

# S.U.N.

Sun Neighborhood Planning Report

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## WORKING IN SUN: A PARTNERSHIP

South University Neighborhood, commonly referred to as SUN, stands among San José's most eclectic neighborhoods. It is the type of place where one will find renovated Victorian homes next to low-income, cinder-block apartments; a Vietnamese restaurant across the street from a single-family house; a fraternity house next to a homelessness support center; and retired couples, single tech workers, musicians, Latino families, and students all living next door to each other. SUN is also one of the poorest neighborhoods in San José, which makes it a prime candidate for the work of local nonprofit organization CommUniverCity San José.

Founded in 2005, CommUniverCity is a multi-sector partnership between local communities, San José State University (SJSU), and the City of San José. CommUniverCity's mission is twofold: to "provide rich educational opportunities for residents of all ages that promote a 'college going' culture and instill a desire for lifelong learning" and to "strengthen the community's capacity to bring about vibrant, healthy, and engaged neighborhoods."<sup>1</sup>

Every semester, SJSU's Master of Urban Planning (MUP) program offers an intensive, six-credit course on the practices of community assessment, designed to engage urban planning students in real field work done as part of CommUniverCity. For the Fall 2015 semester, two classes of students spearheaded the first assessment efforts in SUN, followed by one class in the Spring 2016 semester. The results will help to lay the groundwork for more in-depth analyses of SUN, intended to help residents build on the neighborhood's strengths and engage with the City of San José in a more informed, collaborative way. CommUniverCity intends to continue its work in SUN for the next several years. This assessment represents the current conditions in SUN and a snapshot of the different characteristics of the neighborhood.



FIGURE I- FALL 2015 CLASS (RICK)



FIGURE III- SPRING 2016 CLASS



FIGURE II- FALL 2015 CLASS (GINETTE)

### Assessment Area Overview

Part of Central San José and a short walk from downtown, SUN is bounded by the SJSU campus to the north and Interstate 280 to the south. Opinions vary about the neighborhood's eastern and western boundaries, but the South University Neighborhood Association (SUNA) represents residents between South Third and South 11th streets. For assessment purposes, the study area also includes the South of First Area (SoFA), a burgeoning arts and entertainment district to the west of SUN, as well as the area just east of the university, where most of its fraternity and sorority houses are located.

<sup>1</sup> "About Us," CommUniverCity San José, accessed November 30, 2015, <http://cucs.org/about-us/what-we-do>.

Compared to San José as a whole, SUN is much more crowded and less affluent. The neighborhood's population density is more than five times that of the city. The median household income is roughly a third of the city's median. Its residents are overwhelmingly renters; only about 10 percent of households are owner occupied, while citywide the rate is above 50 percent. SUN is a mostly residential neighborhood, and single-family homes and multi-unit apartment complexes coexist within the same block. To meet growing demand for student housing after World War II, Victorian homes were often torn down to make way for apartments. Many of the remaining Victorians have been beautifully restored, but others are damaged and vacant. Large pieces of abandoned furniture on the street are considered eyesores—and a source of tension between homeowners and the transient population of student renters.

The construction of Interstate 280 in the late 1960s demolished blocks of homes and split SUN off from the Spartan Keyes neighborhood to the south. As a result, SUN is a relatively small, walkable neighborhood of less than 150 acres. On- and off-ramps offer residents easy access to the freeway but also generate traffic and tend to encourage speeding, with thousands of vehicles driving through the neighborhood each day. Vehicle noise and pollutants are potential concerns for households near the interstate.

William Street serves as the neighborhood's commercial corridor, with businesses including restaurants, hair salons, convenience stores, and gas stations. SUN is also home to several shelters serving such populations as at-risk youth and adults with mental illnesses. Other well-known institutions include St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Lowell Elementary School, and Notre Dame San José High School. At the geographic and symbolic center of the neighborhood is O'Donnell Garden Park, SUN's only public green space. It serves as the setting for many neighborhood events, including the SUN Association's annual community Halloween party—which, more than any other occasion, provides an opportunity for all members of the neighborhood to gather and mingle.



FIGURE IV- SUN BASEMAP

## Methodology

Students utilized a variety of assessment techniques, but the overall focus was on an asset-based approach. This method identifies a neighborhood's positive strengths and attempts to connect them in ways that multiply their power and effectiveness. This stands in contrast to the more traditional, needs-based model of urban planning, which focuses foremost on a community's problems and deficiencies. Aspects of both approaches can be found in this report, but emphasizing assets, connections, and opportunities served as the assessment team's guiding principle.

The assessment effort included a door-to-door survey conducted on Saturday, September 26, 2015 and organized by CommUniverCity staff. Assisted by SJSU undergraduates in sociology and political science classes, students fanned out through SUN to administer a 15 to 20-minute questionnaire to a randomly-selected sample of 200 residents. The 36 questions focused on residents' opinions about the neighborhood and community involvement. Selected findings from the door-to-door are included in Chapter 1.

The other primary components of the assessment were community open houses held in the fall on Saturday, November 21, 2015 and in the spring on April 16, 2016 at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in SUN. The events were an opportunity for students to present preliminary

findings, engage residents, and solicit feedback. Resident feedback from both events is provided in Chapter 6.

### In addition, the assessment team:

- evaluated maps and aerial photo
- participated in a walking tour led by neighborhood residents
- analyzed demographic data
- consulted official documents and historic records
- conducted interviews with residents and experts
- took measurements of key streets
- attended community events
- assembled a panel of transportation professionals
- collected oral histories
- organized a pair of focus groups looking specifically at the topics of homelessness and improving relations with SJSU's Greek life community.

# 1.0 DIVERSITY, CULTURE, AND CONNECTIONS IN SUN MAKE FOR A UNIQUE COMMUNITY WITHIN THE GREATER SAN JOSÉ AREA

South University Neighborhood is a part of the larger fabric of the City of San José, and it is affected by interactions with people and organizations beyond its borders. These include citywide institutions from the municipal government to local media. This chapter will explore some of these external connections, as well as connections that developed as part of the engagement process that informed this report.

## 1.1 SUN IS DIVERSE

SUN has seen large demographic shifts in the past fifty years. It has transformed from a homogenous, mostly white neighborhood in the 1960s and '70s to an area of diverse cultural backgrounds today. This transition reflects the City of San José's shift from a primarily agricultural community

in the 1930s and '40s to the center of the high-tech industry for the United States and, arguably, the world.<sup>2</sup>

### Population and Race

In the 1970s, San José became one of the United States' fastest growing cities. Between 1970 and 1976, the city's population grew 24 percent to more than a half million people.<sup>3</sup> SUN's population during this time stood at nearly 10,000 people.<sup>4</sup> According to the 1970 U.S. Census, the neighborhood was roughly 90 percent white and 5 percent black. Just ten years later, however, the white population had decreased significantly to 48 percent; the black population held relatively steady at about 6 percent and would remain stable through 1990. During this time, the neighborhood saw a dramatic increase in the percentage of foreign-born residents, from 24 percent in 1980 to more than 40 percent in 1990.

<sup>2</sup> Megan Lynn Alpers, "Valley of Heart's Delight: Orchards to Hard Drives in the San José Mercury News" (master's thesis, San José State University, 2010), accessed November 27, 2015, [http://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4739&context=etd\\_theses](http://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4739&context=etd_theses).

<sup>3</sup> Robert Lindsey, "San José Moves to Manage Its Growth," *The New York Times*, December 30, 1978.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Total Population 1970, prepared by Social Explorer, accessed October 13, 2015, <http://www.socialexplorer.com>.

The Census Bureau did not provide reliable estimates of the Hispanic population in the United States until 1980.<sup>5</sup> That year's Census showed that 27 percent of SUN's population was of Hispanic origin. (It is important to note that the bureau treats "Hispanic and Latino origin" as a question of heritage and thus can be claimed by anyone, regardless of race.) By 2000, more than half of the neighborhood declared Hispanic heritage.

The 2000 U.S. Census was able to provide further insight into the neighborhood's racial composition with the addition of more categories for respondents to choose from. Over 20 percent of the community identified as Asian, more than half of whom considered themselves of Vietnamese descent. Meanwhile, the white population further decreased to a little less than 25 percent.<sup>6</sup> Today, the American Community Survey estimates show that the SUN study area has a population of approximately 7,443 residents, of whom 44 percent claim Hispanic or Latino heritage. The white population stands at 31 percent.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> D'Vera Cohn, "Census History: Counting Hispanics," Pew Research Center, March 3, 2010, accessed November 24, 2015, <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2010/03/03/census-history-counting-hispanics-2/>.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Total Population 2000, prepared by Social Explorer, accessed October 25, 2015, <http://www.socialexplorer.com>.

<sup>7</sup> ESRI population estimates, apportioned through ESRI's Community Analyst Demographic and Mapping Subscription Service, SJSU Education License (Redlands, CA: Environmental Systems Research Institute, 2015), accessed October 22, 2015, <https://communityanalyst.arcgis.com>.

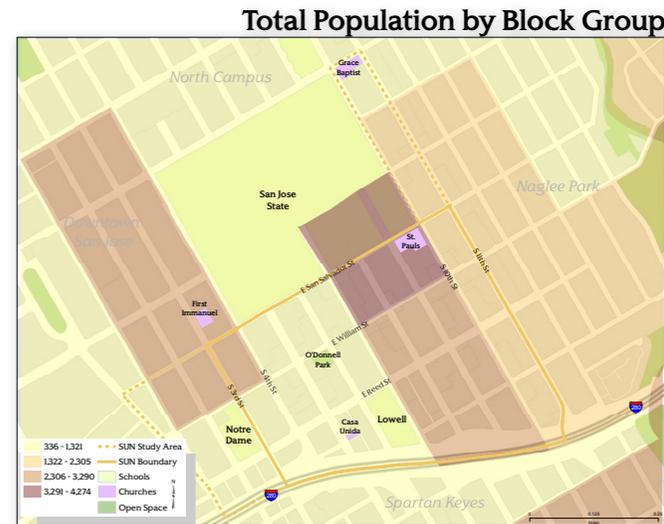


FIGURE 1.1 POPULATION MAP

## Income

The American Community Survey 2009-2013 five-year estimate shows that SUN is one of the lowest-income areas in San José, with a median household income of \$32,768, well below the median income of: an adjacent neighborhood, Naglee Park at \$71,111, the City of San José at \$81,829 and the County of Santa Clara at \$91,702.<sup>8</sup>

Half of the households in SUN have a total household income of less than \$30,000. This is most likely due to the neighborhood's very high proportion of renters, many of whom are college students attending nearby San José State University.

**Median Household Income by Block Group**



**FIGURE 1.2 MEDIAN HH INCOME MAP**

## Housing Tenure

In 1972, a little more than 20 percent of SUN's population owned a home in the neighborhood. Based on data from the U.S. Census, homeownership in SUN slowly declined at a rate of 1 to 2 percent each decade from 1970 to 2000. However, the 2010 U.S. Census indicated that homeownership increased by 4 percent over the previous decade. This may be partially attributed to the U.S. housing boom in the early 2000's. While homeownership among residents may be on the rise, the proportion of owner-occupied housing has decreased. Almost 90 percent of housing units in SUN today are rentals.<sup>9</sup> This can be partially explained by the neighborhood's close proximity to San José State University (SJSU), which draws students looking for affordable rentals near campus.

**Percentage of Owner Occupied Units**



**FIGURE 1.3 OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING MAP**

**Percentage of Renter Occupied Units**



**FIGURE 1.4 RENTER OCCUPIED HOUSING MAP**

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Census Bureau/American FactFinder, American Community Survey 2009-2013 5-Year Estimates, accessed November 27, 2015, [http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmc/cf/1.0/en/county/Santa Clara County, California/ INCOME/ MEDIAN\\_HH\\_INCOME](http://factfinder.census.gov/bkmc/cf/1.0/en/county/Santa%20Clara%20County,%20California/INCOME/MEDIAN_HH_INCOME).

<sup>9</sup> American Community Survey 2009-2013 5-Year Estimates, apportioned through ESRI's Community Analyst Demographic and Mapping Subscription Service, SJSU Education License (Redlands, CA: Environmental Systems Research Institute, 2015), accessed October 22, 2015, <https://communityanalyst.arcgis.com>.

## Education

Approximately 58 percent of neighborhood residents have some college education; 33 percent have earned at least a bachelor's degree.<sup>10</sup>

Percentage of Population with a Bachelor's Degree

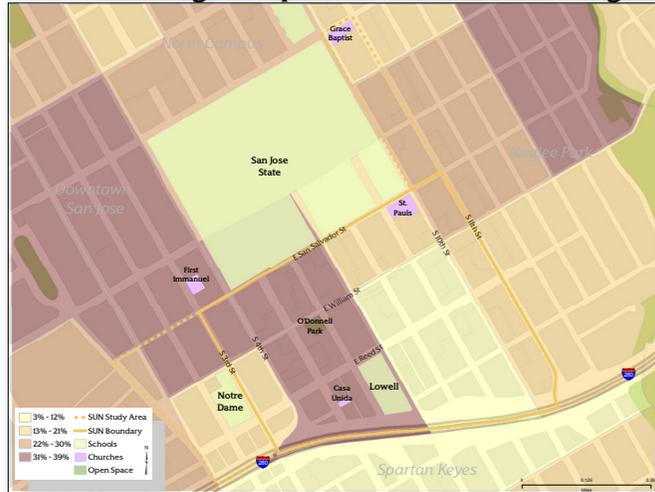


FIGURE 1.5 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT MAP

## Community Survey Results

The assessment effort included a door-to-door survey conducted on Saturday, September 26, 2015 and organized by CommUniverCity. Assisted by SJSU undergraduates in sociology and political science classes, students fanned out through SUN to administer a 15- to 20-minute questionnaire to a representative sample of 200 residents. The 36 questions focused on residents' opinions about the neighborhood and community involvement. Figure 1.6-1.12 illustrates key demographic and resident perception findings from the survey.

