

January 4, 2015

Provided within are the results of the Survey concerning the Guadalupe Oak Grove Park. The Survey was created by a group of three individuals concerned about the lack of a maintenance plan for the park. Working with District 10 Councilman Johnny Khamis, four volunteer workdays were conducted over the last year and a half to cleanup heavy brush areas. Soon, the City of San Jose and the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority will be discussing joint stewardship of the GOGP. In preparation for these meetings, the City must decide a direction for the park. A Master Plan from 1987 does exist; but the park-plan laid-out in the master plan is not being followed (due to limited funds and manpower resources within the City). What direction should be decided for GOGP? The goal of the survey was to gather public perception about the future of the GOGP.

The survey was conducted from November 17th to December 31, 2014. The motivation of the survey was to gather park-user and neighbor perspectives and perceptions. Background information about the history and nature of the park was provided to those taking the survey; and docent-led walking tours were given for those interested. Approximately 30 people participated in the walking tours. The questions presented in the survey and the responses from the 73 individuals who completed the survey are presented below. Also presented are the comments gathered. Our purpose here is to present the raw data. We do not analyze and/or interpret the results. We are providing Council District 10, PRNS and SCCOSA administrators the results of the survey. We hope that the data will help in the discussion(s) about the future of GOGP.

Lee Pauser, Audubon Society; Patrick Pizzo, CNPS; and Dave Poeschel, Sierra Club and Conservationist.
All are Almaden Valley park advocates.

Gathering Input on the Use and Future of



Guadalupe Oak Grove Park is located in Almaden Valley between the Villas of Almaden, the Jeffrey Fontana Park and the Campton Chase. It is about 64 acres of undeveloped hillsides, oak savanna, and oak woodland laced with hiking/walking trails. When the park first opened it was classified as a regional park, and, due to budget cutbacks, was changed to neighborhood park status and transferred to Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services (PRNS).

When opened in 1987, the park, being an open savannah, was characteristically open--one could see through the park. The openness of the park encouraged the growth of grasses, flowers, and new oak seedlings. As time marches on, the openness of the park is being lost--the park is evolving into an oak woodland. One cannot now see through the park which raises safety issues. Wildflowers that were abundant in the park are now scarce.

Soon, a partnership between the City and the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority will jointly serve the needs of the park. The purpose of this survey is to solicit your opinion as to the future direction for the GOGP with the main issue, to preserve the park as an open Valley and Oak Savannah or to let it naturally evolve and integrate with plants and trees within the surrounding urban landscape.

Note: This activity is being conducted by park volunteers with the backing of the Martin-Fontana Parks Association. The results of the survey will be presented to Council District 10 prior to the opening of discussion between the SCCOSA and the City of San Jose. Organizers of this effort include Organizers of this effort include Patrick P. Pizzo (SCV-CNPS affiliation, MFPA), Dave Poeschel (Sierra Club affiliation, MFPA), and Lee Pauser (Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society affiliation, Friends of the Almaden Meadows Park).

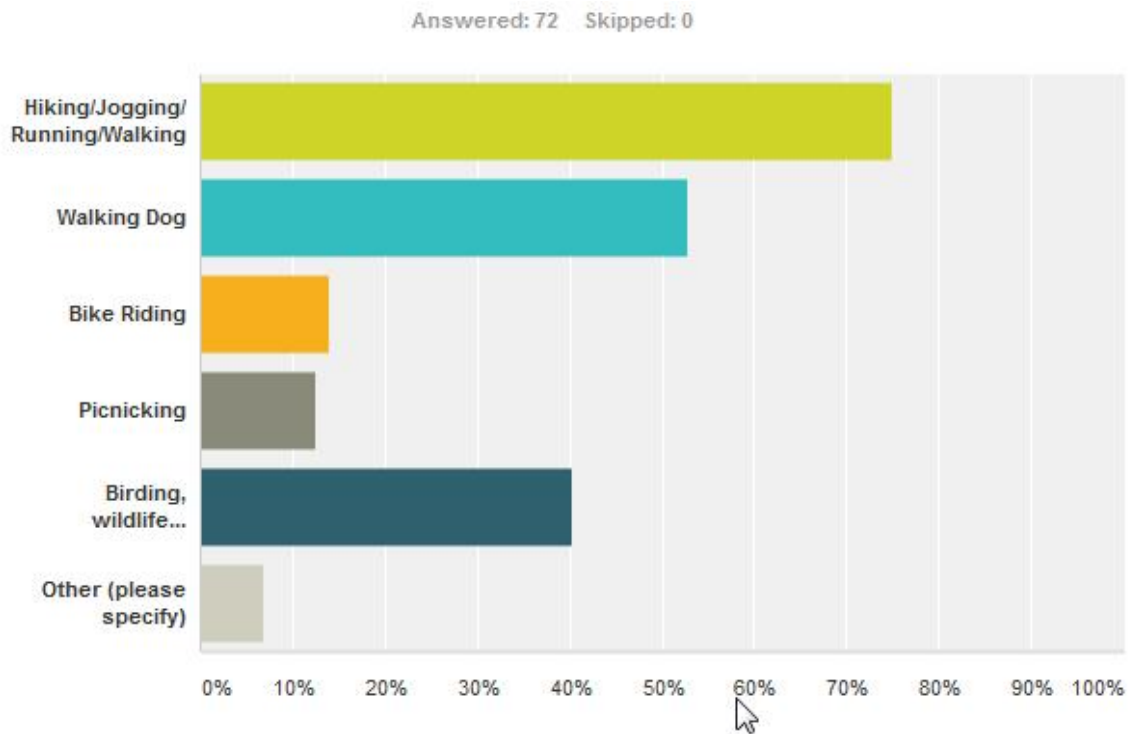
January 4, 2015

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Survey Questions

Q1: How do you use the park?

