

MEMO

To: OneShoreline
From: Civic Edge Consulting
Date: July 2025
RE: **Colma Creek Public Feedback Summary**



Overview

This memo provides an overview of public engagement learnings in the Colma Creek area via past projects and planning initiatives. The purpose of this document is to inform the OneShoreline project teams about community input provided so far at the outset of re-starting work on Colma Creek, and to reflect back to the community what (and how) community feedback has grounded the development of projects currently underway.

Sources referenced:

- [Resilient By Design](#) (RBD)
- [Colma Creek Adaptation Plan](#) (CCAP)
- [South San Francisco General Plan](#) Executive Summary (SSFGP)
 - [Existing Conditions Report](#) (ECR)(2019)
- [Lindenville Specific Plan](#) (LSP)
 - [Phase 1 Engagement Summary](#) (P1ES)
 - [Phase 2 Engagement Summary](#) (P2ES)
 - [Phase 3 Engagement Summary](#) (P3ES)
- RBD [Engagement Toolkit](#)

Key Community Feedback

The following was heard or learned during prior community engagement efforts along Colma Creek.

- Community priorities:
 - New parks and open space, spaces to gather
 - Increased access and recreation along Colma Creek
 - Transformation of Colma Creek to increase ecology, connection to the Bay
 - New bike and pedestrian paths
 - Preserve legacy of industrial uses and current business operations
- Community engagement needs:
 - Translate materials for community engagement
 - Host events in walkable locations and/or by the water's edge to better engage communities
 - Consider youth-focused engagement to educate and invite guardians into the project
 - Consider in person engagement in addition to digital
 - Consider activating a space close to public transportation and high foot traffic with interactive activities for the public to engage in and provide input

Community Profile

- The South San Francisco sub-areas of Downtown, Lindenville, and East of 101 are disadvantaged communities. (ECR 262)
- Primarily, communities in low-lying shoreline and creek-side locations are at risk from sea-level rise and increased chances of storm and earthquake events. These [communities] are most often the communities that have already been hit by losses of employment opportunities, challenges with affordability, and are now finding themselves literally stranded between rising tides and stormwater. (RBD 6)
- These communities have the lowest access to public open space, the highest migrant populations and often are the most in need of initiatives to build physical and social resiliency. (RBD 6)
- ...almost 43% of South City residents [were] born outside the USA. (RBD 32)
- A diverse population, it includes 36.6% Asian and 34% Hispanic/Latino which is almost 50% higher than the Bay Area average for both groups. (RBD 32)

- Close to 60% of families speak a language other than English in the home. (RBD 32)
- More than half of all South San Franciscans speak a language other than English at home. Nearly a quarter of the population speaks English less than very well. (ECP1)
- As [South San Francisco] has continued to grow, the racial composition has evolved since 1990, with a majority Asian Pacific Islander and Latino population in 2017. The majority of Asian Pacific Islanders reside in the Westborough sub-area, while the majority of Latinos reside in the Downtown sub-area. (ECR 4)
- In South San Francisco, more than two-thirds of adults and children lead sedentary lifestyles. This is paired with about 20% of adults and children who are obese and overweight. (ECR 262)
- Gentrification and displacement are challenges affecting nearly all of South San Francisco to some extent, especially given rapidly increasing apartment rental rates and housing sales prices. (ECR 263)
- In South San Francisco, most commutes are by car, and drivers driving alone. Those on the west side have a very low percentage of commuting by transit with only 1.5% of people cycling. (RBD 40)

Engagement Hurdles and Strategies

- The Baylands restoration projects are an extensive and impressive ecological asset for the Bay Area. There is, however, a disconnection between shoreline communities and the restoration which has created a challenge for engaging local communities in the conversation around adapting for sea-level rise. (RBD 6)
- Greater access to the shoreline, education uses, and places of genuine public ownership are needed to create a critical mass that care about the shoreline and are invested in this important conversation. (RBD 6)
- Communities have become detached from the Bay with fewer spaces to gather and ill equipped with facilities that draw people in on a daily basis. (RBD 11)
- The historic pattern of large freeway and rail infrastructure circling the Bay has cut off many smaller communities from the shoreline. Main streets and creeks need to be revived and reconnected to the Bay as both social and ecological corridors enabling climate adaptation. (CCAP 118)
- Engagement events featured a map of the city's stormwater system and an activity where residents pinned their house and traced the stormwater network from their street down to Colma Creek. This was to display that every drop of water that enters the City's stormwater system ends up in the Creek. We also shared historic photographs of flood events impacting the blocks surrounding the Creek, fostering

the sharing of personal stories from residents of flood events they had experienced in their time living in South City. (CCAP 28)

- We received an overwhelming response to the bike/coloring competition and were able to share entries through our social media channels to further draw attention to the project and the issue of adaptation in the City of South San Francisco. (CCAP 31)
- Events and programming are critical to engaging communities at the Bay's edge when it comes to education and decisionmaking about rising sea levels. (RBD 12)
- Once communities have better access and regular events to attend, the regional conversation about adapting to sea-level rise becomes more worthwhile since there are larger number of people are now invested in the issue. (RBD 12)
- South City has a need that will not be inherently met by existing social media platforms, alone (RBD 24).