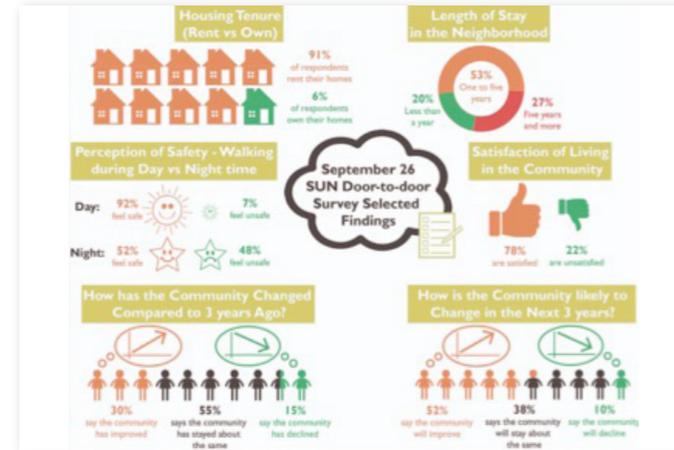


FIGURE 1.6 INFOGRAPH

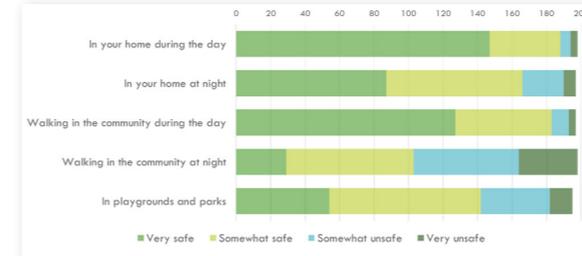


FIGURE 1.7 POWERPOINT GRAPHS

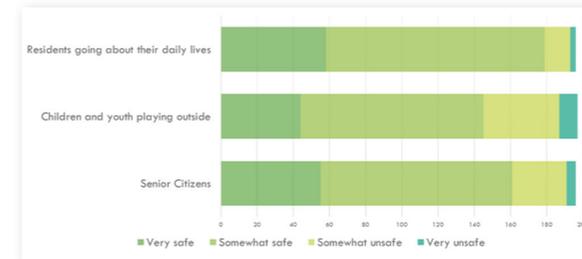


FIGURE 1.8 POWERPOINT GRAPHS

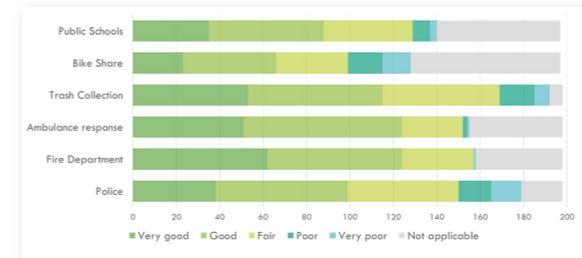


FIGURE 1.9 POWERPOINT GRAPHS

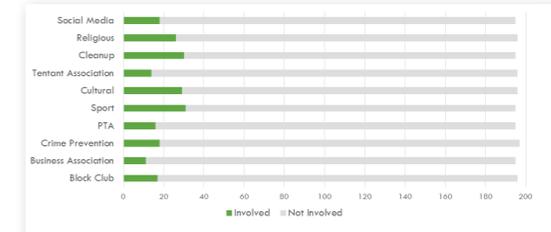


FIGURE 1.10 POWERPOINT GRAPHS

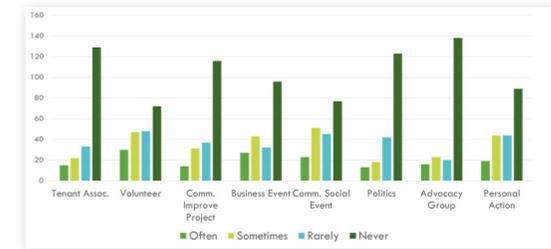


FIGURE 1.11 POWERPOINT GRAPHS

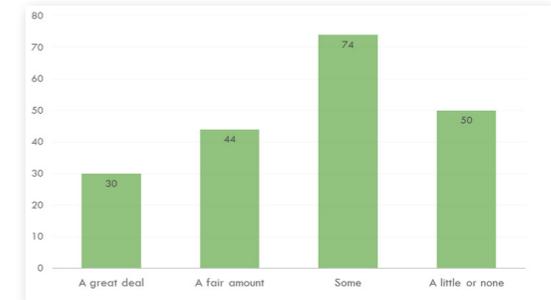


FIGURE 1.12 POWERPOINT GRAPHS

10 American Community Survey 2009-2013 5-Year Estimates, apportioned through ESRI's Community Analyst Demographic and Mapping Subscription Service, SJSU Education License (Redlands, CA: Environmental Systems Research Institute, 2015), accessed October 22, 2015, <https://communityanalyst.arcgis.com>.

## 1.2 RESIDENT PERCEPTIONS INFORM FUTURE DIRECTION FOR SUN

Focus groups were conducted with residents regarding their views about SUN's character and identity. Their responses were collected and organized into broad categories for generalizable analysis.

Ten interviews were with residents in the community; two homeowners and eight renters in total. Some are working professionals, two work for city government and one works in the nonprofit sector; five are students. The summary below reflects their recorded perspectives and interpretation of their responses.

### Renters and Owners

The neighborhood is predominantly composed of renters, with a large number of apartment complexes and homes having been converted into multiple dwelling units. Significant differences between homeowner and renter responses were evident during the interviews. For example, the homeowners' feedback was directed at increasing property values and maintaining the historical integrity of the neighborhood, whereas renters were concerned about the rising cost of housing.

Renters and homeowners however did agree on the immediate challenges facing the neighborhood. Personal

safety, traffic, parking, illegal dumping, and neighborhood cleanliness arose repeatedly during the interviews. The severity of these issues has potential to unite residents of all income levels toward the long-term goal of improving their shared spaces.

### Students

Because of the proximity to San José State University, students comprise a visible population within the neighborhood. Many of the University's sororities and fraternities are located along 10th and 11th Street. It was suggested that the continual in-and-out migration of students has led to instability within the neighborhood. Additionally, neighborhood leaders note that historical homes within the area have been subdivided into multiple dwelling units, thus fragmenting the existing single-family housing stock and serving as reminders of an increasingly demanding rental market.

## 1.3 PRIDE AND PLACE ATTACHMENT: SUN COMMUNITY PROUD TO CALL THE NEIGHBORHOOD HOME

Neighborhoods with a strong sense of pride and community ties can more effectively react to unwanted activities, such as crime and illegal dumping. Encouraging pride in the neighborhood is essential for achieving a

desirable quality of life. Whether it's supporting local businesses, participating in civic organizations or clearing vacant lots of trash, pride and place attachment results in lasting improvement and community self-sufficiency.

Pride and place attachment is demonstrated in a variety of ways, such as maintaining homes and businesses in a neat and attractive appearance, ensuring streets and sidewalks are clean, and historic structures are well-preserved. After conducting a reconnaissance-level survey, the main characteristics attributable to pride and place attachment in SUN were well-maintained homes and yards, unique yard decorations, and public art.

### Well-Maintained Homes and Yards

Well-maintained homes are a strong indicator of place attachment. There are a number of owner-occupied homes and rental apartments located throughout SUN that are well-maintained. As discussed earlier, the neighborhood contains many historic homes which create vibrancy for the area. By investing in their properties through maintenance and restoration, residents demonstrate emotional attachment to the neighborhood.



FIGURE 1.13 PHOTOS OF WELL-MAINTAINED HOMES AND YARDS



FIGURE 1.14 PHOTOS OF WELL-MAINTAINED HOMES AND YARDS



FIGURE 1.15 PHOTOS OF WELL-MAINTAINED HOMES AND YARDS



FIGURE 1.17 PHOTOS OF WELL-MAINTAINED HOMES AND YARDS



FIGURE 1.16 PHOTOS OF WELL-MAINTAINED HOMES AND YARDS

### Yard Decorations

Residents in SUN have eclectic and unique decorations displayed outside of their homes. Most of these decorations appear as structural art, flowers, holiday decorations, statues or stained glass windows. These small gestures add to the character, charm and walkability of the neighborhood.

### Public Art

Most examples of public art were located on the walls of commercial buildings along William Street. SUN can and should use public art more often to foster pride and place attachment.



FIGURE 1.18 PICTURE OF PUBLIC ART



FIGURE 1.19 PICTURE OF PUBLIC ART

## 1.4 ORAL HISTORIES: CAPTURING VOICES OF SUN

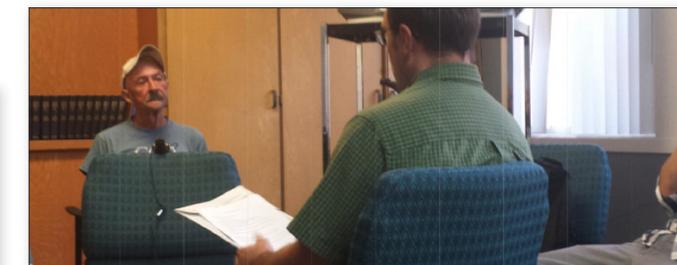


FIGURE 1.20 PHOTO OF JP

Coming back to his fraternity house at 2 a.m. one morning, Jobel Cabigting came across a man dumping trash on the lawn. "I respectfully asked him to leave," the San José State University undergraduate said, "and when he turns around to look at me he pulls out a knife." The incident ended without violence, but it illustrates a genuine safety concern for students who live near campus.

While there is no official count, the general consensus among South University Neighborhood residents is that the number of homeless people near their homes has increased since December 2014. That's when the City of San José cleared out the so-called Jungle, an encampment of more than 300 people located on the other side of Interstate 280.

But homelessness has many faces, and not all of them look like the mentally ill man that Cabigting encountered. John Paul—or J.P., as he prefers to be called—is a member of St. Paul’s United Methodist Church who plays in the praise band. He also, as of the writing of this report, was living in a van in the church parking lot. J.P. had been a live-in caregiver for an HIV patient. When the man died, he was left without a place to live. “At my age—I’m 67 years old—I do have my Social Security,” J.P. said. “I have money, but if I rent a place then I starve to death. So it’s very hard in San José for senior citizens to get housing.”<sup>11</sup>

To further understand residents’ experience and history in SUN, members of the assessment team conducted interviews with two long-term residents. Their stories are included here in full.

## 1. Ann Clarke Interview in O’Donnell Garden Park, October 31, 2015

### Describe your experience living in SUN.

We moved to SUN in 1977, living here 37 to 38 years.

We love living here. I think it was absolutely the right decision. Now, we are obviously not the same people that we were when we moved in, not the same family or circumstances, but it is still fit for us.

We live in a Queen Anne-style Victorian house, but it is not restored in the same way as some of the other beautiful homes in the neighborhood. It was built from plans purchased from Sears at that time. You could buy a whole set of plans and build your home. Several other homes were similarly built in the neighborhood. It was an option for people who could not afford to have custom homes designed by architects at that time.

During 1895 to 1900, conditions were different than now. Not sure if San José did plan checks at that time. People could just build whatever they wanted. Before we bought our home, it was divided into at least seven apartments. It was gross and disgusting. Health department had closed

it. After we bought it, we completely renovated it and made it into our family home with our three children. We raised our kids here and now our children have moved out, our oldest grandchild is 22. We love being here for our retirement, close to downtown and everything, we do not want to move out. We have converted the rear of the house into two legal apartments, which we rent out.

### One of the most significant events that impacted the neighborhood:

During the time when President Reagan was governor, as a cost-cutting measure, he closed down many mental health facilities (except the ones for severely ill people) to disperse people to community care centers in various neighborhoods. These mentally ill people landed very heavily in this neighborhood without any resources or services catering specifically to them. The City of San José, was falling anyways all over the place at the same time. People were moving from downtown, did not appreciate living in the cities and there were a lot of vacant and blighted lots in the neighborhood. There was a sort of vacuum here; People who did not fit in anywhere else came here. This continues to be a problem in this neighborhood.

In the early 1970s, San José State was growing like never before. Students from all over the place came here. San José State did not have any dorms for housing at that time. Therefore nice homes were sold and torn down by

landlords (who were actually like slum lords) and horrible apartments took their place. Redevelopment had bought up some land but did not build anything on it.

### Assets/Opportunities:

From the last five years, the City and university have increased their community involvement. I hope that it continues even further. Students like you from San José State are valuable resources that help in building positive relationships.

Gradually, if we can keep up and intensify this involvement beyond what we are now, it will help bring positive changes in this neighborhood. More activities like Halloween in the Park will bring positive outcomes. If there is something happening in the park every Saturday, people will count on it and look forward to it.

To make this happen we need more resources from the City, maybe a couple of experienced interns from the Parks and Rec. Department can take the initiative and help organize these events and activities regularly in the community or park every Saturday for a couple of hours, maybe from 1 to 3 or 4 p.m. We can find out what people are interested in, what help they need. We can have health and other social workers come and attend these activities and provide support.

<sup>11</sup> Sources: Community interviews; Mark Emmons, “San José’s ‘Jungle’: Former Homeless Encampment Returns to Nature,” San José Mercury News, July 9, 2015, accessed October 21, 2015, [http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci\\_28460323/welcome-san-josé-site-formerly-known-jungle](http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_28460323/welcome-san-josé-site-formerly-known-jungle).

## 2. Sheffield Clarke Interview at his home, 405 S. 8th St. November 4, 2015

Moved to SUN in 1977, living here 37 to 38 years. Only homeowner on this block, rest all are renters. Our house used to have five legal and two illegal apartments in the basement. The house did not have electricity or central heat before so there were gas pipes everywhere. We have upgraded it twice since we moved in. Now we have central heating and a gas furnace in the basement.

### Any significant changes in the past three decades?

Nothing much has changed, except the closing of San Fernando for expanding the SJSU campus. Togo's used to be on William Street. Now it has moved to Fourth Street. Sonia's on Eighth and William has been there the whole time we have been here. The old Spartan Market too is still there.

The housing scene has not seen many changes since we have been here. A couple of houses changed to Sorority homes. The University Club is now a sorority. The childcare center used to be a parking lot.

Walking down San Salvador Street, the 7-Eleven is still there, the little Asian market on the corner of William and Seventh streets is still there.

A couple of houses got burned down and there have been some additions, but nothing significant in the last three decades. It is the same as before.

This corner of the world has not changed much in the last three decades as far as housing and neighborhood businesses are concerned. We can see many more students walking by in the neighborhood; there seems to be higher occupancy. Rents have increased and most of the places have been upgraded. If you want more rent you need to keep up the place. But many of the houses are owned by old people like us, and they are no longer able to keep up. We have two rental units at the rear of the house.

### Character of the neighborhood:

This is a very diverse neighborhood; it is very much like the UN. You can find people from every race, every ethnicity represented here. I have no idea how many different languages are spoken here. There are Vietnamese, Hispanic (both Mexican and South American origin), and people from many other Asian countries. You can find students who are studying, working and old people like us.

Concerns in the neighborhood: When we first moved in, there were prostitutes here on weekends. They were displaced from the downtown area by the police.

We still have homeless people; they are not welcome on the campus so they come here in the neighborhood and make a mess.

We also have graffiti problems three or four times a year. You can find graffiti on the mailboxes, electric poles, and even on the sidewalks. St. Paul's church also has graffiti problems. The City usually comes to clean up at the church, but we usually clean it up if it is near our house.