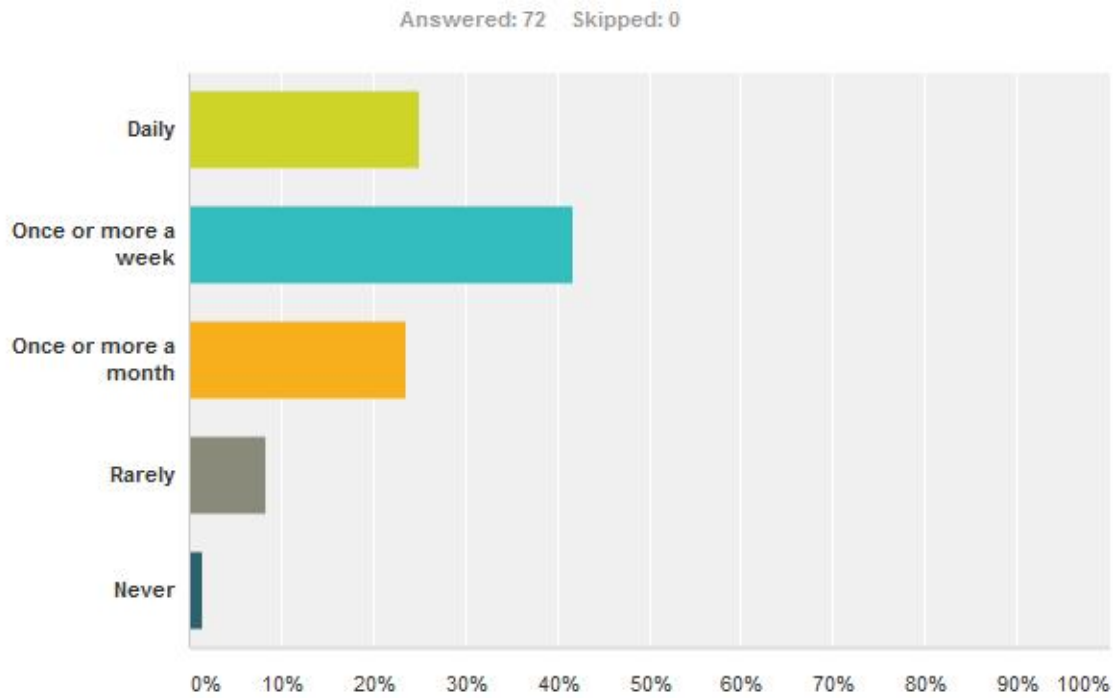


Answer Choices	Responses
Hiking/Jogging/Running/Walking	75.00% 54
Walking Dog	52.78% 38
Bike Riding	13.89% 10
Picnicking	12.50% 9
Birding, wildlife viewing, and/or other appreciation of natural beauty	40.28% 29
Other (please specify)	Responses 6.94% 5
Total Respondents: 72	

'Other' responses to Q1:

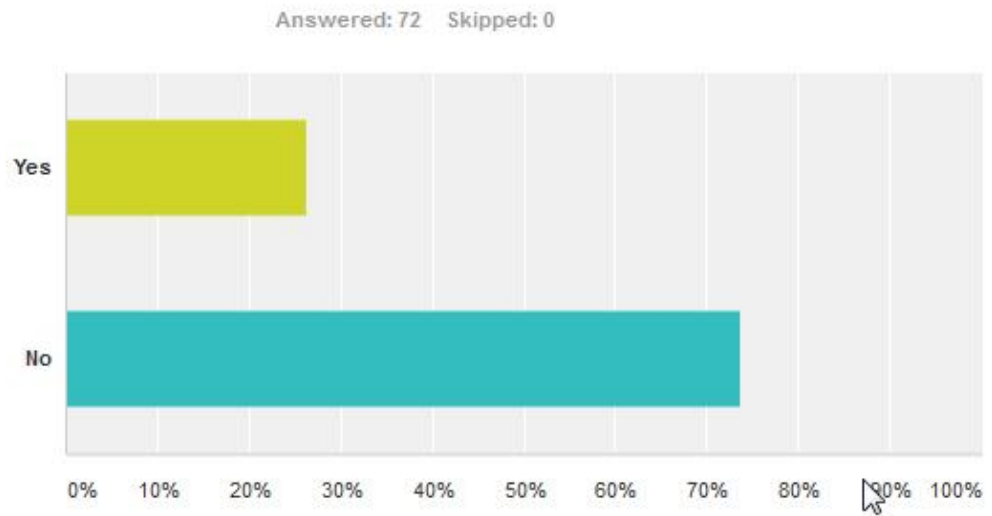
- none
- just enjoying its natural beauty and serenity
- Meet friends
- Meditation
- adopt-a-park volunteer; kiosk display maintenance

Q2: How often do you visit the park?



