for the community workshop."

According to Wessling, changes could also include jobs-based development, a clean-tech center, algae farming, energy facilities, habitat restoration, kayaking, soccer fields, and a living museum all tied to sustainable design practices.

"It could be so much more," she said. "We're asking the community to be a part of the visioning with us."

Launched in 2008, Wessling suggested the plant master plan will take about three years to complete. The master plan includes three main components:

Technical to identify technology options for the plant's continued operations.

Land use to identify land use scenarios for the plant's 2,600-acre property.

Community engagement to work with ratepayers, stakeholders, and partners in developing a successful master plan.

If approved, the plant master plan will result in a 10 to 15 year improvement program to upgrade, improve and rebuild the water pollution control plant.

City of San Jose is working on some of the most urgent projects as part of a five-year improvement program. Some of them include replacing electrical cables, rebuilding five of the 16 digesters, and replacing decaying concrete.

The May 16 event is open to everyone, but specifically targeted at residents of Milpitas and the other cities directly served by the plant site.

The day will include an optional bus tour of the facility from 1:30 to 2 p.m.; a 2 to 2:30 p.m. open house; and a 2:30 p.m. presentation and public input session.

Attendees will use handheld clickers to weigh in on a variety of land use ideas.

The workshop will be held at the plant at 700 Los Esteros Road in San Jose, accessed from Zanker Road off of state Highway 237.

## [Running Water](#)

« [Cry me a river](#)  
[Meat and Veg](#) »

### [Plant Master Plan Open House](#)

The City is taking public outreach for the WPCP master plan update very seriously. The Environmental Services Department pulled out all the stops, bringing in many buses for tours



and putting up two big tents in the parking lot, for mingling and the presentation.



Inside, there was lots of printed matter.



(click through if you want to read all the water no-nos.

Most of the people I talked to were there for the tour. They had tried to sign up last year, but couldn't get a spot. I got on the first bus (since I was there so early) and we were lucky to have the marvelous Matt Krupp as our tour guide.



After the tour, we watched a very professional presentation, narrated by ESD Director John Stufflebean, that laid out the issues that the master plan outreach process wants public input on.

Now, the biggest issue in this show is that the plant itself is getting old, and needs serious upgrades. That's the heart of the matter, and you'll get no argument from me that the upgrades are necessary. As I said the other day, the last thing you want to have fail is your sewage treatment plant. Matt put it that one of the most important functions provided by a modern society is wastewater treatment. It's the reason that no one in the US knows what cholera looks like anymore.

Of course, these very necessary upgrades will cost in the neighborhood of 1 *billion* dollars (insert Dr. Evil voice, if you want.) and paying for them is going to be another question entirely. That's why I was happy to see Pierluigi Oliverio [blog](#) that the SCVWD had finally come to an understanding with the City of San José about greater use of recycled water for groundwater recharge and streamflow augmentation.

But it's the land use issues where public opinion will matter, at least I hope so. The plant controls 2,600 acres of land, a fraction of which (180 acres) is devoted to the actual plant, a larger fraction of which (770 acres) is used for sludge drying, and the rest of which is either a salt pond or buffer lands. More modern sludge drying methods (yes, research goes on in all sorts of fields) may make a big chunk of the "biosolids" area available for other uses, and more modern processes in general should reduce the odor of the plants operations to the point that less buffer would be needed to shield neighbors from the plant. The interactive portion of the program had each of the 80-odd people who remained after the break (in summer heat, I should add) using clickers to register their opinions about operational, economic, environmental and social aspects of land use.

When they're available, those results will be up [at the plant master plan homepage](#). But I'll summarize them.

Not surprisingly, the operational aspects of the plan upgrade aren't much being left to public opinion. (There is a technical advisory committee, which John Stufflebean and the head of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Board both said was full of their professors from 30 years ago, to weigh in on those questions.) The audience with clickers was asked whether the plant upgrade should incorporate "architectural amenities," and that was it. A majority said "some" of these would be good, but that was the first question, and, as I'll get to, I'm not sure how strong this opinion was. I was thinking as I walked into the building this afternoon that the plant looks just like my high school (it was probably built around the same time) in its mid-sixties concrete vibe. For the record, it's an industrial facility, and I don't mind its looking like one.

