



***Press Release***

Office of Economic Development

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **SAN JOSE HARNESSES WEB 2.0 TECHNOLOGY TO HELP DETERMINE CITY'S FUTURE AND GROWTH**

*In partnership with Knight Foundation, San Jose's Wikiplanning online pilot project seeks broad input from community about City's Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan update*

*Participants eligible for complimentary tickets from San Jose arts, entertainment and cultural organizations*

SAN JOSE, CALIF., July 31, 2009—Beginning midnight Aug. 1 and continuing through Oct. 31, the City of San Jose will be open 24/7 to collect community input concerning the City's general plan update, Envision San Jose 2040. The community is invited to visit Wikiplanning, [www.wikiplanning.org](http://www.wikiplanning.org), San Jose's new virtual collaboration tool, supported in part by Knight Foundation, to weigh in on the future of San Jose and the best strategies for success.

The Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan Update is the City's long-range plan for where and how San Jose will grow in the future. The Plan identifies locations for jobs, housing, stores and shops, parks and open space and other community facilities; guides infrastructure development and has policies that help the City plan for the delivery of important City services such as public safety and libraries.

The first 20 participants to officially log on and register at Wikiplanning.org will receive 2 passes each to the upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> Annual AT&T San Jose Jazz Festival, August 7-9. Out of the first 20 participants, one name will be drawn to be a guest announcer at

4 p.m., Sunday, August 9 at the Smith Dobson Tribute Stage, and will introduce Crossing Borders, featuring Jennifer Scott and Kristin Strom. Other incentive prizes will be given away between August 1 and October 31 and include passes and tickets from:

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|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Abhinaya Dance Company             | San Jose Mariachi Festival    |
| Children’s Discovery Museum        | San Jose Museum of Art        |
| Chinese Performing Arts of America | San Jose Repertory Theatre    |
| History San Jose                   | San Jose Stage Company        |
| Institute of Contemporary Art      | San Jose Taiko                |
| Opera San Jose                     | Symphony Silicon Valley       |
| San Jose Chamber Orchestra         | Teatro Visión                 |
| San Jose Jazz Festival             | The Tech Museum of Innovation |
|                                    | Ballet San Jose               |

“San Jose has a strong tradition of extensive civic engagement. We value and invest in significant outreach around policy issues, from development projects and neighborhood planning to public art, housing, and parks,” said San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed. “Using the wiki platform to increase the number and diversity of residents participating in local government decisions around the General Plan furthers our City’s commitment to civic engagement, open and honest government, and reaching decisions in full view of the public,” said Reed.

Even with open government and pervasive engagement, it is challenging to get time-pressed residents to attend evening and weekend meetings—traditional methods of civic engagement. Wikipanning allows the community to address Envision San Jose 2040 city planning issues discussed at traditional public meetings. But instead of attending a meeting, the community will be able to weigh in from their own homes, workplaces or anyplace with an internet connection any time throughout the day or night—allowing a diverse range of residents to make their voices heard with community planning leaders.

Offering input to the Envision San Jose 2040 is simple. Users go to [www.wikipanning.org](http://www.wikipanning.org) and enter either their email address and home zip code or the password “2040.” Participants then are able to see and select a variety of activities online, including a mix of project-specific multi-media learning sessions, message boards and a survey. They are also able to post, share comment on photos that visually represent their preferences of what they want to see more of, or less of, in San Jose.

"One of our goals in the General Plan Update process is to hear as many voices as possible while building a consensus around a vision for our future. The Wikiplanning project along with the public meetings creates an environment in which that can happen," said Shirley Lewis, co-chair, Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan Update Task Force.

An intangible advantage of the Wikiplanning project is the participation of younger members of the community. Given the pervasiveness of internet usage among younger members of the community, Wikiplanning aims to bring all of San Jose's population—including the age group that will be most active in 2040.

"The Envision San Jose 2040 update conveys the vision for the City's future, based on the values and priorities of our diverse community," said Sam Liccardo, councilmember, City of San Jose and co-chair Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan Task Force. "The wiki platform engages our oft-overlooked younger residents in the public process to shape the future of the San Jose that they will soon lead." said Liccardo.

The Wikiplanning project is supported, in part, by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, which invests in communities where the Knight Brothers owned newspapers.

"At Knight Foundation, we believe the use of digital tools will enable broad and deep community support for the Envision San Jose 2040 process. In capturing a diverse set of opinions from an informed public, we can more effectively shape the decisions that will impact our lives," said David Mills, Knight Foundation's San Jose program director.

#### **ABOUT ENVISION SAN JOSE 2040 GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

The San Jose General Plan is the blueprint for the future growth and development of a city. San Jose's current General Plan was adopted in 1994 and guides the City's day-to-day decision-making for land use and City services. While the strategies in the Plan serve as a consistent and stable framework, San Jose's dynamic landscape continues to grow and evolve. Since the General Plan was adopted, San Jose has changed a great deal with economic shifts, growing population and diversity, and private and public investment in buildings and infrastructure. San Jose also is projected to receive significant new population and job growth over the next 30 years. Because of this changing and evolving environment, it is once again time to consider our present and look to our future by updating the General Plan. Envision San Jose 2040 is intended to describe

what the people of San Jose want their city to become and how they will get there through the successful implementation of the General Plan. For more information, visit [www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/gp\\_update](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/gp_update)

**THE JOHN S. AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION**

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation invests in journalism excellence worldwide and in the vitality of U.S. communities where the Knight brothers owned newspapers. Knight Foundation focuses on projects with the potential to create transformational change. For more, visit [www.knightfoundation.org](http://www.knightfoundation.org).

**ABOUT THE CITY OF SAN JOSE**

From its founding in 1777 as California's first city, San Jose has been a leader, driven by its spirit of innovation. Today, San Jose stands as the largest city in Northern California and the Capital of Silicon Valley—the world's leading center of innovation. The city, the 10<sup>th</sup> largest in the U.S., is committed to remaining a top-ranked place to do business, to work and to live. For more information, visit, [www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov).

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