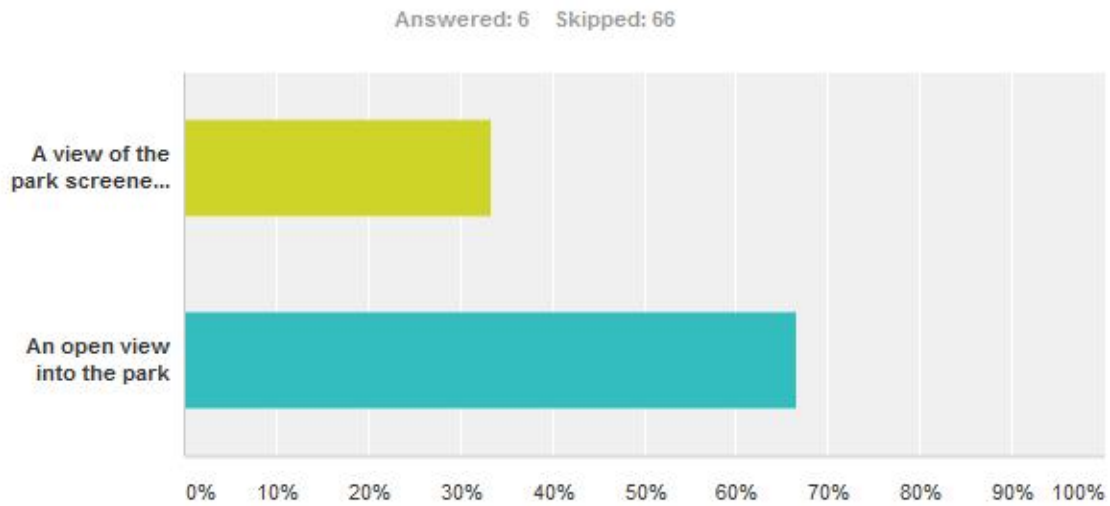
Answer Choices	Responses
Daily	25.00% 18
Once or more a week	41.67% 30
Once or more a month	23.61% 17
Rarely	8.33% 6
Never	1.39% 1
Total	72

Q3: From your residence, can you view any part of the park?



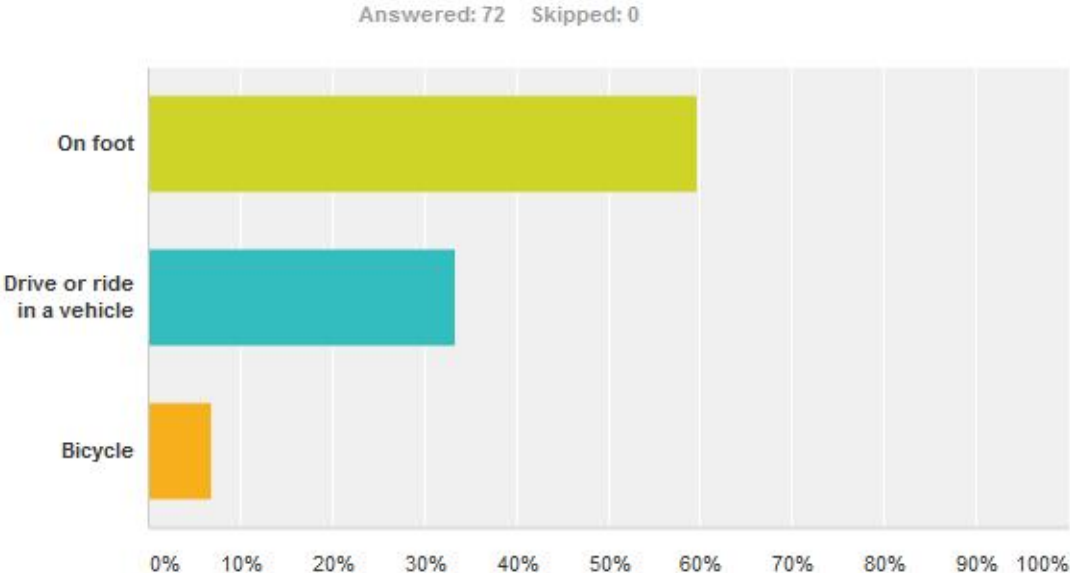
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	26.39%	19
No	73.61%	53
Total		72

Q4: If you live on Thorntree Drive directly across from the park, do you prefer:



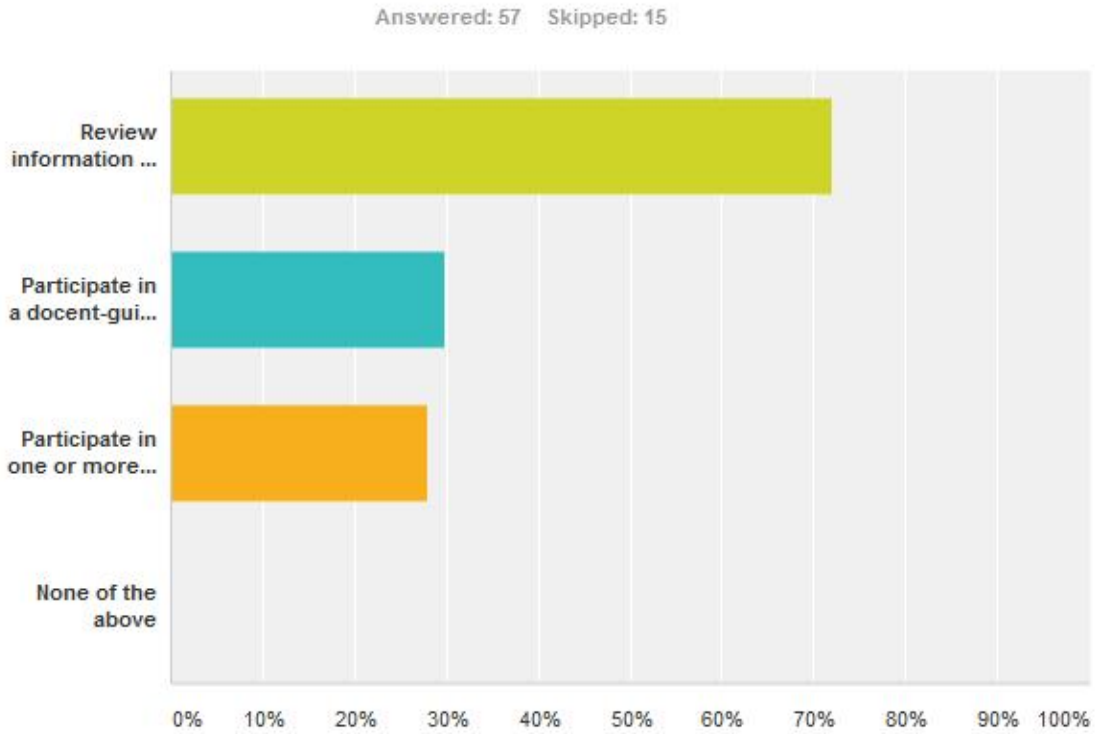
Answer Choices	Responses	
A view of the park screened by vegetation	33.33%	2
An open view into the park	66.67%	4
Total		6

Q5: How do you usually get to the park?



Answer Choices	Responses	
On foot	59.72%	43
Drive or ride in a vehicle	33.33%	24
Bicycle	6.94%	5
Total		72

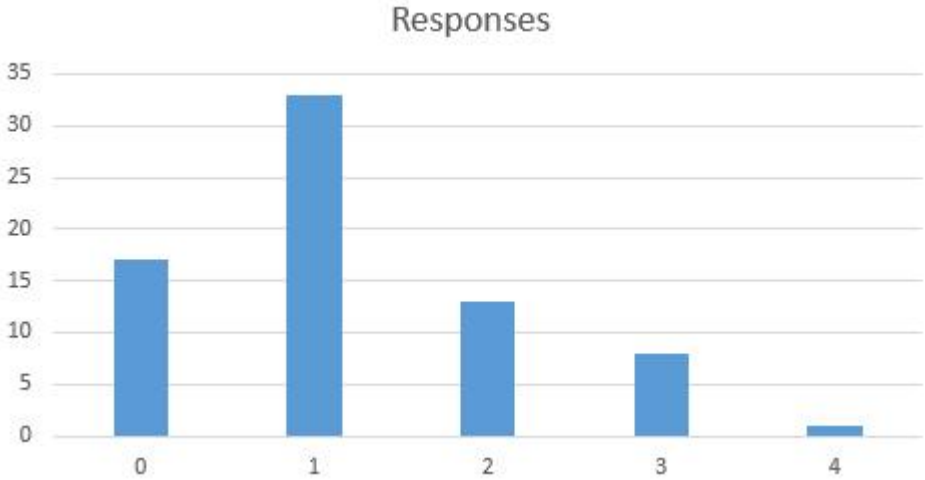
Q6: Before taking this survey, did you: (Check all that apply)



Answer Choices	Responses	
Review information at http://GOGPbrochure/birdsfly.info	71.93%	41
Participate in a docent-guided walkthrough	29.82%	17
Participate in one or more GOP workdays?	28.07%	16
None of the above	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 57		