### Favorite thing about SUN:

SUN's diversity is its identity. It has a unique conglomeration of people, which is constantly changing. We love that everything is so nearby, the kids' schools (Lowell, San José High, and San José State), jobs (Togo's), they could ride their bikes everywhere. We can go to the movies, for dinner, all within walking distances; we do not need to drive. It is good exercise for us and also good for the environment.

We are very proud of our orange tree that we had planted after moving in. It is a magnet for people. People of all ages come to pick oranges; sometimes it becomes challenging at this age, but most of the time it is a good way to meet all kinds of people.

## 1.5 GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS HOLD SUN TOGETHER

Like any community, SUN has groups of people with shared interests. Sometimes their interests place them in opposition with each other, while at other times they highlight opportunities for collaboration. Some are actively pushing for change in the neighborhood; others will experience the effects of that change. The following are just a few of the key groups and organizations that define and characterize the study area. Provided below are descriptions of both specific and general major stakeholders in SUN. Many of the stakeholders are from non-profit organizations, local institutions (schools, churches, and government), neighborhood associations, and local businesses. While not exhaustive, a list of additional stakeholders is also provided in Chapter 5.

### 1.5.1 NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

#### SUN Association

The neighborhood association for most of the study area is the South University Neighborhood Association which is formally recognized by the office of Council District Three.

The Council office is represented by staff liaison Patricia Ceja.<sup>12</sup> The organization represents residents who live in the area bounded by South Third Street, East San Fernando Street, South 11th Street, and Interstate 280. According to the association's mission statement, its purpose is to encourage neighborhood safety and beautification, to encourage communication and collaboration between residents, property owners, schools, businesses, police, local government, and other community organizations, to promote youth participation in neighborhood activities, and to empower residents with education about local government and other resources.<sup>13</sup>

One way the group fulfills its mission is through block captains, who serve as points of contact for residents and report problems and successes back to the SUN Association executive board. The association uses an email mailing list to distribute information on general meetings and special events, including annual celebrations for Earth Day, Halloween, and National Night Out, most of which take place in O'Donnell Garden Park on William Street.

The association is open to all residents. A full list of priorities, which can be found on the SUN Association

website,<sup>14</sup> was approved in 2009 and covers such wide-ranging subjects as safety, increasing single-family homeownership, and adding additional parks or community spaces to the neighborhood. While some goals have been accomplished, others remain outstanding and are still being worked on today.

The primary source of news on happenings in SUN is the SUN Association itself. The group's online offerings include an email newsletter, Twitter account,<sup>15</sup> NextDoor page and website.<sup>16</sup> The group recently migrated its presence on Facebook from a "page" to a "group."<sup>17</sup> While anyone can view a public group, a moderator must approve users before they can make posts; once approved, their posts are more prominently featured than on a page. The group currently has 15 members.

### University Neighborhoods Coalition

University Neighborhoods Coalition (UNC) was created to be an alliance for neighborhoods for the City of San José's Strong Neighborhood Initiative (SNI) program. The UNC originally encompassed a large area from South 1st Street to Coyote Creek, and East Santa Clara Street to Interstate 280.

Today, the UNC covers only the South University Neighborhood and the Greek area on South 10th & South 11th Streets up to East San Fernando Street. The Greek area was added because they wanted to have permit parking in that area. In 1999, the UNC was established as a non-profit, and is managed by a board of local community members. The bylaws allow for seats from various backgrounds and groups, including education, faith, businesses, adjacent neighborhoods, SJSU, local non-profits, government, and landlords. The meetings are open to the public and generally include representatives from each of the groups.

The UNC's purpose is to make the neighborhood a better place to live. During the Redevelopment and SNI period, the UNC was the organization responsible for holding neighborhood meetings to create a top ten list for improving the area. Currently, the UNC has a few members that regularly go to San José City Council meetings to advocate for their interests. UNC meetings are held every second Tuesday of the month at Notre Dame High School.

Interest of the UNC board members appears to be waning. There is often just enough for the bare minimum. In the last seven UNC meetings, representatives from District 3 and business owners have only attended four. Similarly, representatives from faith groups and San José State University have attended five meetings.

O'Donnell Garden Park located at South 6th and East William Street is one of the UNC's proud accomplishments. The UNC identified the need for a park, and pushed the City of San José to develop it. It took years to complete, but was the first new city park in 100 years. The UNC also spearheaded facade improvements and pedestrian lighting on East William Street. The UNC recently worked with a developer to decrease the number of units and building height originally proposed, and prevented the developer from demolishing a property on the historic inventory list. An earthquake safety program is being developed by the UNC. The program was originally slated for neighborhood purposes only, but the City is interested in distributing it to other areas when completed.

Many members of the UNC are active or former members of the South University Neighborhood Association. The groups work together on many neighborhood improvement projects. The board includes the Vice Principal at Notre Dame High School, a St. Paul's representative, an SJSU and Greek organization representative, an Adjacent Neighborhood representative, and a representative of San José's 3rd District Councilmember, Raul Peralez. The group has a strong working relationship with Mayor Sam Liccardo, because he was the former District 3 Councilmember. There is also a board member named Pete Kolstad that has close ties with many groups. He is currently Secretary of

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=1195>

<sup>13</sup> "Welcome," South University Neighborhood, accessed November 27, 2015, <http://www.sjsuna.com/welcome>.

<sup>14</sup> "Priorities," South University Neighborhood, accessed November 27, 2015, <http://www.sjsuna.com/priorities>.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.twitter.com/sjsuna>.

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.sjsuna.com/>.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/414434822080635/>.

the Market/Almaden Neighborhood Association, Adjacent Neighborhood representative for the UNC, on the Steering Committee for the Responsible Landlord Engagement Initiative, and board member of the United Neighborhoods of Santa Clara County as a District 3 representative.

### San José Downtown Residents Association

The section of the study area between Market and Fourth streets is covered by the San José Downtown Residents Association,<sup>18</sup> which represents people who live throughout the downtown area. The group has monthly mixers, quarterly speakers, and other special events. Its identified priorities include the following:

1. Increase the variety of downtown businesses
2. Make downtown more pedestrian friendly
3. Establish transportation alternatives
4. Create accessible healthcare for downtown residents
5. Activate underutilized areas

## 1.5.2 OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

### St Paul's United Methodist Church

St. Paul's United Methodist Church is located on the southwest corner of East San Salvador and South 11th Streets, where it has been a neighborhood landmark for decades. Since July 2012, the current pastor has been Reverend Jennifer Goto, who is extremely active in the neighborhood and also serves as the Associate Community Director for CommUniverCity. The church holds weekly worship services at 10:30 am on Sundays, as well as a variety of other events, often functioning as a community center. Some of these events include programs for low-income children and their families, a weekly mobile farmers market, childcare, and Sunday school. The church is actively involved in pursuits of peace, justice, and inclusion. It is widely regarded as an asset to the SUN.

St. Paul's faces a lack of funding and staffing to accomplish its many goals. Many of the facilities are in need of upgrades and modernization. A lack of worshippers is apparent as well, with an average congregation of about twenty people.

St. Paul's has functioned as a center of SUN for many years. The pastor and members of the church have contributed to the San José State Urban Planning study since its inception. In addition, the church opened its doors for events related

to the project, including past and present open houses. Reverend Jennifer Goto engages in frequent community building with neighborhood residents and in the past has staged daily trips to O'Donnell Garden Park with local mothers to combat illicit activity and loitering. St. Paul's also has an active representative on the UNC board.

Located across the street from SJSU, the church functions as the Methodist campus ministry, a position in which it takes great pride. Many church attendees are current and former university students. The church also hosts events for student groups.

### San José State University

SJSU was founded in 1857 and is the oldest public institution of learning in the State of California. Its primary campus, approximately 154 acres, occupies 19 city blocks to the north of SUN, roughly bounded by San Fernando Street, South 10th Street, East San Salvador Street, and South 4th Street. Though it has one of the smallest campuses in the California State University system, it has one of the highest enrollments with over 32,000 students and over 3,000 staff members.

Residents of SUN have called SJSU both an asset and a barrier. While it is such a large, powerful force in the area, many non-student residents feel unwelcomed or intimidated

by the institution. More work needs to be done to bridge the gap between the university itself, its student population, and non-student residents in the area, which are part of the goals of this report and other ongoing efforts. Most SJSU students who live in the neighborhood are only there for a limited amount of time. It is common to find student residents that only spend anywhere from one to six years on average in the neighborhood. This issue is exacerbated by the fact that many students move to a new residence at the end of each school year. This constant turnover creates a disconnect between student residents and their permanent neighbors. Students, as a more transient force, do not feel any pride or ownership for their temporary home, leading to a lack of involvement in local activities. Though they create more "eyes on the street," students also contribute to some of the neighborhood's problems, such as litter and late-night noise.

The effect that SJSU has on SUN and its residents cannot be overstated. Its students comprise a majority of the renters in the neighborhood and are primary patrons of local businesses. The university owns land in the neighborhood, manages some housing, and its police force patrols some areas. SJSU has a child daycare center in the SUN. SJSU students in the Education Department often volunteer at the child daycare center and Lowell Elementary School. SJSU also provides office space to CommUniverCity for administrative purposes.

<sup>18</sup> San José Downtown Residents Association home page, accessed November 27, 2015, <http://downtownsanjose.wix.com/sjdra>.

## Sunday Friends Foundation

Founded in 1997 by Janis Baron, Sunday Friends Foundation is a non-profit organization which believes that helping others and doing volunteer work fosters self-respect and pride in one's accomplishments. Major efforts include nutrition education and financial resource programs, providing English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and more. It began at homeless shelters in which Janis Baron created a reward system for children at the shelter to participate in cleanup efforts, and now involves parents donating their time and participating in workshops and events in return for tickets. These low-income families work to earn these tickets which can be exchanged for certain items. Through donations by a variety of generous donors, tickets can be exchanged for items that both children and adults desire and need, such as diapers and toys. The exchanging of tickets for these items happens at a weekly program called the Treasure Chest. Sunday Friends has earned numerous awards for its service recognition, including a Jefferson Award, a Kaiser Permanente Thriving Volunteer Award, and a SJSU Provost Award for Excellence in Service Learning. To date, the foundation has grown to involve over 1,000 volunteers from the community each year as well as other local non-profits, SJSU and Santa Clara University.

Programs run by Sunday Friends cycle through three San José locations, including Lowell Elementary (second and fourth Sundays of each month), Anne Darling Elementary (third Sunday of each month) and Santee Elementary (first Sunday of each month). The organization operates numerous programs with the help of volunteers, including a nutrition education program, healthy cooking projects, computer education, finance management, parenting effectiveness, violence prevention, writing support, and life skills for parents, as well as children's programs for science, math, reading, piano, dance, and school readiness for preschoolers. The Treasure Chest event has become very popular in the recent years, helping parents and children living in the community learn about important lessons on how to manage and save money.

Sunday Friends has maintained a strong relationship with Lowell Elementary School through the bimonthly events held at Lowell, in which many low-income families with children benefit greatly from the programs.

## Lowell Elementary School

Lowell Elementary School is a public educational institution within the San José Unified School District, located within the SUN. Bounded by South 6th Street, South 7th Street, East Reed Street and Margaret Street, it is the only elementary school within the SUN. It serves about 430

students ranging from kindergarten to 5th grade, with over 85 percent of students being Hispanic.

Lowell Elementary School is qualified as a Title I school, meaning that a significant percentage of its students come from low-income families. Eligible schools receive federally-funded financial assistance for its students, granting many students access to free or discounted lunches. Additionally, the school is bordered by interstate 280, which creates a physical barrier and increases potential risks for pedestrians and bicyclists, especially for Lowell students and their families travelling to and from school.

Lowell Elementary School provides its cafeteria and one of its buildings to the Sunday Friends Foundation for bimonthly programs and events. SJSU students also provide volunteer services for numerous programs and events throughout the year at Lowell. In addition, SJSU fraternities and sororities lead Lowell students on tours of the SJSU campus.

## Notre Dame High School

Established in 1851, Notre Dame is the oldest private all-girls Catholic high school in California. The school is located within the SUN, bounded by East William Street, South 2nd Street, East Reed Street and South 3rd Street. The school considers its urban setting as an opportunity for its students to learn about culture, science, and

technology and to participate in community service. The student population is 38 percent White, 37 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 22 percent Hispanic and 3 percent Black.

Located in the heart of downtown San José, Notre Dame is landlocked and incapable of any future capital expansion, including sports facilities like swimming pools, tennis courts or recreation areas. As a result, the school has had to create partnerships with surrounding institutions such as SJSU for recreational facility access. Furthermore, since Notre Dame is a private school, its students commute from all over the South Bay Area. Faculty at Notre Dame have noted that the public transportation system can be improved to extend its network, which will make it possible for more students from around the Bay Area to ride transit.

John Bracco, Vice Principal of Student Affairs, is an active board member of University Neighborhoods Coalition, whose meetings are held at Notre Dame High School.

## Preservation Action Council of San José

The Preservation Action Council of San José (PAC\*SJ), founded in 1990, is a non-profit member organization providing information to property owners, education to the public, and promoting programs and policies for historic preservation and compatible new architectural design. PAC\*SJ attends all City of San José Historic Landmark

Commission meetings to stay informed. PAC\*SJ organizes historic walking tours as well as yard and salvage sales throughout the year. Continuity, the PAC\*SJ newsletter, is published quarterly. PAC\*SJ has a strong board with many active volunteers.

Turnover in local San José government has created numerous challenges for PAC\*SJ. Different mayors and elected city officials have had varying degrees of commitment toward historic preservation which creates inconsistencies regarding priorities.

PAC\*SJ has many achievements as an organization. They have secured the preservation and reuse of many San José properties, conducted historic surveys for the San José, and published numerous books on preservation.

The organization has strong working relationships with the City of San José's Planning Director and the Historic Preservation Officer. Both of these positions play a vital role in preserving the history of San José. PAC\*SJ also has some strong relationships with neighborhood associations, including Naglee Park, which is a neighbor to the SUN and shares a similar historic housing stock. For contact information for these stakeholders, please refer to Appendix A.

## Business Owners

The businesses along East William Street form the economic backbone of SUN and serve as a destination area within a primarily residential area. The majority of these businesses are independent ventures; they lack corporate or franchise ties, and they may be the owner's sole source of income. Among the SUN Association's priorities is to transform this section of William Street into a unified business district that would draw more students from the university and people who live outside SUN. Several association members expressed a desire to see more upscale businesses and cafés that would provide social gathering spots.

