

“Heritage Trail” Along Valley Center Road

Valley Center will receive \$225,000 in State money to replant 723 trees along Valley Center Road between Woods Valley Road and Cole Grade Road, after the road widening is completed. That State money, and approximately \$150,000 pledged by the county, local tribes, businesses, developers, and individuals will be used to beautify the road and the “Heritage Trail”, included in the road project along the roadway.

The trail will have an “enhanced” footprint from Old Road to Miller Road – a thirteen-foot pathway on a four-inch decomposed granite base, enclosed by four-foot lodge-pole pine fencing on both sides of the trail. The pathway will meander down into the Parks & Recreation District parcel at the corner of VC and Lilac Roads.

The environmental mitigation grant will pay for replacing the over 600 trees removed by the road-widening project. The money will also be used to buy park benches and signage about local history and natural features along the trail, and picnic tables in the Oak grove where the trail will go on to the Parks & Recreation District parcel.

The amount of the grant is insufficient to pay for the 723 trees and other items originally proposed, due to the increased costs since the time of application. The grant doesn’t provide funding for the design, purchase, and installation of an irrigation system either, so the community will have to obtain additional donations.

The local cash pledges will be collected by the Valley Center Trails Association (VCTA), a local tax-exempt organization, and paid over to the County Department of Public Works (DPW). The DPW is preparing a cooperative agreement between the county and the VCTA to facilitate the collection. The money will then be used by the DPW to pay for a contractor to install the trees and other landscaping complementing them and the trail.

They will be watered by an irrigation system from the landscaped medians, another part of the road project, and the county will pay for the water and maintenance. When the grant was won, irrigation was only going to be provided for a year via a water truck. In the interim, the county has agreed to include irrigated medians, and conduit to serve the future irrigation system, as part of the road project.

Anyone interested in making a donation for the trees and trail may contact (or send a check payable to VCTA) VCTA Treasurer Lori Jacobs at P.O. Box 605, Valley Center, CA 92082, or 751-0902, or o2bridn@sbcglobal.net Any individual, business, or organization sympathetic to supporting non-motorized trails in Valley Center may join VCTA by contacting Membership Chair Fred Wollman at 518-8545 (cell) or fred@fwollman.com. Annual dues are \$10 for students or seniors over 55, and \$25 for households or businesses (only one vote per membership).

Jana Limon, operator of the Wellness Spa on Valley Center Road, is the new chairperson of the revived VCTA. The non-profit tax-exempt organization was founded in 1999, and worked as a committee of the Parks & Recreation District to have trails and pathways for Valley Center included when the county Board of Supervisors adopted the county's Trails master Plan. At a reorganization meeting on September first, they elected a new slate of officers: Chairperson Jan Limon; Vice-chairperson/Grants Larry M. Gartner M.D.; Vice-Chairperson/Liasons Richard Rudolf; Secretary Darrell E. Hatcher; Treasurer Lori Jacobs; Membership Chairperson Fred Wollman; EEMP Grant Pledge Collector Craig Johnson; and VCCPG Representative Dale Huntington.

The VCTA meets quarterly, beginning in January 2008. All meetings will be held at the Valley Center Branch Library at 6PM, the 2nd Wednesday of the meeting month. The next meeting will be held on January 9, 2008.

In addition to helping implement the EEMP Grant, the VCTA will be helping to implement the trails and pathways called for in the county's Trails Master Plan for Valley Center. A copy of the county's Trails Master Plan is at the Valley Center Branch Library.