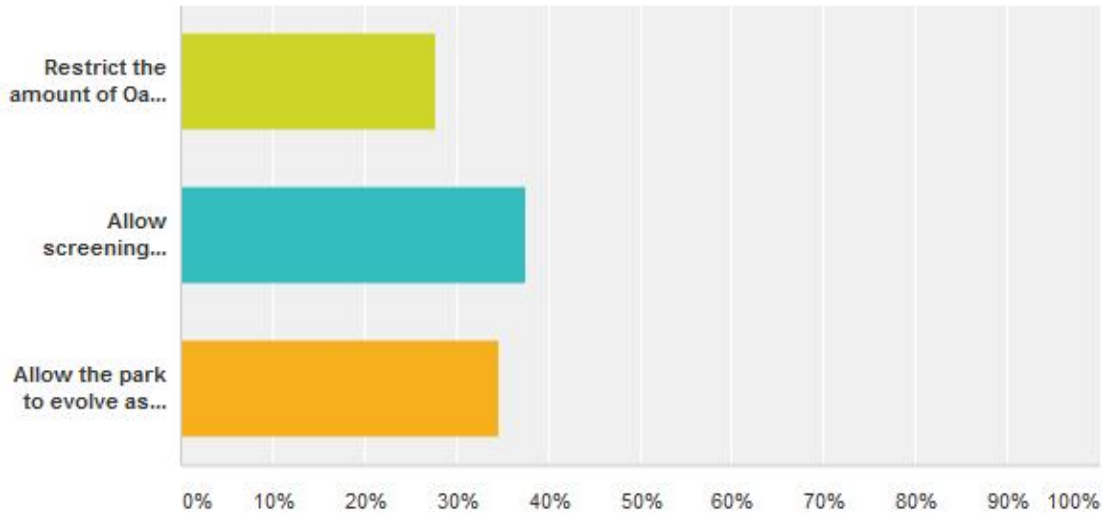
Q7: When you visit the park, other than yourself, how many adults or children accompany you?

Answered: 72 Skipped: 0



Q8: What action for the park would you support?

Answered: 72 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Restrict the amount of Oak Woodland and preserve the Open Oak Savannah.	27.78% 20
Allow screening vegetation on the East Periphery, but retain and preserve the balance of the park as an open oak savannah.	37.50% 27
Allow the park to evolve as an Oak Woodland	34.72% 25
Total	72

Q9: What is the major factor in deciding the action indicated in Question 8, above?

Answered: 72 Skipped: 0

1. Keep the park more natural as it would normally be in a more natural environment. The park is almost too preserved and the trees that are there are closer together than what would normally be there due to their protected status
2. Nature should be allowed to evolve. Oaks are beautiful. Grass currently being destroyed by burrowing squirrels and gophers.
3. Talking to neighbors and visiting often
4. Urbanization has led to a park that is highly altered from its historic range of variability. Action is needed to restore the park to its former state.
5. General appearance
6. Park needs to be cleaned up some to promote new growth.
7. I'm concerned meddling with the park will ruin it.
8. Concern for continued Barn Owl habitat
9. Until you sent this out my only concern was fire and the potential for the park to actually become homes. I would love to see it have a plan and make sure that plan is implemented. I thank the volunteers who are working on that.
10. I think trees are important.
11. preference is to preserve the park as an open Valley and Oak Savannah
12. Respect for what neighboring parcel owners might prefer, while maintaining the native vegetation balance of the park and keeping it clearer for fire/safety reasons
13. Let nature have its way
14. We appreciate the beautiful natural environment
15. Who will maintain the park
16. Potential for unexpected consequences,
17. Cost. How many people actually use the park vs. the annual cost in tax dollars to maintain the park
18. love all the oaks...do whatever needs to be done to make park more attractive
19. Tax dollars
20. Having more open oak savannah would allow for more birds of prey to help control the ground squirrel population; we enjoy watching the hawks and other birds. Another critical need for the hawks is to reduce the seagull population that used to frequent our neighborhood. An open savannah reduces thick vegetation where criminal activities could take place. I live on Sterling Oaks and don't have an issue with the need to screen the homes. We would like to see reduction of the coyote brush, and really love the majestic trees on the hill across from our home.

21. Preserve a unique resource
22. I believe there are some trees that are dead or unhealthy and need to be thinned out so other vegetation or trees can flourish. This is such a treasure of open space in our densely populated city, a piece of natural history and beauty, a place of solitude enjoyed by many. I would like to see more of the wildlife and birds return to the park.
23. I like it the way it is. could get rid of some unsightly rotted downed oaks and scrub.
24. Let nature take a natural course
25. it follows the original park plan, which allows us to keep this unusual mix of oaks. We very much support the related positions of the 3 different docents, to control to some extent the natural encroachment of the Live Oaks and non native grasses and plants.
26. I've lived in San Jose for over 30 years and have seen the far too much "urbanization" of natural landscapes. GOGP is a jewel amidst tons of asphalt and concrete, and provides a peaceful place to be outdoors, experience native California plants and wildlife, and take a break from the hectic pace of city life - right down the street from my home. I strongly agree with what was said in the master plan report from 1987, "This park is one of the few remaining large oak stands within the city and as such represents an invaluable natural resource for the City of San Jose."
27. My considered opinion as a botanist and restorationist who formerly lived nearby and made a complete plant list for the park. Ground water will decrease, fire hazard increase and likely biodiversity decrease if it is "allowed" "to evolve" as an Oak Woodland. Disconnected from other parks, most of which are over-run with weeds anyway, new oak woodland species will not find their way to the park. I am not sure a healthy oak woodland would be supported by the water resources available. The first option would also be quite acceptable to me.
28. I want good habitat for birds and wildlife. I am concerned though that you want to remove too much downed wood. This is needed by lots of critters.
29. Need to let the blue oaks and valley oaks survive, not choke them out. Need wild flowers to come back, control non native grasses.
30. preserving and encouraging as much native biological diversity as possible
31. I can't imagine what could be done to allow the space to become other than what it's becoming "naturally". We've lived here since the park was opened and the more wooded atmosphere is much more beautiful than it was when it first opened up. You can't even tell you're in a city anymore from certain parts of the park. Things change and evolve based on the environment they're in. Let it become what it wants to be, not what people want to force it to be.
32. Allow natural progression controlling for fire hazard and safety hazards such as low limbs etc
33. Fire hazard if the park is allowed to evolve on its own. An open, light screening vegetation along the fence that is also fire resistant would be ideal