## Landlords

Rental properties account for 88 percent of the housing units in SUN, more than double the rate for San José as a whole. These rental units are found everywhere from large apartment blocks to converted basements of Victorian homes. While some owners are neighborhood residents who live on the property or elsewhere in SUN, many are out-of-town investors. The SUN Association has developed good working relationships with some of these landlords. In other cases, neighborhood leaders said, they have written letters to owners of properties that they identify as problematic, threatening legal action. The board also works with the Responsible Landlord Engagement Initiative, which

serves as a third-party mediator for disputes involving property owners, assists landlords in developing action plans, and recognizes examples of improved maintenance. This countywide program recently became part of Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County.

A review of Craigslist on Nov. 1, 2015, showed postings for about 25 apartments in SUN. While this information does not represent a scientific sample, it does give a general idea of what rental housing is available in the neighborhood. Monthly rents ranged from \$1,400 to \$2,900, with a median price of \$1,849. The median size was 750 square feet.

## Homeless Population

Homelessness in SUN is similar to the situation in many of San José's urban neighborhoods. SUN is part of central San José, which—with its concentration of services and economic assistance—tends to draw homeless individuals. The churches in the neighborhood actively support the homeless community and provide resources. Grace Baptist Church's Leadership Council recently formed a homelessness subcommittee to look at the issue in the neighborhood, and Grace Community Center features shower and laundry facilities that are open to homeless people. The City of San José provides many other resources for homeless individuals; however these efforts are not specifically directed toward the SUN area.

## Fraternities and Sororities

SJSU currently has 18 active Greek-letter organizations with chapter houses, and 17 of them are located within the study area—mostly on the 100 and 200 blocks of South 10th and 11th streets. They include 10 fraternities affiliated with the Interfraternity Council,<sup>19</sup> six sororities affiliated with the Panhellenic Council,<sup>20</sup> and one fraternity affiliated with the National PanHellenic Council,<sup>21</sup> which represents traditionally black fraternities and sororities. Together, these organizations have about 600 male and 600 female active members, though only a portion live in their respective chapter houses. Each chapter has its own executive board of student leaders, including a president who serves as the chapter's spokesperson and public face.

The fraternity and sorority houses in San José are local chapters of national or international organizations, some of which are more than 180 years old. National leaders have the ability to revoke a local charter, essentially shutting the chapter down, as happened to SJSU's Sigma Pi chapter in March 2015 after it failed to meet scholarship

<sup>19</sup> "Interfraternity Council (IFC)," San José State University, accessed November 28, 2015, <http://www.sjsu.edu/getinvolved/frso/groups/ifc/index.html>.

<sup>20</sup> "Panhellenic Council (PHC)," San José State University, accessed November 28, 2015, <http://www.sjsu.edu/getinvolved/frso/groups/panhellenic/index.html>.

<sup>21</sup> "National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC)," San José State University, accessed November 28, 2015, <http://www.sjsu.edu/getinvolved/frso/groups/nphc/index.html>.

standards.<sup>22</sup> The university can also suspend a chapter, temporarily preventing it from recruiting new members and participating in or hosting events; the Sigma Gamma Rho sorority, for example, is currently suspended through 2016 for hazing violations.<sup>23</sup>

Members of the Greek community told the assessment team that they enjoy living in the area because they are surrounded by their peers and are close to classes. Their primary concern and complaint about the neighborhood is the presence of shelters and transitional housing near their chapter houses, and they expressed a desire to see these facilities moved elsewhere in San José.

## City Government

San José City Council District 3 includes most of Central San José and encompasses 38 different neighborhoods, of which SUN is just one.<sup>24</sup> District 3 is currently represented by Raul Peralez. One of the councilman's four assistants serves as a liaison to SUN and the SUN Association, which is recognized

by the City as an official neighborhood group. San José Mayor Sam Liccardo previously represented District 3 from 2007 to 2015. As a result, Liccardo is well acquainted with the neighborhood's leaders and their goals.

From 1997 to 2012, the City was actively engaged in comprehensive efforts to improve the quality of life in SUN. The initiative began with the creation of an official Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy, which identified neighborhoods that could benefit from improvement plans. The University Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan, adopted in 1998, covered not only SUN but Naglee Park and blocks along the north and west edges of the San José State University campus. The City developed the plan in conjunction with a 17-member advisory group of residents, property owners, students, business owners, and representatives of SJSU and other community organizations. In 2000, the City and San José Redevelopment Agency partnered to launch the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative. The program focused on organizing residents and other stakeholders so they could act "as advocates for proposed action items"<sup>25</sup> in the neighborhood improvement plans. Through the initiative, an update to the University Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan was adopted in 2002. The University Neighborhood Coalition and SUN Association both grew out of these planning efforts.

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative effectively came to a close with the dissolution of all Redevelopment Agencies by the State of California in 2012. Currently, while SUN figures into some of the City departments' upcoming plans and projects, there is no particular agency or staff member focused on the neighborhood. Direct interaction between neighborhood leaders and City staff is limited.

## 1.6 CELEBRATING SUN IN THE SUN

As part of a comprehensive community analysis, the SJSU graduate planning students accessed the local knowledge and resources of the area in order to understand the social fabric of the neighborhood. Through the participation of events held in the neighborhood and through outreach efforts, the students worked to establish connections within the neighborhood, cultivate relationships, raise awareness and bring the neighborhood together. This section provides a summary of a few community events.

### 1.6.1 DON'T BE SPOOKED, CELEBRATE HALLOWEEN IN THE PARK

The SUN Association sponsors and coordinates several events in O'Donnell Garden Park, but residents agreed that nothing brings the entire neighborhood together quite like the annual Halloween celebration. Those at the event on Oct. 31, 2015, described it as a rare opportunity to mingle

with neighbors beyond their immediate block. As part of the ongoing engagement process, several members of the assessment team attended the Halloween party—some in costume—to conduct interviews, pass out flyers for the upcoming Open House, and have informal conversations with residents. For the assessment team, which until then had mostly been to the park on weekdays and observed only a few kids utilizing the playground, the event was a chance to see the park full of people, with hundreds of children, parents, and volunteers making use of the full space.

### 1.6.2 COME TOGETHER, RIGHT NOW, OVER SPRING

On Saturday, March 19, 2016, the SUN Spring Festival was held from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm at O'Donnell Garden Park in celebration of Earth Day. The event included live music from a local band, complimentary lunch, various booths staffed by local groups and organizations like CommUniverCity, SJSU graduate planning students, Sunday Friends Foundation, City of San José Department of Environmental Services, Our City Forest, South University Neighborhood Association, and the University Neighborhood Coalition. The event particularly engaged children with numerous children's activities and a mobile video game truck.

<sup>22</sup> "Charter Revoked From Beta-Eta Chapter at San José State University," Sigma Pi Fraternity International, March 17, 2015, accessed November 28, 2015, <https://sigmapi.org/charter-revoked-from-beta-eta-chapter-at-san-josé-state-university>.

<sup>23</sup> Recognized Student Organization (RSO) Conduct," San José State University, accessed November 28, 2015, <http://www.sjsu.edu/getinvolved/frso/judicial/>.

<sup>24</sup> City of San José, "City of San José District 3," updated August 17, 2015, accessed November 19, 2015, <http://sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/40789>.

<sup>25</sup> City of San José, "Strong Neighborhoods Initiative," accessed November 20, 2015, <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=1745>

The SJSU graduate planning students were provided with a booth at the festival in which to engage visitors. Activities at the booth included a children's drawing activity, and interactive posters that asked three main questions: "What do you like about your neighborhood?" "What do you dislike about your neighborhood?" and "What would you like to see changed about your neighborhood?" In addition, a large map was displayed for visitors to mark where they lived within or near SUN. Interviews were recorded during the festival by the SJSU graduate planning students to be presented at the April 2016 Community Open House.

## 1.7 ARE WE SAFE IN SUN?

The following sections provide analysis of crime and safety in and around SUN, as well as information about the two police departments that serve SUN and other neighborhoods around the SJSU campus: the San José Police Department and San José State University Police Department. Resident perceptions about public services in the neighborhood, including police services are displayed in Figure 1.12. In the past, both departments have had liaisons who attended SUN Association meetings and gave 1.1.2updates on safety issues in the neighborhood. The association's executive board is currently working on re-establishing these connections.

### 1.7.1 CRIME AND SAFETY

This section summarizes general trends of major reported crimes throughout SUN. Three adjacent neighborhoods, Horace Mann, Naglee Park, and Spartan Keyes were also analyzed as a basis for comparison. The three neighborhoods were selected based on their proximity to SUN, SJSU and the downtown area. All four neighborhoods possess a similar Livability Index, which is calculated by AARP and based on the following categories: housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement, and opportunity to achieve a total maximum score of 100. According to AARP, the average community will achieve a Livability Index of 50. The Livability Index of SUN is 55, Horace Mann, 59, Naglee Park, 57, and Spartan Keyes, 55.

**Data Sources:** The following data sources were used to compile data, statistics, and spatial information for this report section:

- <http://www.sjsuna.com/>
- <http://myneighborhoodupdate.net/>
- <http://www.esri.com/software/arcgis/community-analyst>

#### Method 1

A series of comparative maps for the four neighborhoods were generated using ArcGIS Community Analyst. Data from the 2014 Total Crime Index by block group for all four neighborhoods (see Figure 1.21) shows on average the Total

Crime Index for murder, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, and motor thefts is much higher in Horace Mann (82-192) and Spartan Keyes (40-192), than SUN (12-81) and Naglee Park (40-138) neighborhoods.

For the Violent Crime Index (see Figure 1.22) the Murder Index variable was selected and results confirmed that the violent crime rates are higher in Spartan Keyes (40-109) and parts of Naglee Park (40-177) neighborhood than in SUN, with the least number of murders (4-39).

Property crimes (see Figure 1.23) re highest in Horace Mann (46-232) and in some parts of Spartan Keyes (46-177) neighborhood. Moderate property crimes can be seen in the Naglee Park neighborhood towards the creek (46-102) and towards the SoFa District of SUN. The findings show that the SUN as a whole experiences relatively less property crime than other neighborhoods.

Another variable included in the analysis is the Motor Vehicle Theft Index (see Figure 1.24). All four neighborhoods have reasonably low rates of motor vehicle thefts. However, parts of Spartan Keyes towards the south (255-357), parts of SUN towards SoFa District (150-254) and parts of Naglee Park neighborhood towards East Santa Clara St. (150-254) show a higher number of incidents. Horace Mann (64-149) has the fewest motor theft incidents among all four neighborhoods.

