

County of Santa Clara

Office of the Sheriff



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Laurie Smith
Sheriff

DATE: May 11, 2005

TO: John Cherbone, Saratoga Public Works Director

FROM: John Hirokawa, Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office

SUBJECT: De Anza Trail Project and Public Safety *JH 1357*

ATTACHMENTS General Crime Statistics for the area near the proposed trail,
2001 through May 6, 2005

There are several studies available for review regarding the impact of trails/pathways in relationship to public safety and crime. Some of the studies are inclusive of the following:

- ❖ Burke-Gilman Trail, Seattle Washington Engineering Department, 1987
- ❖ Rail-Trails and Safe Communities, National Park Service, 1998
- ❖ Greenway Trails, Colorado State Parks, 1995
- ❖ Brush Creek Trail, Santa Rosa, 1992

Some of the studies have concluded that the existence of a trail has had little, if any, affect on crime experienced by adjacent property owners. Law enforcement officials believe that there is no greater incidence of crime to homes along trails or pathways.

I contacted three (3) local police agencies regarding their experience with trails and public safety. I talked to Sergeant Art Roberts from the Mt. View Police Department regarding the Stevens Creek Trail, Captain Dave Dehann from the Campbell Police Department regarding the Los Gatos Creek Trail, and Captain Dave Gravel from the Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department regarding the Los Gatos Creek Trail. These law enforcement agencies have not experienced increased crimes rates to the neighborhoods adjacent to the trails.

In the City of Cupertino there are two major pathways or trails, the San Tomas Aquino Trail and the Stevens Creek Trail. The neighborhoods adjacent to these trails have not been subjected to an increased crime rate.

The Town of Los Altos as an extensive pathway/equestrian trail system. The homes that border this pathway system have not been vulnerable to break-ins any more than other homes within the town.

Trail design will dictate the type of patrols monitoring the trails (motorcycle patrol, foot patrol, or vehicle patrol). The De Anza Trail will receive routine, periodic patrol checks as with any other city park or trail. The cost for routine patrol is already incorporated into the contract cost for the City of Saratoga. The community, City Council, and City staff can request the Sheriff's Office to concentrate routine patrol efforts at a designated location, such as, City parks, specific neighborhoods, specific residential streets, business districts, etc., at no additional cost to the City of Saratoga.

The Sheriff's Office ran a query to obtain statistical information of the streets near the proposed De Anza Trail for any possible relevant information. The spreadsheets will be provided to the City of Saratoga for the review of any interested group or individual. If an individual or group is seeking additional statistical or incident information, the Sheriff's Office will be willing to conduct additional queries. In order to run additional queries, we would need specific time periods, specific locations, and specific types of incidents.