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## Valley's bike-trail network grows with new tunnel in Mountain View

**RIDERS BENEFIT AS LINKS OPEN IN S.J., MOUNTAIN VIEW**

By Denis C. Theriault  
Mercury News  
Article Launched: 04/13/2008 02:10:05 AM PDT

Someday - maybe not soon, but someday - bicyclists in Santa Clara County will enjoy a far-flung "expressway" system of trails linking the Peninsula to downtown San Jose, Alviso to Almaden Valley. That network would then connect to a planned 500-mile trail system, known as the Bay Trail, circling the San Francisco and San Pablo bays.

While that vision remains years (and millions of bucks) away, it has lurched several hundred feet forward in recent weeks. Saturday, Mountain View officials cut the ribbon on a segment including a tunnel taking the Stevens Creek Trail to the south side of El Camino Real.

With slate-faced openings, a 14-pane skylight and fluorescent lights, the tunnel delighted cyclists and joggers who passed through Saturday afternoon to check out the trail extension.

"I thought, 'I'm going through! Yeah!'" said Nicole Jastrow of Sunnyvale, who was bicycling with her 8-year-old daughter, Erica Payne.

But the two and other cyclists were disappointed to find that, once passing under El Camino Real, the trail ended abruptly at a chain-link gate. They had hoped it would extend farther up the creek. City officials say it will - soon.

Saturday's trail dedication came a week after San Jose officials opened crossings on the Guadalupe River Park Trail at Highway 101 and near Mineta San Jose International Airport, extending that trail all the way to Alviso. And, as soon as August, a key gap in the Bay Trail at Moffett Field - affectionately dubbed the Moffett Gap - also could be closed.

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Combined, all of those openings would amount to only a few miles, but they were years in the making. And any time a trail can surmount such barriers, Mountain View city engineer Bob Kagiyama said, the gains are immediate.

"You always see a lot more people making use of facilities - once you get to the other side," he said.

Segment by segment, slowly but surely, bike trails in San Jose and the rest of the county have been stretching toward one another. Trail building can involve a painstaking, complicated calculus, costing millions of dollars and requiring buy-in from clusters of property owners and political overseers.

Yves Zsutty, San Jose's trails guru, says all that work will pay off. When finished, he said, those pathways "really could function like a set of expressways and highways for bicyclists."

He noted that new segments of the Los Gatos Creek Trail opened in San Jose last year, and plans are in place to connect that trail - which stretches all the way to Los Gatos - to the nine-mile Guadalupe network. San Jose also is exploring plans for a Willow Glen Spur Trail, on an old railroad right of way, that would link the Guadalupe trail, the Los Gatos Creek Trail and the city's old Highway 87 bikeway.

Meanwhile, Zsutty said, plans are under way to keep stretching the Guadalupe trail. Going north, through Alviso, it would hit the regionwide Bay Trail system; going south, from Interstate 280, it will hit Willow Glen in a few years, then snake into South San Jose.

Stevens Creek Trail planners also are hoping to head to the hills someday, a march that will resume in the summer while planners find money for an eventual crossing at Highway 85.

Patrycja Bossak, chief planner for the Bay Trail, which is managed by the Association of Bay Area Governments,

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A jogger is reflected in a mirror as he runs on the Stevens Creek Trail in... (Patrick Tehan)

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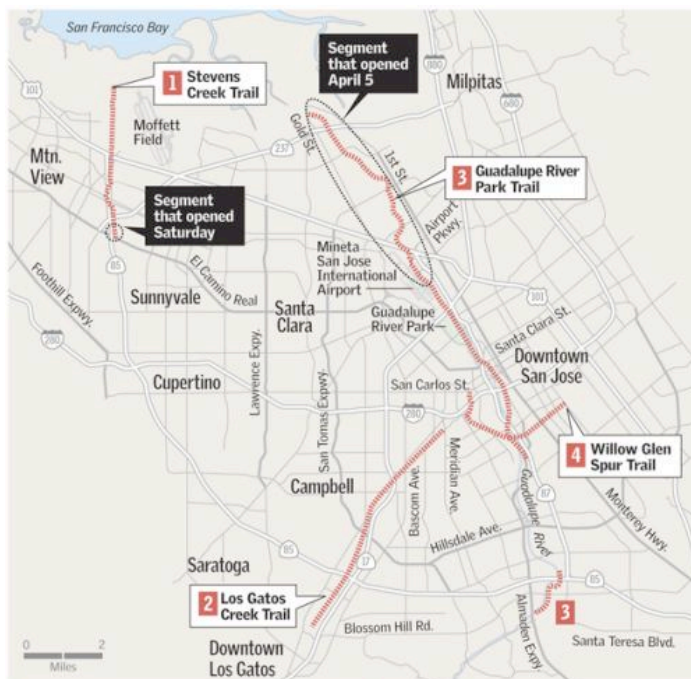
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said interest in the trails is rising along with interest in keeping healthy.

"It's a free, safe, accessible opportunity to gather," she said. "The most rewarding thing is when you meet people who met on the Bay Trail and they say to you, 'Thank you so much.'"

Contact Denis C. Theriault at [dtheriault@mercurynews.com](mailto:dtheriault@mercurynews.com) or (408) 920-5035.

*Mercury News Staff Writer Sharon Noguchi contributed to this report.*



### 1 Stevens Creek Trail

**Segment opening Saturday:**

From Yuba Drive to the south side of El Camino Real

**Next segment nearing completion:**

From the south side of El Camino Real to Sleeper Avenue and Franklin Avenue

**Next segment in the works:**

From Sleeper and Franklin to Dale Avenue and Heatherstone Way, near Highway 85

### 2 Los Gatos Creek Trail

**Segment that opened Oct. 20:**  
Lincoln Avenue to Auzerais Avenue

**Segment to open later:**

Auzerais to San Carlos Street (built by KB Home, expected this summer) and San Carlos to Santa Clara Street and Guadalupe River Park.

### 3 Guadalupe River Park Trail

**Previous route:**  
I-880 to I-280

**Segment that opened April 5:**

Airport Parkway to Gold Street (via undercrossings at Airport Parkway and Highway 101)

**Construction starting summer 2009:**

I-280/Woz Way to Virginia Avenue

**Construction planning started, but no timeframe yet:**

Gold Street to the Bay Trail

**Construction TBD:**

Virginia Avenue to Chynoweth Avenue in South San Jose, completing a gap in the trail, which picks back up at Chynoweth and heads to hills in Almaden

### 4 Willow Glen Spur Trail

Proposed trail along old railroad right of way

Source: Cities of Mountain View, San Jose

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