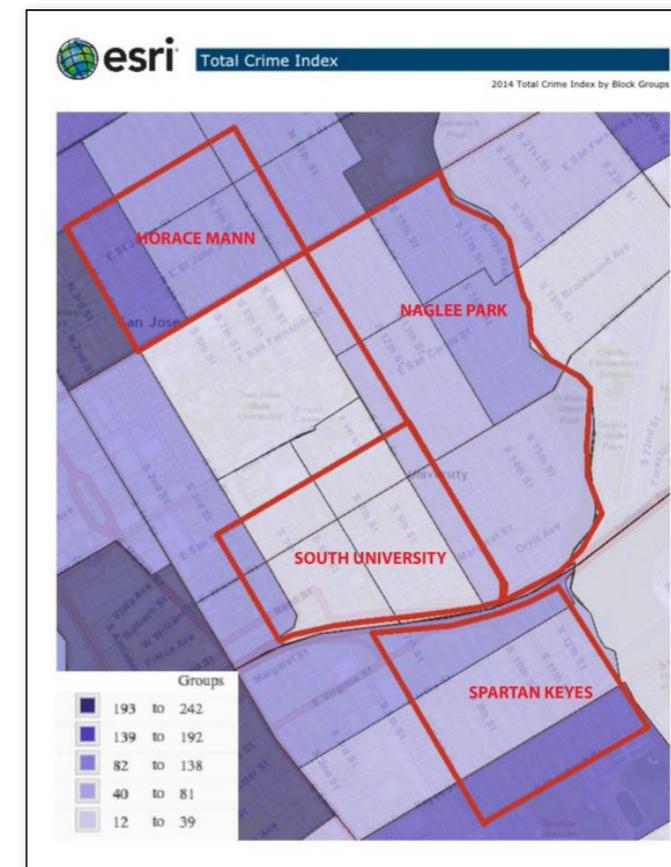


FIGURE 1.21 CRIME FIGURES FROM SPRING CLASS

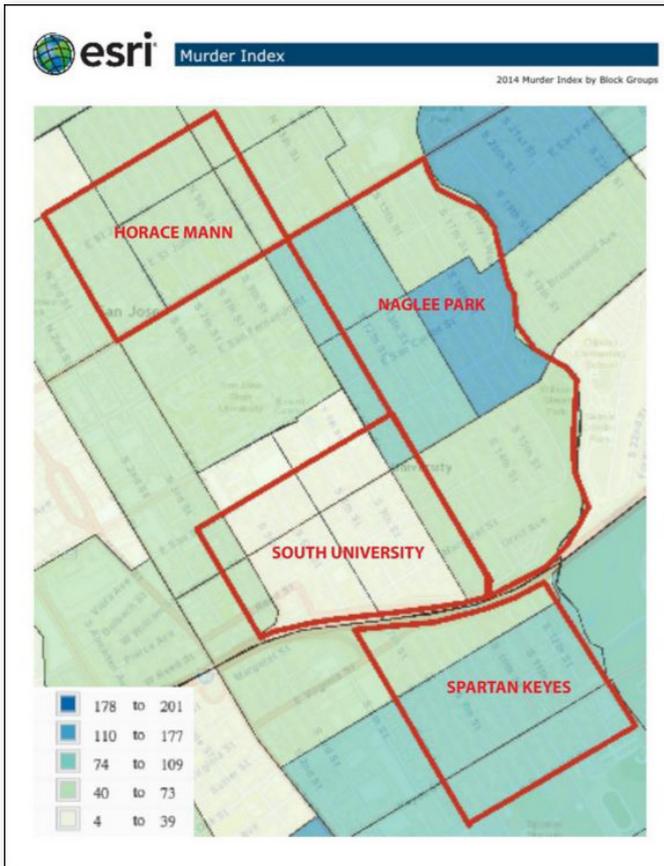


FIGURE 1.22 CRIME FIGURES FROM SPRING CL

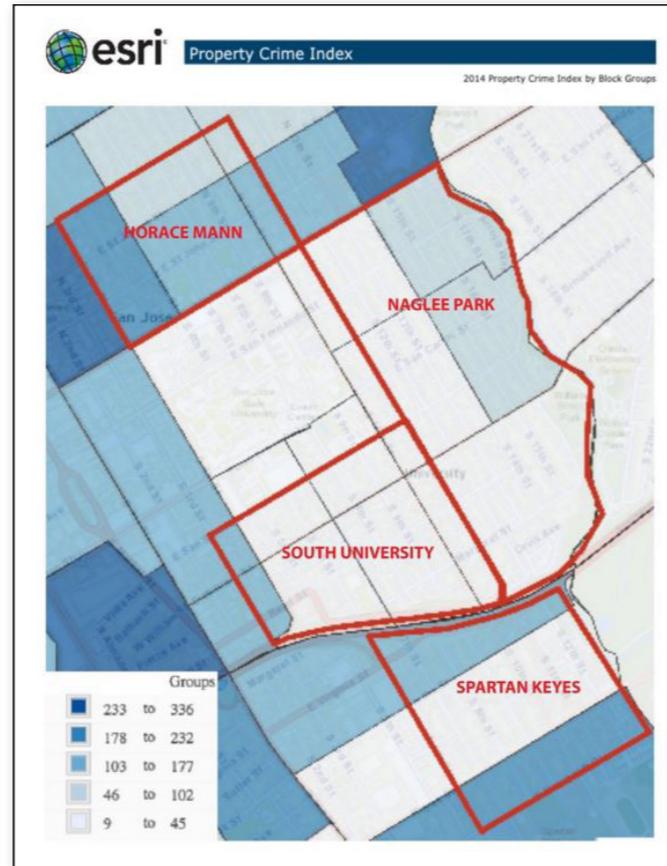


FIGURE 1.23 CRIME FIGURES FROM SPRING CLASS

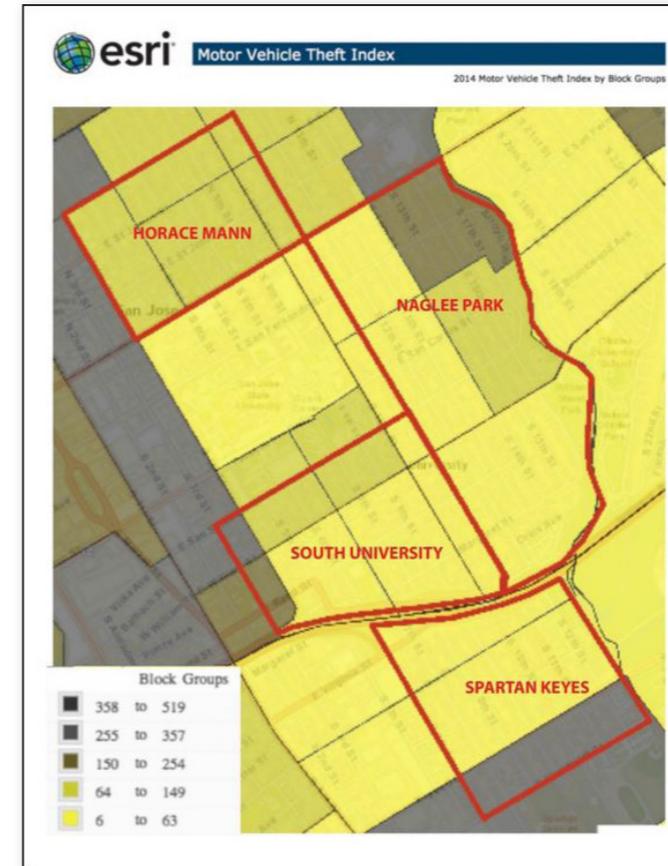


FIGURE 1.24 CRIME FIGURES FROM SPRING CLASS

### Method 1- Key Findings Summary

- Horace Mann exhibited the highest number of crimes out of the four neighborhoods.
- Spartan Keys and parts of Naglee Park exhibited relatively high murder rates.
- Horace Mann exhibited the highest number of property crimes with moderate levels of reported incidents in Spartan Keys.
- Spartan Keys has the highest rates of motor vehicle theft incidents, with moderate numbers in parts of SUN and Naglee Park neighborhood.
- Overall, SUN appears to be relatively safe compared to the three comparison neighborhoods.

### Method 2

Using data from [www.myneighborhoodupdate.net](http://www.myneighborhoodupdate.net), a total of five major police report types were analyzed within each of the four study areas to determine the prevalence of certain crimes and incidents in each area. The categories include: violent, property, traffic, disorder, and other crimes. The breakdown of each crime category is as follows:

- **Violent:** murders, sexual assault, domestic violence and criminal threats
- **Property:** burglary, theft, trespassing, vandalism
- **Traffic:** hit-and-run, parking violation, traffic accident, vehicle stop
- **Disorder:** narcotics, resisting arrest, weapons violation, suspicious circumstances, disturbance, restraining order violation, mental subject, suspicious person

- **Other:** missing person, death, civil assist, parole violation, welfare check, fire

## Method 2- Key Findings Summary

- SUN had the highest quantities of all crimes, on average, compared to the three study neighborhoods (with the exception of Horace Mann, which had similar rates of disorder reports)
- Naglee Park and Spartan Keyes had the lowest amounts of police reported incidents out of the four neighborhoods.
- All neighborhoods exhibited high rates of disorder crimes.
- All neighborhoods had relatively low rates of violent crimes. The most common types of violent crimes included assault and sexual assault.
- All forms of crime reports decreased towards the end of 2015, beginning in November and reaching its lowest rates at the end of December and increasing again around January 2016.
- Overall, there are little to no signs of increasing or decreasing incidents of any one type of crime. Property, violent, traffic, disorder, and other crime remain relatively consistent throughout the year.
- Disorder crimes exhibit the highest volatility across all neighborhoods and experience high and low fluctuations throughout the year.
- The majority of crime reports occur on major intersections and streets, including East Santa Clara and South 11th Street.

## Summary

Discrepancies in findings between the two methods may be influenced by the year in which data was collected as well as the method by which data was collected. The ESRI Community Analyst tool recorded information from 2014 and registered information at the block level, resulting in possible inconsistencies when comparing such information to the neighborhood-specific data gathered from [www.myneighborhoodupdate.net](http://www.myneighborhoodupdate.net). Regardless, both methods provide useful insight into the presence and location of crime in SUN and surrounding neighborhoods in central San José.

### 1.7.2 SAN JOSÉ POLICE DEPARTMENT

The San José Police Department has a Crime Prevention Unit that includes a Neighborhood Watch program. This unit makes presentations to neighborhood groups to help the communities understand how to discourage, deter, and prevent crimes such as burglary, auto theft, and other personal crimes in or near homes.

### 1.7.3 SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

The San José State University Police Department is responsible for responding to all crimes committed on most local property owned, operated, controlled or administered by SJSU or the California State University system.<sup>26</sup> This includes off-campus property located within SUN, including the International House, Associated Students Child Development Center, and fraternity and sorority houses.<sup>27</sup> In the case of major crimes, the university police department may request assistance from the San José Police Department.

Among the department's programs are a dispatch center, evening shuttle and escort programs, investigative and crime prevention units, and other services to help the university and surrounding areas.

<sup>26</sup> San José State University Police Department, "Memorandum of Understanding between the City of San José & SJSU," accessed November 20, 2015, [http://www.sjsu.edu/police/about\\_upd/mou\\_city\\_sjsu/index.html](http://www.sjsu.edu/police/about_upd/mou_city_sjsu/index.html).

<sup>27</sup> San José State University Police Department, "Jurisdiction," accessed November 20, 2015, [http://www.sjsu.edu/police/about\\_upd/jurisdiction/index.html](http://www.sjsu.edu/police/about_upd/jurisdiction/index.html).

## 2.0 TRANSPORTATION: MOVING AROUND SUN

### 2.1 I-280: THE FREEWAY'S LONG SHADOW OVER SUN

South University Neighborhood as it is known today did not exist prior to the late 1960's. SUN and the adjacent Spartan Keyes Neighborhoods to the south used to be one larger neighborhood until construction of I-280 began. In order to make room for on-ramps, entire city blocks disappeared at South Fourth and South 11th streets. When the freeway opened in 1972, it resulted in more traffic on local streets and speeding vehicles entering and exiting the interstate. This increased traffic and vehicular speeds on neighborhood streets, in turn, decreased SUN's desirability as a residential neighborhood.<sup>28</sup>

Figure 2.1 shows just how much of the original neighborhood was torn down and how separated the neighborhood became after I-280 was built.



FIGURE 2.1 IMPACT OF HIGHWAY 280

Interstate 280 is located at the southern border of the South University Neighborhood, and carries over 200,000 cars per day. SUN residents feel the effects of elevated traffic volumes along Third, Fourth, 10th, and 11th Streets leading to and from freeway on- and off-ramps. Residents can experience upwards of double the number of cars traveling along these “collector” streets when compared to streets such as William or Reed which run parallel to the I-280. For more detailed traffic volumes of streets within SUN, please refer to Figure 2.4.



FIGURE 2.2 PHOTOS OF I-280



FIGURE 2.3 PHOTOS OF I-280

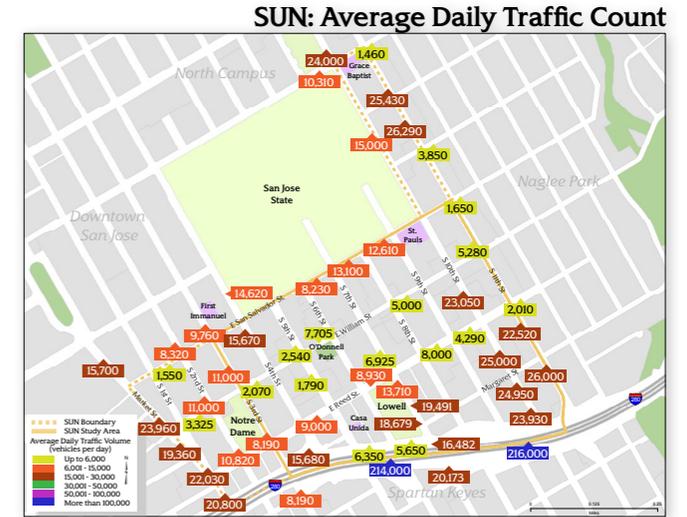


FIGURE 2.4 ADT MAP

A panel of transportation experts—including representatives from the City of San José, urbanism advocacy group SPUR, and California Walks—all identified I-280 as an obstruction because it has severed SUN from other parts of the city. The neighborhood “gets more uncomfortable the closer you get to the highway,” said California Walks Planning and Policy Manager Jaime Fearer. “If you’re on foot or bike, trying to get south from there is not very pleasant. I imagine for those people that live closer, they deal with a lot of noise and air pollution.”

28 Maggi and Montgomery, Historic District Study, 18.

## 2.2 PARKING IS AT A PREMIUM

According to the American Community Survey 2009-2013 Five-Year Estimates data, 59.2 percent of SUN residents either drove alone or carpoled to and from work as their primary means of transportation – that translates to a high demand for parking.<sup>29</sup>

Immediately evident in SUN is the lack of driveways and covered garage spaces which can be attributed to SUN's historical roots. Instead, most cars utilize on-street parking or converted spaces located in the front yards of properties. The few covered spots that do exist belonged mainly to the larger apartment complexes dotting the neighborhood.

The lack of parking has led to interesting parking behavior. Cars, for example, were often parked on sidewalks serving both as an eyesore and a safety hazard. To utilize the street parking spaces in SUN, a special SUN parking permit is required. These are available to residents for an annual \$35 fee. This cost is much cheaper than any of the adjacent SJSU campus owned lots and SUN Association leaders suspect that student demand for parking has created a secondary market for these permits among students, further

exacerbating the parking problem.<sup>30</sup> This is especially problematic for actual SUN residents who drive as these permits are limited – only five permits are legally allowed per household.

Unfortunately, parking is a tough problem for SUN and one that is not likely to disappear soon. SUN's location makes it somewhat of a parking availability "desert" in which parking locations in and the neighborhood are simply not available. I-280 cuts off the neighborhood to the south, while the SJSU campus and its student only permit parking turns away SUN parkers to the north. To the west is the busy SoFA District, while to the east lies a different parking zone requiring a different permit to park. Given the tight supply and high demand for parking, SUN and city leaders must work to provide creative solutions in the near future to alleviate this issue. Thankfully, pieces of the solution may already exist.

## 2.3 BICYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS CAN HAVE THEIR FUN IN THE SUN

While road access for bicyclists and pedestrians is often lacking in many areas of San José, SUN offers a strong baseline of access and also has great potential. SUN's flat topography and gridded street network make this area easy for bicyclists and pedestrians to navigate. Additionally, road diets have already been implemented on the major arterials along the perimeter of SUN, reducing the number of car lanes, adding buffered bike lanes for cyclists, and incorporating countdown crossing-signals for pedestrians.



FIGURE 2.5 PICTURE OF ROAD DIETS

### 2.3.1 BICYCLISTS

Many of SUN's streets currently contain either a Class 2 dedicated on-street bike lane or a Class 3 shared bike route which are demarked by sharrows (see Figure 2.6). Additionally, the City's 2020 Bike Plan outlines the construction of 1.8 additional miles of Class 2 and Class 3 bike lanes to the 3.5 miles already built.<sup>31</sup>



FIGURE 2.6 SHARROWS PHOTO

<sup>29</sup> American Community Survey 2009-2013 5-Year Estimates, apportioned through ESRI's Community Analyst Demographic and Mapping Subscription Service, SJSU Education License (Redlands, CA: Environmental Systems Research Institute, 2015), accessed October 22, 2015, <https://communityanalyst.arcgis.com>

<sup>30</sup> Residential Permits," City of San José, accessed November 30, 2015, <http://www.sanjoséca.gov/index.aspx?NID=3410>.

<sup>31</sup> City of San José, San José Bike Plan 2020 (San José, CA: November 17, 2009), ii, accessed November 30, 2015, [http://www3.sanjoséca.gov/clerk/Agenda/20091117/20091117\\_0602att.pdf](http://www3.sanjoséca.gov/clerk/Agenda/20091117/20091117_0602att.pdf).

Street	Class 2 Existing	Class 2 Planned	Class 3 Existing	Class 3 Planned
E. Reed St.		0.7 miles		
E. San Salvador St.		0.7 miles	0.7 miles	
E. William St.				
S. Market St.				0.3 miles
S. 1st St.				0.1 miles
S. 2nd St.	0.3 miles			
S. 3rd St.	0.3 miles			
S. 4th St.	0.2 miles			
S. 7th St.	0.4 miles			
S. 10th St.	0.8 miles			
S. 11th St.	0.8 miles			
Total Mileage	2.8 miles	1.4 miles	0.7 miles	0.4 miles

TABLE 2.1 BIKE LANE TYPES ON SPECIFIC STREETS

## 2.3.2 PEDESTRIANS

Over 12 percent of workers ages 16 and older living in SUN reported walking as their main mode of transportation to work.<sup>32</sup> This may be due in part to the flat topography of

the neighborhood, the high number of renters and students living in the area, the proximity to the SJSU campus, and the existing infrastructure that services pedestrians.

