

Cupertino council gives boost to Stevens Creek Corridor trail project

The city of Cupertino made a decision Tuesday that spells good news for threatened steelhead trout, nature lovers, pedestrians and bicyclists looking for a straight route from McClellan Road to Stevens Creek Boulevard.

The city council unanimously voted to start design work on a project that would restore portions of Stevens Creek and extend the trail from Blackberry Farm onto Stevens Creek Boulevard near the Blue Pheasant Restaurant. The project will be dubbed Phase II of a long-term Stevens Creek Corridor restoration project.

The trail meanders along the creek and currently dead-ends near the Blackberry Farm parking lot. The desire to extend the trail has existed for some time, but the project has been somewhat in limbo due to the uncertainty of grant money and other funds dedicated to the project.

The city plans to work with SSA Landscape Architects on design services. The city manager will also send letters of intent to various granting agencies in hopes of getting more money for the \$3.5 million project. The letter will spell out the city's intent to proceed with the creek restoration and trail portions of the project.

Currently, the project has a budget shortfall of about \$1.6 million, according to city staff. The city estimates it could bring in \$2.7 million in total outside funding.

Much of the prep work will take another two years, with much of 2011 devoted to designing the project. City architect Terry Greene said

that major construction work would likely start in the summer of 2013 and wrap up in September.

Members of the city council appeared confident that funding will reveal itself over the coming months and years and that the environmental investment will be worth the effort.

"We'll figure a way to make it work and [creek restoration] is the right thing to do. In the long run, we are going to be very happy with it and as happy as we were with Phase I," Councilman Orrin Mahoney said.

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