- or a spaced out planting of vegetation. A solid wall of vegetation would look unnatural and give the park a closed-in feeling.
34. Leave GOGP as is. It is beautiful and enjoyed by so many.
 35. I believe it would evolve as nature not man intended with all the native creatures, birds and mammals intact.
 36. The park is overrun with non-native plants that shouldn't be there.
 37. I enjoy the wildflowers in the spring and I would like to see the Blue Oaks encouraged.
 38. Seems like this is how the park is evolving naturally. Fire risk overall seems low.
 39. Would like to see more native grasses and wildflowers, but not see the street or houses.
 40. It is a mix of both options
 41. The park is perfect as is.
 42. Prefer open areas with some shade
 43. I don't think you need to tinker with this park.
 44. I would like the park to maintain its current character.
 45. Screening hides the city.
 46. Preserve original ecosystem of park, but provide screen to block view of homes/streets from the interior of the park
 47. Prevent uncontrolled fires.
 48. Screening from homes enhances the natural setting. Rarity of Oak Savannahs
 49. Proliferation of the Coast Live Oak, and what seems to me to be dense growth of flammable areas.
 50. Docent discussion highlighting the uniqueness of the blue and valley oak stand in this valley which could be overtaken by live oaks
 51. Info gained today in the informative and enjoyable docent-guided walk through
 52. Docent Walk
 53. Natural beauty
 54. Desire limited intrusion in this natural setting.
 55. I want to see more native shrubs and flowers and they need sun. I enjoy the openness of blue oaks, summer and winter.
 56. Let nature take its course.
 57. We need a place around here with more trees.
 58. It's hard to change what Mother Nature has in store.
 59. Environmental education/experience
 60. I like the idea of not letting the park get overgrown with new growth, however I wouldn't like for all new evolving growth to be stripped out. If that is what voting for the "open oak savannah" would do.
 61. Most oaks in the park drop their leaves in the Fall. Sunlight gets to the meadow below encouraging wild flowers. I like the openness of the GOGP. The bird survey seems to indicate birds like the park status quo.

62. I prefer the park to be open as it once was
63. Evolution is reality. How the park is changing is just fine. Please save sentimentality for movies. Remember, writers of Master Plans see dollar signs. The park does need visible "Smoky the Bear" signs to educate the public on the no smoking rules. And the "No Bikes on Hills" signs need replacing. All bets are on that California now will not be the "wet" environment of the 1900's, so micromanaging environment is going to be a lost cause. Please, just keep people/dogs/bikers on the paths so more destruction does not happen. Yes, cows were grazing there earlier... prior to the property being deeded to the city. I was running the roads in the property in 1975. Please leave the lower growth vegetation along the paths (it is fine to prune to keep the path clear). It is providing shade and shelter for the wildlife, as well as allowing the ground to dry out slower... and keeping people on the paths. It will not take long... you are going to find bikers creating their own paths now that shrubs are removed in the meadow areas. The shrubs were providing a sense of seclusion which is now destroyed by the "cleanup" campaigns of the past 3 years. When one is out in nature, a seclusion sense is necessary. I suggest a visit to QuickSilver Park to further understand. Just go down McAbee Rd to the end. Evolution is working just fine there. I've been running there since 1977. Cows are still grazing there, also.
64. I prefer openness to density, and I love wildflowers.
65. Beauty - the beauty of the trees. They clean the air and provide shade in the hot summer months allowing us to enjoy the park when we otherwise could not.
66. status quo
67. Water
68. I do want Safety. I do not want people outside the neighborhood to see this as an area where they can conduct unlawful acts given the inability to be seen. Also want to feel safe and secure when enjoying the beauty with my family.
69. Happy neighbors like screening, preserving the balance of park is important
70. I have lived here 15 years and I have only know GOP as is and wouldn't want it changed.
71. I prefer the oak woodland
72. I love the fact that there is still naturally evolving land in San Jose. I like seeing deer, coyote, rabbits, and other wildlife having plenty of hiding places and safe haven from "us" provided by the woodland. Plenty of trees seem to die as others grow. Seems like Mother nature knows what she's doing. I have been disappointed by the actions of Volunteers/ city staff cutting down small oak trees around the park. I would understand if the plan was to reduce fire danger but what I have seen during volunteer efforts is removal live small trees!

