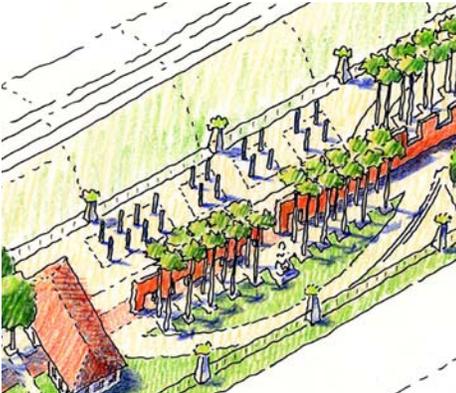


RAILROAD CORRIDOR PROPERTY STUDY

SAN CARLOS SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT (SAMTRANS)



San Carlos, San Mateo County, California

San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans)

Design completed 2002

Project Type: Urban Railroad Corridor Master Plan

PURPOSE

The purpose and goals for the master planning effort were to program the property with development that will energize the area, develop the property into an asset for the surrounding community and local citizens, and provide a positive edge for the SamTrans commuter rail line.

DESCRIPTION

The existing character of the property was a long, narrow, leftover piece of land that had not been utilized by the railroad or anyone else. Working with the physical nature of the property, the philosophy or design concept was developed for a linear garden. The linear garden would be structured together with a wall that provides numerous functions and roles along the 16-block long site. The wall transforms into a series of spaces that provide the pedestrian with visual interest, spatial enclosure, natural elements, and shelter from the neighboring commuter rail line.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Revitalizing the charming San Carlos community to increase property value and economic opportunities through transit-oriented development was carefully evaluated. Joining in a shared vision for the future of the downtown has been a well-considered process. Once the overall project goal was established to utilize untapped land and program the property with development that energized the area and provided a positive edge for the SamTrans commuter rail line, a conscientious effort was made to assess opportunities while preserving the environment. Public participation played a key role throughout the analysis and planning phases.

CONTEXT SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS APPROACH

The impact of this proposed development on the adjacent community will be tremendous. The local business association is predicting a strong economic development surge in area retail and real estate transactions. This master plan provides a true mixed-use program that brings residential, employment, and transportation facilities together in a garden environment that is rich in experiences for the pedestrian and local community.

OUTCOME

The solution combines the simple concept of a linear garden and wall with such functional elements as multifamily residential and public mass transit. It provides the artful play and expression of a series of spaces and unique environments enclosed as architecture, sculpture gardens, and outdoor rooms. Experienced in sequence or individually, the spaces would be truly exciting. The end result illustrated the importance of landscape architecture in promoting a broader investment strategy.

CHALLENGES

At the same time this project was being done for SamTrans, the City of San Carlos was preparing a Development Guidelines for the Downtown San Carlos area (adjacent the project site). The concepts developed for this project were shared with the San Carlos team and used in various public meetings.

FUNDING

The Agency has not identified a funding source for the project at this time.

LESSONS LEARNED

As a result of this project and an Agency Capital Improvement Plan which has several grade separations planned, the 'after-project' development should be considered at the same time as the 'initial' project (i.e., a grade separation that will require property acquisition for a shoofly during stage construction).

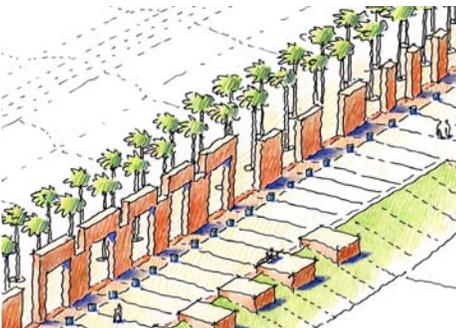
KEY WORDS

Applicable Project Delivery Stages: Administration, Planning, Design

Applicable Transportation Professionals: Railroad Engineers, Structural Engineers, Landscape Architects, Architects

Applicable Transportation Modes: Transit, Railroad, Bicycle, Pedestrian

Transportation Topics: Visual Quality, Environmental Justice, Safety, Mobility



WEB LINKS <http://www.smcta.com/>
<http://www.smcta.com/>
<http://www.caltrain.com/>

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