Community Needs

- ...the resilience of local communities depends very much on smaller scale interventions and enhancements - new pedestrian and cycle connections, small parks and main street revitalization projects. (RBD 6)
- Community resilience is often dependent on the quality of the services and amenities within walking distance of neighborhoods, as well as how these sites/ services can adapt in times of emergency. (RBD 6)
- Upgrading parks, squares, and public facilities in the heart of smaller vulnerable cities and neighborhoods is critical to building social resilience and preparing for disaster. (RBD 12)
- There is community demand for expanded recreational programming and new facilities, but given budget constraints, the City has limited ability to meet these demands. (ECR 227)
- Creeks and streets are opportunities to create public corridors that take people and water towards the Bay. Once destinations are established at the Bay's edge, these corridors become critical in providing safe and convenient access for adjacent neighborhoods. (RBD 12)
- As South San Francisco continues to experience growth and change, its transportation needs are increasingly mismatched with its infrastructure and services. This mismatch is especially apparent in the East of 101 Area, where the current transportation paradigm is not able to accommodate expected growth. However, similar questions are facing developing areas around the Lindenville and El Camino/Chestnut areas (ECR 180)

- South San Franciscans do not have adequate open space to support the demand for athletic fields. (RBD 41)
- ...neighborhoods have a shortage of open space within walking distance. (RBD 41)
- South San Francisco has a high demand for preschool and childcare facilities. (ECR 227)

Lindenville Specific Feedback

Lindenville Specific Plan Vision

- The Specific Plan sets out to continue the city's industrial legacy, but also create a Mixed Use Neighborhood and allow for the enhancement of existing features, such as the revitalization of Colma Creek into a community-serving linear park with restored ecology, and the development of new spaces for housing, creative and artistic uses, and improved pedestrian and bicyclist paths. (LSP 16)

Lindenville Community Profile

- Lindenville contains a burgeoning group of artists, makers, and creative businesses that enhance the identity of the Plan Area, in particular South Linden Avenue. (LSP 20)
- The changing economy has led to a decline in small businesses, light industrial, and other flex employment uses across the region. There is a strong demand for industrial space throughout San Mateo County and South San Francisco, but businesses are competing for a shrinking supply of space as industrial properties are redeveloped. (LSP 20)

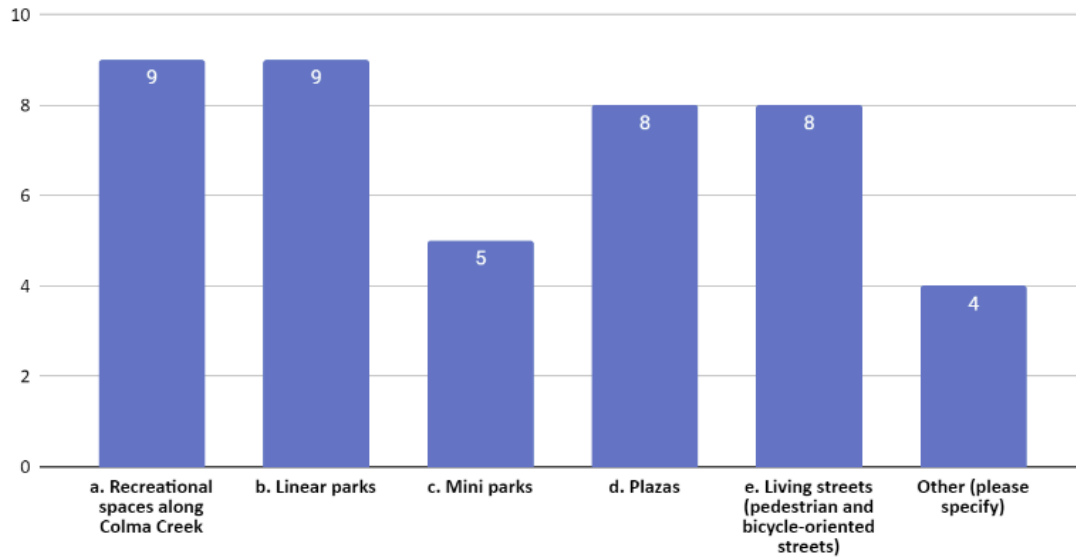
Community Specific Risks

- Lindenville has a disproportionately high pollution burden from diesel particulate matter and traffic, two pollution sources that stem from the area's industrial and logistics uses and its proximity to high-volume roadways. (LSP 24)
- These historically contaminated sites, and the storage and disposal of hazardous substances, pose threats to soil health, groundwater quality, and human health. (LSP 24)
- The Lindenville of today is auto-oriented, employment-focused, and lacking in parks and open spaces. (LSP 25)
- Currently, there are no designated public open spaces or parks within the Lindenville Specific Plan boundaries... (LSP 89)