Q10: Optionally, provide your contact information

Answered: 38 Skipped: 34

Answer Choices		Responses	
Name	Responses	89.47%	34
Company	Responses	0.00%	0
Address	Responses	0.00%	0
Address 2	Responses	0.00%	0
City/Town	Responses	0.00%	0
State/Province	Responses	0.00%	0
ZIP/Postal Code	Responses	100.00%	38
Country	Responses	0.00%	0
Email Address	Responses	84.21%	32
Phone Number	Responses	0.00%	0

Provided zip codes are predominantly 95120, but include one each of 94596, 95008, 95014, and 95123, and 95129, and two of 95118.

Additional comments made to MFPA

"The park for years has been a wonderful place to walk and feel one with nature. Besides a clean-up on a regular basis the park should be left alone and let nature take its course."

Rod Carpenter

"One benefit of the involvement of the SCCOSA may be routine visit by a park ranger, at least on some schedule."

Patrick Pizzo

"I regularly walk here and the place is kept clean of garbage and debris by those that use the park. The park ranger or it may be a city worker, opens the gates at 7am and comes back to lock up at the end of the day. I'm not sure what changes are being proposed in the name of safety. Perhaps cutting lower level branches so no one can "hide"? Some of the trails need to be maintained once in awhile. I like the way nature has been left alone here to change without the mighty of hand of mankind intervening."

Scott Raley

"I enjoy walking this park because it's close by and it's hilly. I looked at the paper "Overview of the Park" and saw the pictures showing the oak woodland and the invasive grasses that would prevail if the park was left to nature taking its course. I would prefer the native grasses and the open savannah shown in the pictures taken in 2001. The new oaks just add ugly clutter. How would change affect the deer?"

Jim Lewis

"Today, we had our first Park Walkthrough. It was very useful. One perspective that came up was to vegetation screen or not to screen. Yes: it appears that homeowners along Thorntree Dr. like the ability to see into the park. But some park users counter that, when walking the park, they would like to feel more like they were 'removed' from suburbia and the vegetation screening provided that feeling. Second; visitors began to realize that a one-size fits all approach is not being considered. That is, one may promote screening along the East periphery but yet hold the interior of the flat part of the park to a different standard. There can be

areas of Coast Live Oak woodland, separate from areas of the open, Valley Oak and Blue Oak Savannah. Also, the following points were discussed:

There used to be a handrail along the wood-rail steps leading up to the quarry area on the west periphery of the park. Scouts put the handrail in; and vandalism and/or degradation took it out. Might do well to consider an appropriate hand-rail for park users at that location."

"The Ground Squirrels and harsh weather tend to 'push' gravel and rocks onto Thorntree, especially where the park-level is higher than the roadway. A low-retaining wall (near the park entrance) keeps debris from spilling onto the roadway. How about extending that to the south, along Thorntree?"

Patrick Pizzo

"Guadalupe Oaks was selected as one of the last remaining natural places in Santa Clara Valley to be cherished, honored and saved for our enjoyment and that of future generations. For this reason I feel that it should be left as natural as possible for not only humans but for the many species of birds and mammals (ground squirrels and gophers included) for that is what makes it natural. Unless a fallen tree hinders our path to enjoy this area it should be left alone as it gives food and shelter to the wild species."

"There is something about humans, we cannot leave a natural place alone, we always have to manicure it or build something on it. We have the Martin-Fontana area which is designed by and for humans, I for one hope we will leave the Guadalupe Oaks area alone, it does not need more of our mark on it. We should encourage its wild natural state."

Norma Campbell

"Is this a regular stop for Monarch butterflies?"

R Smith

"Hi: I have seen Monarchs at Guadalupe on both migrations also Painted Ladies. Not a ton of Monarchs it's not a stop for them to cluster on a regular basis but they do use it."

"The new oaks are just a part of the natural transition, they in my opinion should be allowed to grow as they will take the place of the older oaks when they fall, and

they will someday just as we all will fall. Time runs out for all things, flora, fauna, human and the wildlife. Hope you all had a great Thanksgiving."

Norma Campbell

"Not a stop, where they gather their strength and prepare for the next cycle of life. Their 'rest-stops' are along the coast, usually, or near the bay where the presence of a major body of water and other factors reduce the risk of frost. Their viability is temperature sensitive. However, in the spring, they look for narrow-leaf milkweed, a CA native plant, to lay their eggs. There used to be large amounts of CA milkweed to support monarch habitat; but agricultural practices and 'improved' chemicals for weed and pest control have greatly reduced this habitat. That was one inspiration for Dave Poeschel to create the Butterfly Garden in J. Fontana Middle Park, just east of the GOGP. Too, another CNP person is considering introducing plugs of narrow-leaf milkweed in the undeveloped area of T.J. Martin Park, between the formal turf and Coleman Ave. These are attempts to increase Habitat for the monarch butterflies in the Spring."

"There were many CA native plants in the GOGP in prior years; but increasing stands of European grasses and weeds, minus the grazing that occurred when horses were kept in this area prior the park-founding, have led to decreasing native plants and wildflowers. Maybe one area that should be given thought for the GOGP is to remove, for example, the wild radish and black mustard stands and replace with narrow-leaf milkweed?"

"I encourage you to view the Master Plan (see above announcement to get an e-copy) and the vascular plant list. See if the CA native, narrow-leaf milkweed existed in our history of the GOGP."