Then the discussion turned to economic uses of the land. We were told that there will be development of WPCP land; the only question is how much and what kind. I have two issues with this. 1) Who has decided? The mayor and the council? Staff? I need to get a better idea of where this mandate originates. 2) I think that San José has a terrible record of developing parcels hoping for economic reward. The city is going to retain ownership of this land, so the city will make the decision of what will be built. I do not think that city staff are the best people to be making detailed development decisions.

Plus, as the drive up Zanker Road showed, there is a huge glut of empty industrial space in north San José. Now, I know that the master plan is supposed to govern the next 30 years, and the recession will end. But once land is built out, it's gone. I really want to know where the development pressure is coming from within the city and who will make the decisions about what is built.

The question on this topic was phrased "Do you support green, sustainable development?" Not, "Do you support any development at all?" A majority of responders did support green development, not surprisingly. Similar majorities supported using some of the land for solar energy generation.

A majority also favored either some, or a large portion of the land be used for habitat restoration. This is my preferred outcome, as you've probably guessed. A majority also supported increasing the area of plant lands under water, in the sense of wetlands enhancement, rather than inundation due to sea-level rise.

A majority rejected retail or commercial development on the site, and a majority favored building a visitors' center that would offer educational programs. Trails and water access were favored a majority, but sports fields were not as popular.



Finally, we were asked to rank our priorities. Given the levels of interest in several of the questions, I expected to see a clear majority, but the vote seemed to be equal percentages for

- architectural amenities
- green development
- habitat restoration
- recreational amenities
- an educational center

But, this question was asked a different way. We were asked to press our clicker buttons in order, ranking our preferences, instead of having separate questions of “What is your first priority?” etc.” So many people were confused that I am sure that the reason that each choice scored equally is that the answers were random.

So, the same questions are going to go up on the web, and I’d like each reader to go vote. I’ll post when the questions are available.

The good news is that almost everyone said they’d like to participate in further workshops. (The clickers are very engaging.) This is a very important process; please consider taking part in the next chance you get.

This entry was posted Saturday, May 16th, 2009 at 5:03 pm and is filed under [WPCP](#). You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.

# The Mercury News

MercuryNews.com

## Water plant could become regional tourist attraction

By Cody Kraatz  
Sunnyvale Sun

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Community leaders are working to turn a local water plant that serves more than 1 million South Bay customers into what could become a regional tourist attraction.

The city of San Jose recently held a public workshop to brainstorm new uses for thousands of acres at the San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant near Alviso at the southern tip of San Francisco Bay that are no longer needed as a buffer area because of new technology.

Residents at the May 16 meeting told San Jose leaders that they would like to see a lot of the plant's 2,600 acres — including vacant buffer land and evaporation ponds — turned to more productive uses such as recreation, commercial and industrial development.

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alternative energy generation and habitat restoration.

Trails, playing fields, a water sports area and a nature museum that could compare to the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco were among

the top choices.

"I am really excited about the possibility of them creating a plant that in the future could become a tourist destination, more of a destination for people to come to instead of just an industrial area," said Saratoga resident Eve Matelan, who serves on the Community Advisory Group working on the plan. "We have an opportunity to dedicate a spot where people could see an estuary or kayak around."

Bhavani Yerrapotu, the environmental services department technical services manager, said the plant is in a "very unique situation. Usually the land is the limitation. We have enough that we can accommodate all of the uses. It's just a matter of prioritizing the public values."

Finding new uses for portions of the property is part of a 30-year Master Plan that includes a roughly \$1 billion rebuilding of the facility that opened in 1956. San Jose operates the plant on behalf of co-owner Santa Clara and the roughly 1.4 million residents and businesses of the other cities it serves: Cupertino, Saratoga, Monte Sereno, Los Gatos, Campbell and Milpitas.

The plant would retain ownership of any land developed, and plant officials said that development of the plant property may help pay for some of the repairs.

"Given the economic reality, we must first look to revenue-generating options to offset the cost of plant operations," said John Stufflebean, director of San Jose's Environmental Services.

"This is a significant opportunity to have a very far-reaching positive impact on the environment," said Bob Power, executive director of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and a Cupertino representative on the Community Advisory Group.

"And this is a very forward-thinking group, so they're going to be very creative about how to operate this plant in the future."

A final plan is scheduled to be presented in 2011.