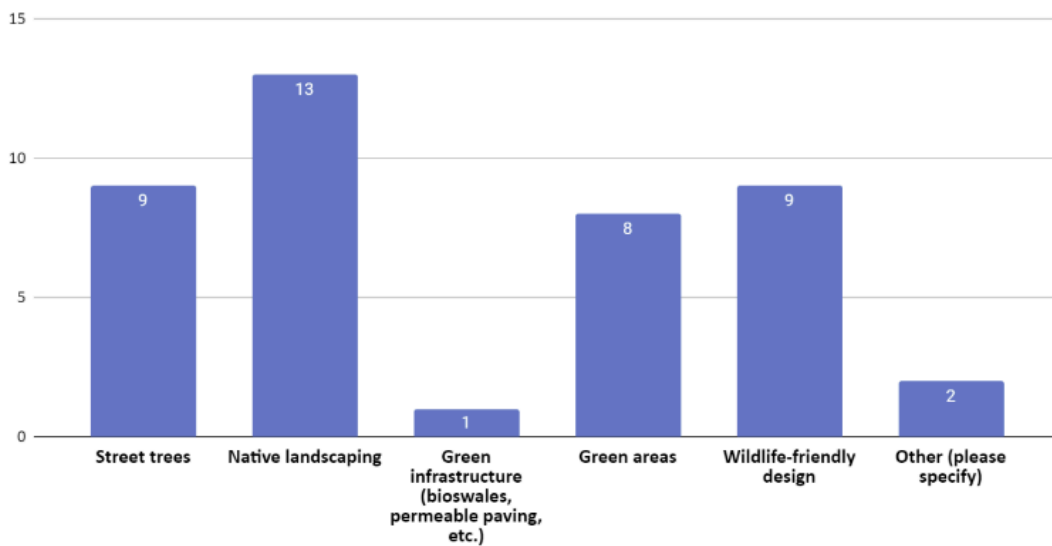
Community Feedback

- The following priorities received the most support during Phase 1 of the Lindenville Specific Plan process:
 - Preserve the legacy of industrial uses that continue to provide essential services for local communities, residents, and business
 - Establish new parks and public spaces
 - Transform Colma Creek
 - Facilitate the growth of arts, culture and the creative economy (P1ES 3)
- Additional key themes emerged around supporting Lindenville's rich history as an industrial area
 - Concerns were expressed that planning efforts will cause an increase in taxes and costs to run small businesses that are already struggling. (P1ES 13)
 - Requests were made that the City be sensitive to existing operations in Lindenville to avoid driving businesses away. (P1ES 13)
 - Improving transit and connections to Downtown and El Camino
 - Create a well-connected bike and pedestrian path
 - Transform Lindenville into a highly-sustainable and resilient district
 - Other feedback included:

Lindenville currently does not have any parks. What types of parks and public spaces would you most like to see in Lindenville? (Select all that apply)



The Resilient South City Plan and General Plan Update reimagine Colma Creek as an important open space and ecological corridor in the community. How should ecology be incorporated into public places in Lindenville? (Select all that apply)



- The following community feedback was heard during Phase 2 of the Lindenville Specific Plan process:
 - Preserve and support businesses with industrial and light industrial uses that continue to provide essential services for local communities, residents, and business; allow for maximum flexibility (zoning & use). (P2ES 4)

- Protect the legacy of the Industrial City, by preserving the “look and feel” through design standards that encourage interpretive signage, public art, and place-making that prioritizes adaptive reuse
- Create all types of housing that is affordable, respects adjacent residential neighborhoods, and allows for models of ownership (vs. just rental products)
- Reconsider open space proposals along North Colma Creek because this area is dominated by industrial condominium properties that are challenging to assemble
- Facilitate the transfer of development away from Colma Creek to encourage active recreation, flood management, and naturalization
- Establish new parks and public spaces that are linked to promote biking and walking
- Prioritize blue-green infrastructure strategies such as water-efficient landscaping, stormwater management, and planting more street trees
- Create a balance between land uses for future generations
- Facilitate the growth of arts, culture, and the creative economy (P2ES 4)
- The following community feedback was heard during Phase 3 of the Lindenville Specific Plan process:
 - Encourage design that draws on the legacy of the Industrial City (interpretive signage, public art, and place-making that prioritizes adaptive reuse)
 - Improve pedestrian and bike safety and mobility in the district as well as connectivity between the district and Downtown
 - Foster the growth of arts, culture, and the creative economy by creating incentives for artists and makers to locate in Lindenville
 - Implement a district-wide strategy for stormwater catchment and treatment
 - Prioritize environmental justice issues such as thorough contamination remediation, meaningful access to open space, and transit connectivity
 - Ensure the viability and financial feasibility of creating a linear park along Colma Creek