Patrick Pizzo

Hi Patrick and all:

"You certainly are more a knowledgeable butterfly person than I and you have brought up some very good points. Agreed, as I had mentioned previously it is not a real "stop" for the Monarchs, they use the area just like they use some of our own backyards. Other pollinators as everyone knows are also in trouble mainly due to our use of insecticides etc. I know in my yard the mustard is used by a variety of bees. I hope that removing the wild mustard will not cause them further problems. The wild radish I use in salads, I have never seen a pollinator using it but I am sure some insect does."

"As there is now an established butterfly garden (thank you Dave) and another is planning on planting milkweed plugs, perhaps we should wait and see how all this plays out. I would hate taking food from the mouth of one pollinator by planting for another. Bees might not be as pretty and fanciful as butterflies but they really are much more important to us and the planet as a whole."

"Enjoy the rain but stay warm and dry."

Norma Campbell

"I like the 1987 Master Plan and would like to see it completed. The idea of GOGP remaining a "preserve" rather than a developed park is very important to me. I would like to see the park opened up a bit and would like to see native grasses and wildflowers reintroduced. Removing many of the downed trees and brush would help a lot. Continuation/expansion of the volunteer days to implement some of the improvements might help the city's chronic lack of funds to maintain this unique preserve."

Rich Grialou

I want to thank you and the other members of the MFPA for hosting last week's dialogue regarding the future of Guadalupe Oak Grove Park. It is satisfying to see people who care deeply about the park and recognize the truly unique nature of it. It is one of the last remaining oak savannah/oak woodland habitats in the valley. I feel that we are at a crossroads - something must be done if we are to return the park to its historic condition. Thank you also for the opportunity to present my opinion and why I feel a future with fire is critical to preserving the park for generations to come.

First, a little about myself. I am the principal of Prometheus Fire Consulting LLC and I have over ten years of experience in fire management. I have worked with a number of federal agencies including the Forest Service and the National Park Service. I have also consulted for CalFire and Santa Clara County Parks. My specialty is in planning, developing, and implementing prescribed fires ("controlled burns") across a variety of landscapes.

My training and experience with similar landscapes convinces me that judicious application of fire is the best option for Guadalupe. Landscape managers typically have a variety of tools available to manage their lands - fire is one. However, the other options - chemical, mechanical, or biological - often are more expensive, more time consuming, less beneficial in the long run, and do not mimic historic conditions. Prior to European settlement, landscapes similar to Guadalupe burned

frequently (every one to seven years according to recent research). This includes both anthropogenic ignitions (human caused) as well as natural ignitions (lightning, etc.). This point deserves emphasis - the landscape we see today at Guadalupe is not "wild" or "natural". It is significantly different from its historic state. Fire is a natural change agent just as necessary as wind and water.

Applying fire to Guadalupe can be done safely and effectively. However, given that the surrounding neighborhood has minimal experience with fire as a resource benefit tool, I recommend we start modestly with several acres in strategic locations. Once we have demonstrated our successes, we can move on to eventual development of a long-term plan for park restoration. We need to attain the necessary buy-in from all stakeholders (public, the City, the bird folks, wildlife folks, etc.). We have a number of choices about where we go from here, but it must begin with dialogue. Perhaps MFPA could lead the way - I have often found it is local, grass-roots efforts that make a difference. It rarely comes from the top and we will need to convince the City that they have a responsibility to manage this park effectively – doing nothing is not a responsible choice. I would be happy to speak to others about why I feel fire to be our best options for preserving the park. I welcome your thoughts.

My family and I have enjoyed the park and its unique treasures for over 15 years. I hope future generations will have the same privilege.

Phil Dye

Survey Response #73

This survey response was received by postal mail after the survey's cut-off date of December 31, 2014. However, since the envelope was postmarked before the cut-off date, it is considered valid. Note that the survey question responses have not been incorporated into the survey results presented earlier beginning on page 3, and are simply transcribed below.

Q1- How do you use the park? Other: Drive by to view the Jeffrey Fontana (sculpture?) off McAbee. Always lovely and cared for at Monument. Say silent prayer always for him!

Q2- How often do you visit the Park? Once or more a month from the back gate at Villas. We will try to visit more now that we've been made aware of the need to preserve the park. We're recent new residents of Villas of Almaden. We just joined the GOGP Association (MFPA?).

Q3- From your residence, can you view any part of the park? NO

Q4- NA

Q5- How do you usually get to the park? Drive

Q6- Before taking this survey, did you: The first item was checked: Review information at [Http://GOGPbrochure/birdsfly.info](http://GOGPbrochure/birdsfly.info)

Q7- When you visit the park, other than yourself, how many adults or children accompany you? Three

Q8- What action for the park would you support? The first two boxes and not the third were checked. Though the on-line survey allowed only one response, they checked both Restrict the amount of Oak Woodland and Allow screening vegetation on the East Periphery.

Q9- What is the major factor in deciding the action indicated in Q 8, above? The safety and preservation of a great and lovely park.

Q10- Optional contact info: Contact information was provided, but is not included in this document.