The neighborhood has continuous sidewalks, all of which are at least five feet in width. This allows for two people to comfortably walk side-by-side. The majority of sidewalks in the neighborhood are compliant with the standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

## 2.3.3 COLLISIONS

Unfortunately, bicyclists and pedestrians are not immune from traffic collisions. In a three year period from January 2011 to January 2014, eleven collisions involving a pedestrian and eleven collisions involving a bicyclist took place. Of the total twenty two collisions, only four were deemed to be the fault of the bicyclist or pedestrian. The remaining collisions were due to unsafe driving, failure to observe right of ways, and consumption of alcohol.<sup>33</sup> For details on specific locations of collisions in SUN, see Figure 2.7 While bicyclists and pedestrians are not immune from causing collisions, the need for even safer routes for non-motorists is clear.

SUN: Bike and Pedestrian Collisions with Automobiles (2010-2014)



FIGURE 2.7 TRAFFIC COLLISION MAP

## 2.3.4 LOOKING AT THE BRIGHT SIDE

Increasing the safety and desirability of bicyclists and pedestrians in SUN is a highly achievable goal. Indeed, a number of infrastructure changes that are already implemented in parts of SUN can be expanded into the rest of the neighborhood to simply and effectively help non-motorists better move around.

The presence of street trees over ten feet in height that provide a significant amount of shade along 6th and 10th Streets, for example, led to a noticeable increase in pedestrian comfort. Providing more shade trees along other large corridors may increase the desire to walk among residents.

From a safety perspective, the intersection at S. 7th Street and San Salvador Street entering into the SJSU campus offers a prime example of a quality intersection. A 25 second audible timer sounds for pedestrians while crossing, and traffic is stopped in all directions simultaneously, allowing pedestrians to cross unimpeded. Additionally, curb ramps are present at all curbs and feature rumble strips that offer tactile feedback for the visually impaired.

This stands in stark contrast to the intersection at S. 7th and William Streets which provides no curb ramps at all. Additionally, pedestrians are given a mere 15 seconds to cross via a non-audible timer. However, as seen at the previous intersection, proven solutions to increasing pedestrian safety are already in place in SUN. City and SUN leaders must work together to expand these essential safety features into those intersections lacking infrastructure. Doing so will fulfill SUN's potential of being an easy, safe, and fun place in which to walk and bike.

32 American Community Survey 2009-2013 5-Year Estimates, apportioned through ESRI's Community Analyst Demographic and Mapping Subscription Service, SJSU Education License (Redlands, CA: Environmental Systems Research Institute, 2015), accessed October 22, 2015, <https://communityanalyst.arcgis.com>.

33 University of California, Berkeley Transportation Injury Mapping System, California Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (Berkeley, CA: Safe Transportation Research and Education Center, 2014), accessed October 2015, <http://tims.berkeley.edu>.

## 2.4 SEEN, HEARD, USED: PUBLIC TRANSIT IN SUN

The percentage of SUN residents taking transit to work is 9.4 percent, significantly greater than the 3.5 percent taking transit to work for the entire city.<sup>34</sup> This is an especially strong ridership figure given that Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) buses provide the sole public transportation options in SUN. VTA has seven on the periphery of the neighborhood boundary.

Five bus lines—66, 68, 72, 73, and 82—service SUN along north-south routes and provide residents with local access to nearby neighborhoods including Naglee Park, Spartan Keyes, and Downtown San José. These lines also lead to connections to transit options servicing South San José, Gilroy, Milpitas, and Campbell. These routes are in service for long hours with routes running as early as 6 a.m. and ending after 11 p.m. Additionally, several other bus lines, including SJSU's Park and Ride shuttles, use the neighborhood as a thoroughfare.

### Transportation Improvements

VTA's Revised Transit Service Plan for FY16 and FY17 identifies short-term bus route improvements for Santa

Clara County, including four lines that currently serve SUN.<sup>35</sup> Lines 66 and 68 will improve their weekend schedules so that buses arrive every 20 minutes between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Line 72 will add an extra northbound trip on weekdays during the peak hours of 8:30 and 9:30 a.m., an extra southbound trip between 6:30 and 7:30 p.m., and an extra northbound trip on Sunday mornings. Finally, line 82 will see extended service on Sundays.

Additionally, there are a number of proposed improvements that will not directly affect service in SUN but will work to increase the overall value of transit in San José. VTA has plans to improve its light rail system and add Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) routes in the downtown area, as well as implement a bus route connecting downtown to Mineta San José International Airport.

In addition, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) is working on a planned extension from Fremont to Downtown San José. Transit ridership is already relatively high in the neighborhood, with approximately 9 percent of residents using some form of public transportation as their primary mode of travel to work. Continued improvements can only serve to benefit the neighborhood given its current congestion and lack of parking.

Line	Weekday			Saturday		Sunday		
	Hours	Commute Hour Frequency (5 - 9 a.m. / 3 - 6 p.m.)	Mid-day Frequency (9 a.m. - 3 p.m.)	Night Frequency (After 7 p.m.)	Hours	Frequency	Hours	Frequency
66	5 a.m. - 11:30 p.m.	15	20	30-60	6 a.m. - 11:30 p.m.	30	6 a.m. - 10:30 p.m.	30
68	4 a.m. - 12:30 a.m.	15	20	30-60	6 a.m. - 12:30 a.m.	30	6 a.m. - 12:30 a.m.	30
72	5:30 a.m. - 10:30 p.m.	15	15-20	30-60	6:30 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.	30	6:30 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.	45
73	5:30 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.	15	20	30-60	7 a.m. - 9 p.m.	30	7 a.m. - 8 p.m.	45
82	6 a.m. - 9 p.m.	30	20	30-60	7:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.	30	8 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.	60

TABLE 2.2: VTA HEADWAYS

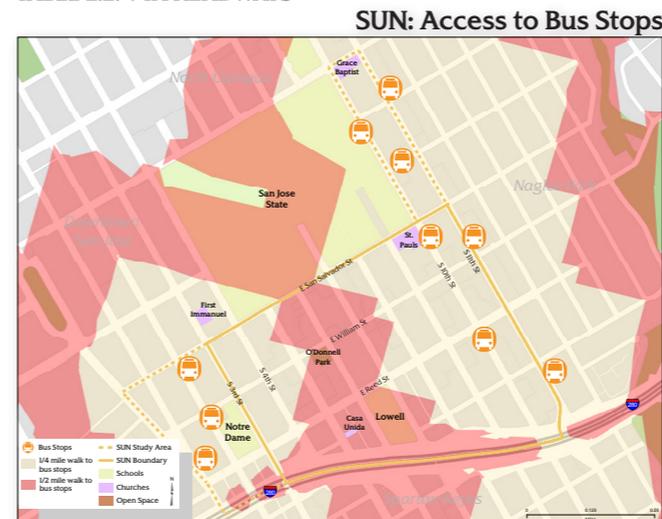


FIGURE 2.8 WALKING DISTANCE MAP

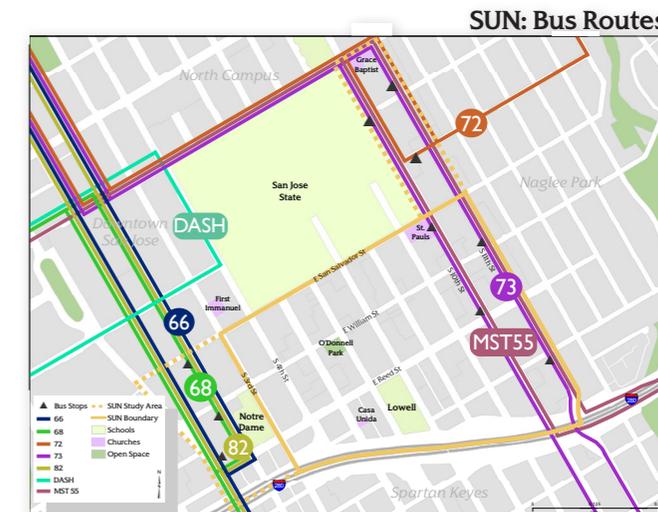


FIGURE 2.9 BUS ROUTES IN SUN

34 United States Census Bureau/American FactFinder. "B08101: Means of Transportation to Work by Age," American Community Survey 2009-2013, Five-Year Estimates (Washington, DC: United States Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office, 2013), accessed November 27, 2015, <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

35 Revised Transit Service Plan for FY16 and FY17," Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, accessed October 8, 2015, <http://www.vta.org/serviceplan>.

## 3.0 URBAN FORM

SUN consists of three primary land uses – residential, commercial, and open space. Low and medium density housing comprise the bulk of SUN’s residential land use while the William Street corridor and the neighboring SoFA District are home to the neighborhood’s primary access to commercial activity. Commercial land use is explored in depth in Chapter 4.0. Open space is comprised mainly of O’Donnell Garden Park, a small, yet highly active and important, green space in the neighborhood located at the corner of South Sixth Street and East William Street. There is also a small public plaza in the SoFA district called Parque de los Pobladores (formerly Gore Park).

SUN also consist of three types of corridors, transitional, commuter, and residential. A “corridor” is....

### 3.1 HOUSING OF THE RISING SUN

The proximity of SUN provides access to downtown San José and San José State. This creates challenges and opportunities for prosperity. The neighborhood was originally laid out in a traditional street grid pattern, which has influenced development, traffic flow, and expansion.<sup>36</sup>

The current urban form today is largely influenced by three periods of developments: pre-World War II, post-World War II until 1970, and from 1970 to present.

#### Pre-World War II

SUN’s close proximity to the Central Business District, the railroad line down Fourth Street, and the Reed Street and State Normal schools all made the neighborhood a desirable place to live. This time period also marked the onset of an era of residential development that continued for half a century. Most of San José’s civic and business minded citizens lived here in the early 1900s.

Development in SUN in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was mostly limited to single-family homes. Many were large Victorians decorated in the popular architectural styles of the era, including the Queen Anne and shingle styles. These homes were a sign of prestige for the city’s well-to-do and professional residents. Later construction brought craftsman-style homes to the neighborhood, as well as bungalows with terracotta roofs and stucco walls.

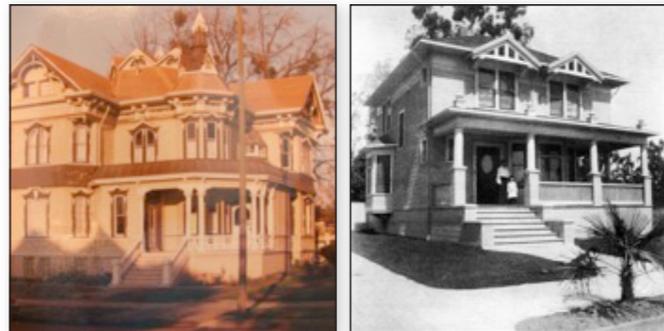


FIGURE 3.1 & 3.2 HOUSING PICTURES PRE WORLD WAR II

From 1872 to 1921, the San Jose Normal School (San Jose State University today) did not provide housing for students. As such, students often lived in SUN, a trend that continues to define the neighborhood today even with the growth of on-campus housing. To offset this problem, the YWCA and Catholic churches provided housing for students via dormitories and cooperative housing arrangements.<sup>37</sup>

#### Post World War II

At the college’s request, the City issued new zoning regulations in 1929 that allowed the replacement of older single-family housing with high-density development; however, those changes did not start to affect SUN

until enrollment began to pick back up after the war. While nearby Naglee Park had been zoned for single-family homes (R-1), parts of SUN were zoned for varying degrees of multifamily housing (R-2, R-3, and R-4), with the densest housing allowed on Fourth and Seventh streets near the college. In addition, once the college earned national accreditation, fraternity and sorority houses and new dormitories started appearing in the neighborhood along 10th and 11th streets. In 1956, after acquiring funds from the State, the college bought 50 parcels of land between San Carlos and San Salvador streets for dormitory construction; land around the acquisition was also developed for private dormitories. Multifamily housing construction mostly stopped after 1965 due to a combination of factors, including a shift in the student body to older students who were more likely to commute and new rules in the City’s zoning code that required one parking space for every two beds.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Franklin Maggi and Bonnie Montgomery, Historic District Study: South Campus Neighborhood, San José (San José, CA: Archives and Architecture, 2005), 11, accessed October 10, 2015, <http://www.archivesandarchitecture.com/projectrepository/>

SouthCampusDistrictEvaluation\_070805.pdf.

<sup>37</sup> Maggi and Montgomery, Historic District Study, 14.

<sup>38</sup> Maggi and Montgomery, Historic District Study, 18.



SUN: Existing Land Use Map



FIGURE 3.11 EXISTING LAND USE MAP

In the figure-ground map (Figure 3.12), the black solid areas represent building footprints or built space. Large-building footprints show SUN's close proximity to downtown and act as a clear demarcation between commercial and residential uses. The map clearly illustrates that there is limited amount of open space that is available for local residents, beyond streets and public right-of-ways, which affects the quality of life and social connections among residents.

SUN: Figure-Ground Map



FIGURE 3.12 FIGURE-GROUND MAP

## 3.2 SUNNY CORRIDORS

According to contemporary Urban Form thought, SUN contains three classifications of corridors: transitional, commuter, and residential. While the commuter and residential types are common throughout San José, the transitional corridor stems from the neighborhood's proximity to SJSU. An example of each type of corridor is explored below.

### 3.2.1 TRANSITIONAL CORRIDOR: SAN SALVADOR STREET, BETWEEN 6TH AND 8TH STREETS

#### Buildings

San Salvador Street is a relatively compact area of multi-family housing, a 7-11 convenience store, a university-owned residence hall, and a five-story parking garage. The five multi-family structures are all two stories in height and contain carports on the ground levels. Washburn Hall, the SJSU-owned dormitory, is three stories in height and houses many SJSU incoming first year students.

#### Tree Coverage

Seven trees were counted during the data collection phase and ranged between ten and sixty feet. This number is low when compared to the 10th Street and 6th Street corridors, which is surprising due to the amount of university-generated pedestrian activity at the intersection of 7th and San Salvador Streets.

#### Street Lights

All of the street lighting along the San Salvador corridor is provided by overhead lighting that emits a distinctive

yellow glow that blankets the entire corridor in the evening. On San Salvador Street the lighting sufficiently covers the streets and sidewalks, in large part due to the lack of obstructions such as trees.

#### Sidewalks

Aside from minor cracks, pedestrian areas along San Salvador Street are free of sidewalk damage. In terms of accessibility, pedestrian activity generated from the SUN residents is frequent enough to warrant the signalized intersection, which also includes four truncated dome curb ramps and a diagonal crosswalk. Additionally, four standard concrete curb ramps were observed on 6th and 8th Streets at their respective intersections with San Salvador Street.

### 3.2.2 COMMUTER CORRIDOR: 10TH STREET, BETWEEN SAN SALVADOR AND REED STREETS

#### Buildings

This portion of 10th Street contains a mix of residential and commercial uses. The majority of homes are single-family structures. Some of the older homes in the neighborhood have since been subdivided into smaller living units for multiple families or unrelated individuals,

with other structures being purposefully designed to look like single-family homes yet built to house multiple families. These homes range in architectural style from classic three-story Victorian to single-floor bungalows. There were 18 of these housing styles present during the field survey, in addition to 12 multifamily complexes.

Commercial uses on 10th Street are concentrated at the intersection of William Street, the primary commercial corridor of SUN:

- Mi Chalateca (Restaurant)
- Creasian (Restaurant)
- William Launderland (Laundromat)
- University Pure Water
- Western Union
- Super Tacqueria (Restaurant)
- Laundromat Costa Azul
- An auto repair shop

The only non-residential and non-commercial parcel observed on 10th Street was St. Paul's United Methodist Church. This institution provides spiritual services in addition to acting as a community landmark and event center for SUN residents.

### Street Lights

The street lighting along 10th Street differs significantly from that on San Salvador Street. While the lighting

fixtures are the same overhead style, there are a number of trees along 10th street and these prevent much of the light from reaching the sidewalks. This creates a situation where stretches of the sidewalk are overly dark. Areas near intersections tend to be more open and well-lit, but the number of dark areas could make users uncomfortable.

### Sidewalks

Sidewalk quality problems were observed on 10th Street. The majority were cracks in the pavement, prohibiting ADA access. The sidewalk quality was satisfactory overall, with both intersections at San Salvador and William Streets exhibiting four standard concrete curb ramps.

## 3.2.3 A RESIDENTIAL CORRIDOR: 6TH STREET, BETWEEN WILLIAM AND MARGARET STREETS

### Buildings

Homes on 6th Street are single-family dwellings. Similar to 10th Street, it was not apparent how many families were living in each house except for those dwellings that had multiple mail boxes. Additionally, the presence of well-kept lawns, historic buildings and facades, and other sources of community pride and place attachment were indicative of

owner-occupied homes. Most of the houses are between two and three stories, set back close to the street, and offered a sense of enclosure that made for a comfortable walk. The College Market is the one commercial use in this portion of 6th Street and also contains a residential unit on the second floor. Across from the market is the O'Donnell Garden Park, the site of annual community events such as the Halloween Social. Two blocks south of the park is Lowell Elementary School, which has the only sports field in the neighborhood.

### Tree Coverage

Street trees were abundant in this corridor; 83 being counted in all. The count was even higher than the 47 observed on 10th Street, which was in turn much higher than San Salvador's seven trees. This shows that there is an unequal distribution of trees in the neighborhood, and that an area such as San Salvador might benefit from an improved street tree or vegetation management program. While the presence of trees does not necessarily mean a corridor has a better functioning streetscape, it does contribute to sense of place and enclosure.

### Street Lights

The street lighting along 6th Street provides the most interesting comparative example in the neighborhood.

The northernmost block of 6th Street is lit by pedestrian scale lights that differ significantly from the roadway style lights located in other areas of the neighborhood. The pedestrian scale lights are on shorter poles that do not arc over the street. They also produce a white light. The positioning of these lights (near the sidewalk and below the trees) does an excellent job of illuminating the sidewalk along this block. The street lights among the southernmost block, however, are the roadway style found in the other corridors. As was the case with the 10th Street corridor, the lights here do a poor job of illuminating the sidewalks as the light is obstructed by trees.

### Sidewalks

The quality of sidewalks along 6th Street is relatively consistent throughout. Uneven pavement and some moderate-sized potholes did pose problems, but they were in limited amounts. Accessibility was also not a severe problem although two curb ramps were absent on the north side of the William Street intersection, while one was missing on the north end of the Margaret Street intersection. The Reed Street intersection includes eight standard concrete curb ramps, which were complemented by sidewalks made out of brick material to stand out from the rest of the street. This design method has been shown to decrease traffic speeds in certain residential neighborhoods.

## Building Heights

### South University Neighborhood (SUN)



FIGURE 3.13 BUILDING HEIGHT MAP

## 4.0 COMMERCIAL LAND USE

Commercial activity in SUN is sporadic, with the greatest concentration of businesses situated along William Street and the nearby SoFa District. This is illustrated in the concentration of businesses map as shown in Figure 4.1. Business locations from the SoFA district's website and a collection of William Street businesses were used as data sources to show different levels of commercial activity in the SUN study area.

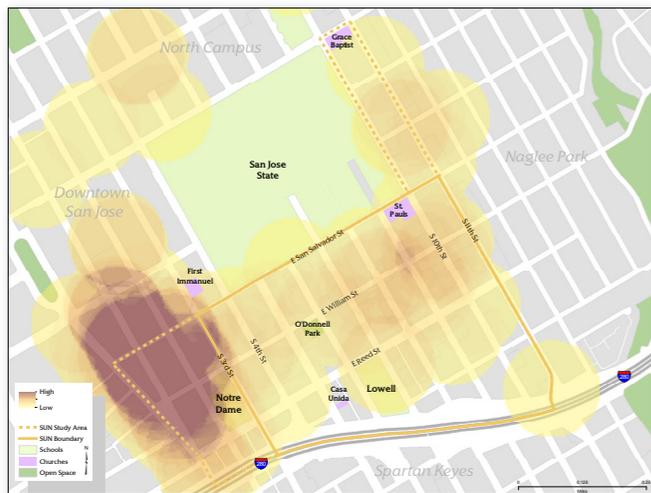


FIGURE 4.1 CONCENTRATION OF BUSINESSES MAP

### SoFa District

SoFA is establishing itself as a cultural hub for San José. While the traditional, established boundary of SUN does not encompass this business district — which runs along South First Street from West San Carlos Street to Interstate 280 — its proximity to SUN and growing reputation as an entertainment destination make it an important part of the study area. In addition to restaurants, bars, music venues, and nightclubs, the district is home to such cultural institutions as Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana (MACLA), which provides exhibition and performance space for Latino and Chicano artists; San José Stage Company, a performing arts theater; San José Institute of Contemporary Art; and San José Museum of Quilts & Textiles. The City of San José is actively engaged in an effort to draw patrons of the arts to SoFA and increase the area's reputation as a cultural center.

### 4.1 EXPLORING WILLIAM STREET – SUN'S COMMERCIAL HUB

William Street contains 26 businesses and organizations within 12 city blocks. Commercial uses are defined by restaurants, mechanical shops, gas stations, hair salons, liquor stores, a cell phone provider, and a smoke shop. Uses are concentrated at the southwest and northeast ends of the neighborhood. New businesses have re-purposed older commercial and residential buildings. A small number of businesses and organizations

situated on the southwestern edge of the corridor, such as Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana (MACLA), also serve visitors and residents of SoFA and downtown San José.

#### 4.1.1 DATA SOURCES AND ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

SUN has identified William Street as the primary commercial corridor for the neighborhood. William Street runs in a southwest / northeast direction. The boundaries for this study were Market Street and 11th Street. Five methods of data collection were used to document and evaluate the economic and social characteristics of William Street, including: direct observation, video documentation, photographing, surveying street elements, and ArcGIS mapping.

Direct observations of SUN consisted of qualitatively surveying the visual and physical aspects of the street. Video documentation included capturing a brief but important perspective from local employees and neighborhood stakeholders through interviews. Interview questions were intentionally open-ended to extract richer responses. Additionally, photographs were taken to record the conditions of each block along William Street. Using these photographs, students developed a panorama which provided a pictorial representation of the area. This was completed under the guiding principles of the Urban Design Field Manual; which defined the corridor according to categories of Imageability, Enclosure,

Human Scale, Transparency and Complexity. The GIS map was used to geocode the locations of established businesses.

#### 4.1.2 BLOCK SURVEY: URBAN DESIGN FIELD MANUAL

A walking audit of William Street was conducted using guidelines from “Measuring Urban Design Qualities: An Illustrated Field Manual.” The manual discusses five qualities of urban design that improve walkability; imageability, enclosure, human scale, transparency and complexity (Figure 4.2.0):

**Imageability of the Environment:** The lasting impression of the overall neighborhood, community, and/or planning area by quality of place, physical elements, their arrangement, and memorability.

**Sense of Enclosure:** Things that visually define space through streets, public spaces, buildings, walls, trees, and other elements.

**Human Scale of the Built Environment:** The size, texture, and articulation of physical elements that match the size and proportions of humans, and the speed at which humans walk.

**Transparency and Visibility:** The degree to which people can see or perceive what lies beyond the edge of a street or public space, and the degree to which people can see or perceive human activity beyond the edge of a street or public spaces.

**Complexity and Legibility:** The visual richness of a place.

The walking audit required William Street to be divided into three segments: 1st to 4th Streets, 4th to 7th Streets, and 7th to 11th Streets. Three arterial streets in particular have heavy vehicle flows: 4th Street, 7th Street and 11th Street. These three streets act as paths through the neighborhood but also serve as well-defined edges for pedestrians and bicyclists. Below is a description of the characteristics, land uses, and building types for each of the three segments of William Street.

**William Street Segment 1: Market Street to Fourth Street**

Building uses along William street between Market and 4th Street are diverse. Primary buildings between Market and 1st Street include Orchestra Palm Restaurant, the San José Stage Company, and MACLA Cultural Gallery. Buildings between 1st and 2nd Streets include WE Harding Company, a vacant lot, a few apartments and single-family homes. The block between 3rd and 4th Streets consists of the Bicycle Express, a University staff building, apartments, and single-family homes. Market Street to 4th Street has a wide variety of uses but appears unregulated in terms of scale and design.

**William Street Segment 2: Fourth Street to Seventh Street**

Fourth to 7th Street includes a mix of uses; commercial, residential and open space. Between 4th and 6th Street is mostly residential uses. There are single-family homes, small apartments and homes divided into multiple dwelling units. From 6th Street to 7th Street the uses become mixed; commercial and residential. O'Donnell Park on the corner of 6th and William Streets is an attractive and welcoming neighborhood node. This segment of William Street attracts a large volume of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists and has excellent enclosure and imageability, particularly between 5th and 6th Streets where the tree canopy is abundant.

**William Street Segment 3: Seventh Street to Eleventh Street**

Seventh Street to 11th Street is residential in character. Commercial activity is present but not concentrated. Commercial uses are present on all four corners at the intersection of William and 10th Streets. However, because of deep setbacks, large parking lots and blank building walls, the intersection fails to activate the street. The street itself is in good condition which unfortunately encourages fast moving vehicle traffic. The lack of crosswalks and bicycle lanes discourages multiple modes of travel. There is a mural at 8th and William Streets on the wall of Spartan Market that gently enhances the imageability of the streetscape.

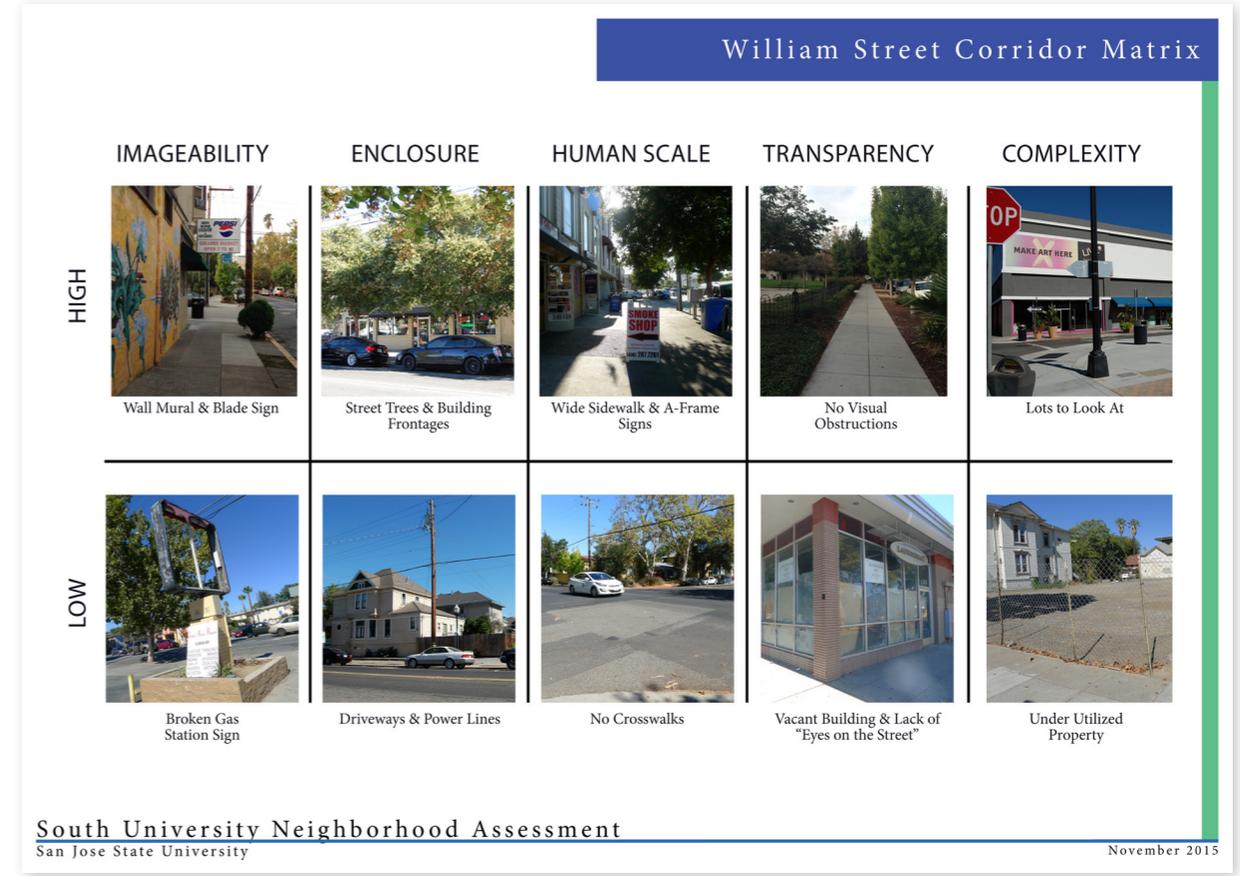


FIGURE 4.2 WILLIAM STREET URBAN DESIGN MATRIX PG. 35 OF G.W.

### 4.1.3 ENGAGING LOCAL BUSINESSES

Although commercial activity never provides the complete story of a neighborhood, it remains a vital element for understanding the everyday functioning of livable places. Interviews allowed for closely engaged conversation with individuals embedded in the local economy of William Street. Every business along William Street was invited to take part in an interview. Four interviews occurred out of seven business contacts. The interviews were videotaped on Saturday, October 17th and are summarized below.

#### Interview Summary

The first interviewee was Joey, curator of Engagement & Dialogue at MACLA (Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana, 510 South 1st Street). Joey spoke at length about the City of San José, downtown, art, and crime. He respected and appreciated the efforts being undertaken by city officials to make San José a cultural destination and night-time attraction. He also applauded businesses in the SoFA district for spearheading a neighborhood revitalization effort centered on art and cafe culture; which, according to him, are two indispensable ingredients for a city-wide renaissance.

The second interview was conducted with Mike, an employee at the Spartan Smoke Shop (414 East William Street). At first, Mike was hesitant about sharing his views on camera. After he fully understood the purpose of the project, he readily agreed. He was open and candid when sharing his thoughts about what could be done to improve existing conditions of the street. He mentioned the need for better lighting and reducing crime in the neighborhood.

The third interview took place with the manager of Creasian (414 East William Street). With an online rating of 4.5 out of 5, this restaurant is viewed as an anchor of the corridor. He spoke enthusiastically regarding future prospects for William Street and viewed students as an asset to the area. He thought that perhaps the street could use more restaurants and shops that stayed open late at night.

The fourth interview was conducted with a Spanish-speaking store employee at Metro PCS (414 East William Street). It seemed that she was familiar with both the benefits and drawbacks of living and working in the neighborhood. She enjoyed the accessibility of stores and eating establishments but tempered her enthusiasm for the area by suggesting that a stronger police presence is needed for William Street to improve.

### 4.1.4 THE FUTURE OF WILLIAM STREET

William Street serves as a central thoroughfare for the SUN residents and San José State University students. However, the cohesiveness of the corridor is currently undermined by poor sidewalk conditions, inconsistent crosswalks, and nonexistent bicycle lanes. Taken together, this discourages movement and circulation on William Street. Well-maintained pedestrian infrastructure as well as roadways designed to accommodate multiple modes of transportation is critical to the healthy functioning of William Street.

Traffic calming measures and strategically placed street lighting may also encourage more night time activity, decrease real and perceived threats to public safety, and attract much-needed businesses and amenities. Capital investment from public and private agencies to create “complete streets” could contribute to the development of William Street into a mature commercial corridor.

## 5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUN

The following recommendations are a result of analysis conducted by the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 MUP students at SJSU in conjunction with CommUniverCity staff and SUN residents and stakeholders.

### 5.1 SOCIAL MEDIA

The SUN can benefit greatly from expanding and maintaining its online presence. This will provide more opportunities for residents in the neighborhood to network and collaborate with one another, as well as with stakeholders currently involved in the neighborhood.

Examples of useful social media platform functions for the community include maintaining and updating the existing SUN website, Facebook page, email list, Twitter account, and Nextdoor account.

### 5.2 EMPOWERMENT OF LANGUAGE COMMUNITIES

One of the SUN's greatest assets is its diversity. This sentiment has been expressed by many people throughout

the research process, from longtime homeowners to new SJSU students. However, the richness of this diversity could be tapped into more deeply. In particular, the neighborhood could benefit from increased connection with the Hispanic and Vietnamese communities. Similar to other San José neighborhoods, there are a variety of opportunities to establish focus groups for the Spanish and Vietnamese-speaking communities. Other language-based groups can be created over time if the need arises. These focus groups could use workshops and other outreach methods to assess the needs of these often self-isolated communities. In addition, these groups can appoint multilingual liaisons to work with greater neighborhood planning efforts on their behalf. By using these outreach methods, all communities can be empowered within the SUN.

### 5.3 BUSINESS ASSOCIATION DEVELOPMENT

Another notable asset in the SUN is its local businesses which reflect the predominantly Hispanic and Asian populations. To encourage these businesses to remain in the neighborhood and to help them thrive, a SUN Business Association should be established. This association could help attract more businesses to the area, particularly along the East William Street corridor. The association could set monthly or quarterly meetings to address issues and

form bonds that could increase SUN's social capital. A SUN association liaison could be appointed to help connect the language-based groups and business associations.

### 5.4 RENTER AND STUDENT CONNECTION

The SUN has a large portion of students and renters who are often not well connected with the rest of the more permanent residents. As a result, these students and renters do not feel associated with the neighborhood, and often do not take the time to get to know their neighbors. Creating yearly "meet & greet" events for new and existing SJSU students at the start of every fall semester can help to facilitate meaningful relationships and a sense of community. Organized walking tours can serve as a way for new residents and students to get to know the neighborhood and meet their neighbors.

In order to help bridge the gap between the campus and community, SJSU students should be encouraged to regularly engage with SUN residents. One method is to create a position for SJSU students to serve as a liaison between SJSU and the SUN Association. The liaison will serve as the voice for the campus and promote communication and interaction between SJSU and the neighborhood.

### 5.5 COMMUNITY CENTER AND CULTURAL HUB

All residents in the neighborhood could benefit from the creation of a cultural hub, such as a neighborhood center or community hall. This center would preferably be located as close to O'Donnell Garden Park as possible, or at least centrally located within the SUN. It could serve as a meeting place for residents as well as a base for neighborhood social events. One suggestion would be to purchase and repurpose a historic Victorian home for a multi-use complex. This complex could include a coffee shop and SUN neighborhood museum on the lower floor and a meeting area on the upper floor. The meeting area could host various events or serve as a headquarters for the SUN Association. This solution could be costly, but offers many possibilities for multilateral partnerships between the neighborhood, SJSU and the City of San José.

### 5.6 OPEN HOUSE FEEDBACK

Attendees provided a variety of feedback on the students' analysis and presentation boards. Many of the comments pertained to the safety and quality of life of the neighborhood. The comments reveal the evolving nature of the neighborhood and include the following.

## Mobility Comments

1. Improve the one-way signage for 10th Street. This would help to avoid incidents at various intersections.
2. Reduce vehicular traffic on San Salvador Street and make the intersection at 7th Street and San Salvador Street more active and lively by improving the streetscape.
3. Improve the safety measures at all intersections due to the number of cross traffic accidents involving cars, pedestrians or bicyclists.
4. Improve the existing pedestrian experience by providing improved crosswalk striping and design throughout the neighborhood.
5. Improve bicycle access and provide signage on San Salvador, Ninth and William Streets.
6. Provide stop signage at heavy traffic intersections.

## Safety and Quality of Life Comments

1. Celebrate the connection or interface between the SJSU and the SUN by making East San Salvador Street exclusively pedestrian, including public art similar to the murals at the Paseo De San Antonio Walk.
2. Plant more trees throughout the neighborhood.
3. Stop illegal dumping at 8th Street and Margaret Street, and 4th Street and Reed Street.
4. Provide additional faculty housing in the neighborhood. This would provide a permanent connection with the university as compared to the student residents who live in the neighborhood for a shorter duration.
5. Provide more trash cans in the neighborhood, especially near businesses.
6. Improve the street lighting, especially on South 7th Street towards Interstate 280.
7. Improve the visual quality of the neighborhood by burying electrical utilities underground, especially on East San Salvador Street.

## 6.0 RESOURCES

### A. List of SUN Stakeholders and contacts

- City of San José Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement Department
- City of San José Code Enforcement, Planning Department
- City of San José Housing Department
- City of San José Historic Landmark Commission
- City of San José Police Department
- CommUniverCity San José
- Grace Baptist Church
- Iglesia Apostolica
- Landlords
- Lowell Elementary School
- Notre Dame High School
- Preservation Action Council of San José
- Raul Peralez, City of San José District 3 Councilmember
- Sam Liccardo, City of San José Mayor (former District 3 rep.)
- San José State University
- San José State Police Department
- San José State Fraternities and Sororities
- San José State Housing Services
- Santa Clara County Government Agencies
- Sobrato House Youth Center
- South University Neighborhood Association

- South University Neighborhood Businesses
- St. Paul's United Methodist Church
- Sunday Friends Foundation
- TransForm
- United Neighborhoods of Santa Clara County
- University Neighborhood Coalition
- Victorian Preservation Association of Santa Clara Valley
- Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)

### B. Links to 201 class videos

### C. Additional Maps/Data

### D. Full CommUniverCity Survey

### E. Misc. Material from Open Houses

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### FALL 2015 REPORT URBP 201 COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT, RICHARD KOS, AICP URBP 201 INSTRUCTOR

#### San José State University

- Dr. Patricia Evridge Hill, Professor and Chair, Department of History
- Eric Narveson, Lecturer of History, Professor of History, Evergreen Valley College
- Shelby Ye, President, SJSU Panhellenic Council
- Eric Wong, Student, SJSU Radio/TV/Film Department
- Sajuti Rahman, Teaching Assistant, Department of Urban and Regional Planning

#### City of San José

- Martina Davis, Supervising Planner, Historic Preservation Office
- Ryan Smith, Department of Transportation
- Art Nino, Housing Department
- Norma Guiterez, San José Council District 3
- Lucila Ortiz, San José Council District 3

#### Organizations

- St. Paul's United Methodist Church
- Da-Lat Cafe
- Kappa Delta Sorority Gamma Iota Chapter
- Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity Epsilon Chi Chapter
- Delta Zeta Sorority, Gamma Lambda Chapter
- SJSU Panhellenic Council
- Downtown Streets Team
- Grace Baptist Church
- Housing for All Alliance
- City of San José Housing Department Bicycle Express
- SJSU Academic Technology Support
- South University Neighborhood Association University
- Neighborhoods Coalition
- History San José
- Sourisseau Academy

#### Video Interviewees

- Rev. Jennifer Goto, Pastor, St. Paul's United Methodist Church
- Raul Peralez, San José Council District 3 Representative
- Sam Liccardo, Mayor of San José
- Forrest Edmiston, SUN Association
- John Paul ("J.P."), member, St. Paul's United Methodist Church
- J.P. Phaw, Da-Lat Cafe
- Karen Clifford, Bicycle Express

- Mackenzie Parsons, SUN Resident
- Gus Kambeitz, SUN Association
- Maria Esther Valdivia de Lopez, SUN Resident
- Myriam Valdivia, SUN Resident
- Jocabeth Hernandez Barraza, SUN Resident
- Margarita Torres, SUN Resident

## Focus Group Participants

- Lauren Bosch, SUN Association; University Neighborhoods Coalition
- Kappa Delta Sorority, Gamma Iota Chapter House Corporation
- Jobel Cabigting, Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity, Epsilon Chi Chapter
- Christina Dunbar, Delta Zeta Sorority, Gamma Lambda Chapter
- Nick Wasemiller, President, Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity, Epsilon Chi Chapter
- Justine Avila, Kappa Delta Sorority, Gamma Iota Chapter
- Marcus Saloman, SUN Association, University Neighborhoods Coalition
- Sandra Soellner, SUN Association, University Neighborhoods Coalition
- Deborah Hudson, SUN Association, University Neighborhoods Coalition
- Cliff Navales, Downtown Streets Team
- Ray Bramson, City of San José Homelessness

- Response Manager
- Chris Richardson, Downtown Streets Team
- Phil Mastrocola, Grace Baptist Church, Housing for All Alliance Ann Clarke, SUN Association

## CommUniverCity San José

- Imelda Rodriguez, Community Director
- Dayana Salazar, Executive Director
- Galadriel Burr, Project Coordinator
- Mariacarla Zazzaro, CommUniverCity Project Coordinator
- Peggy Arana, Administrative Coordinator

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- Jaime Fearer, California Walks
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- Sheilah Butler, House Manager, Kappa Delta Sorority, Gamma Iota Chapter
- Walter Soellner, SUN Association
- Tom Hunter, Creative Arts for Youth
- Ron Dwyer-Voss, Pacific Community Solutions
- Maureen Reyes Damrel, Downtown Streets Team

- Emily Nguyen, Translation Services
- Anhthuy Le, Translation Services
- Ann Clarke, SUN Resident
- Clarice Shephard, SUN Resident
- Mike Hoffinger, SUN Resident
- Sheffield Clarke, SUN Resident
- Kevin Schroder, SJSU-SUN Liaison

## FALL 2015 REPORT URBP 201 COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT, DR. GINETTE WESSEL, URBP 201 INSTRUCTOR

## Neighborhood Representatives

- SUN Neighborhood Association
- Marcus Salomon
- Sandra Soellner
- Walter Soellner
- Mike Hoffinger
- Deborah Hudson
- Joey Reyes
- Mike Ropal
- Nicholas Pelot
- Adriana Barrera
- Ann Clarke

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- Eric Wong
- Raul Peralez
- Kevin Schroder

## CommUniverCity San José

- Imelda Rodriguez
- Galadriel Burr
- Mariacarla Zazzaro

## San José State University

- Fall 2015 SOCI 10i4 Introduction to Quantitative Methods, Jason DeHaan, Instructor
- Fall 2015 POLS 195A Political Inquiry, Melinda Jackson, Instructor
- Fall 2015 URBP 232/152 Urban Design Studio, Ginette Wessel, Instructor

## SPRING 2016 REPORT URBP 201 COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT, DR. GINETTE WESSEL, URBP 201 INSTRUCTOR

### Organizations

- South University Neighborhood Association
- St. Paul's United Methodist Church
- South University Neighborhood Association
- University Neighborhoods Association
- Sunday Friends Foundation
- Lowell Elementary School
- Notre Dame High School
- Preservation Action Council of San José

### CommUniverCity San José

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- Peggy Arana, CommUniverCity Administrative Coordinator
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### San José State University

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- Sean Dougan
- Prema Krishnan

- Twinkal Parmar
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- Garima Kuthiala
- Brandon Wofford

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- Michael Fallon, Community Learning & Leadership (CCLL)
- Pete Kolstad, Director, Community Learning & Leadership
- Linh Nguyen, Student, SJSU Radio/TV/Film Department
- Benjamin Schuster, Urban & Regional Planning Office



### Fall 2015 Class (Rick)

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MIDDLE ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: TEACHING ASSISTANT SAJUTI RAHMAN, WARREN NA VARRO, CARLSON SHUM, KRISTLE RIZZI  
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**Fall 2015 Class (Ginette) (left to right)**

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**Spring 2016 Class**

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**“ YOU CAN’T RELY ON BRINGING PEOPLE  
DOWNTOWN, YOU HAVE TO PUT THEM THERE. ”**

**— Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities***