



Highlights from the Joint Workshop

Launching Our Conservation Vision

Monday, April 23, 2012



A Public Meeting Attended by:

Board of Directors
Citizens' Advisory Committee
OSA Staff
Members of the Public

Facilitated by:

Mary Selkirk

**Open Space Authority Conservation Vision
Highlights from the Joint Workshop**

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Background

In the spring of 2012, the Board of Directors of the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority committed to launching a comprehensive conservation vision and strategic planning process for the agency.

On the evening of Monday, April 23, 2012, all members of the Authority Board and the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) met in a joint workshop to launch the conservation vision and strategic planning process.

The purpose of the joint workshop was to consider major trends that will affect the agency and the county over the next two decades, develop a shared understanding of the core values that underlie the mission of the Authority, and to develop a dynamic 30-year conservation vision for the agency. Together, the Board and CAC accomplished all three objectives. The visions developed by the participants reflect the core values of the organization, and will form a solid foundation and reference point for the agency throughout the planning process over the next year.

The following is a brief summary of the workshop participants' discussions and brainstorming at the workshop.

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Mind Mapping the Trends

Board and CAC members first brainstormed together to produce a robust “map” of trends in the county that will have a major influence on the Authority over the next two decades. Ms. Selkirk presented a mind map framework that was created based on her interviews with the Board Chair and the CAC Chair.

All participants were encouraged to add to the map, and each person decided on what “branch” their ideas should be placed, or whether a new branch should be added. Contradictory “branches” were also included.

The result of the group’s mind mapping is shown in the photo below (see larger version on page 18):



Figure 1: Workshop Mind Map of Emerging Trends

The group then commented on the results, and drew attention to linkages across trends, for example, the link between the trend toward smaller government, the need for creative

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partnerships, and the increasing pressure for resolving the perceived conflict between open space preservation and housing.

Some of the major trends identified in the mind mapping exercise included:

Environment and the Landscape

- Climate change and its effects: environmental changes, need to comply with State laws to reduce GHG emissions and implications for Authority activities
- Changes in attitudes toward local agriculture: concerns over food safety, interest in supporting local farming and ranching
- Rising land prices/competition between open space and housing

Government/the Economy

- Trends toward regional planning
- Changes in the local economy; increase in income inequality
- Trend toward smaller government and smaller public agency budgets
- Increasing needs for partnerships
- Greater competition for local philanthropy
- Innovations in technology that will help with outreach/government efficiencies/transportation improvements

Demographics

- Changing demographics: aging population, increasing ethnic group populations/challenges to our sense of “us”
- Decline in support for open space among some ethnic groups
- Need for focus on youth

Health and Education

- Increased awareness of public health and interest in parks and open space and local food
- Revitalization of education

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Our Core Values: The “Why” of “What” We Do

Following the mind mapping exercise, facilitator Mary Selkirk invited Board and CAC members to meet in two mixed groups to discuss together what they believe were the core values that underlie all the work of the Authority, as well as their own personal values that they were able to express through their dedication to the agency. The purpose of the exercise was not to seek clear consensus from the group at this workshop, but to foster shared understanding of everyone’s views on the agency’s core values, that will be refined and integrated into the final conservation vision and strategic plan.

Ms. Selkirk presented a Core Values Map framework (see below) of the Authority’s core values that was based on her interviews with the Chairs of the Board and the CAC. The two groups considered the framework and produced an array of core values in the course of their brainstorming discussions.



Figure 2: Mind Map of Core Values

A. Brainstorming

Group 1 Brainstorm

- Connectivity: connecting lands, connecting people with the lands, connecting people to the Valley
- Permanence
- Conservation
- Spreading and sharing stewardship ideals

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- Sense of place in our Valley
- Being surrounded by nature
- Love of outdoors for our physical and mental health
- Beauty
- Access to large areas of open space
- Integrity of our organization: inclusive, transparent, fiscally sound
- Passion for nature and quality of life
- Passion for legacy—passing on to the youth in our Valley

Group 2 Brainstorm

- Trust in the community
- Connectivity
- Science and knowledge based
- Legacy: Commitment to education of the next generation
- Collaborative partnerships are vital
- Transparency and accountability of our organization
- Passion for urban open space; equitable access
- Intrinsic value of nature and open space even if not in direct view
- Maximizing access where appropriate
- Understanding how we fit into the environment

B. Core Values: Common Themes

- Passion for open space of all kinds, urban and rural
- Commitment to connectivity: of lands throughout the County and of people to the lands, and what we do today connects us to the future
- Our legacy: commitment to education and stewardship for the next generations
- Sense of our Valley as our place
- Passion for providing access to all
- Commitment to the integrity of the Authority as an organization: external (trust in the community and commitment to working with the public and partners) and internal (assuring fiscal sustainability into the future)
- Collaboration and sharing

Our Common Vision: A Day in the Life of a Santa Clara County Family in 2043 (50th Anniversary of the Authority)

The final focus of the joint workshop was on creating a concrete vision of the accomplishments of the Authority in 2043, its 50th anniversary year. Board and CAC members were asked to meet in small groups and to do a “look back” exercise: to brainstorm what kinds of activities a typical Santa Clara County family would be engaged in on a day in 2043 that were a direct result of these accomplishments. Their visions were captured on flip charts, transcribed below. The flip chart notes have been organized into categories and have been consolidated from the two groups. Members of the public were invited to participate in these exercises as well, and their input is included in Appendix 3 beginning on page 13.

Open Space and Parks

- Lands are unchanged but there is new access
- Bridge has been built at the Palassou property
- New land trust has been formed and has acquired 50,000 acres
- Healthy urban creeks are protected

Urban and Rural Trail Systems and Transit

- The family is biking through the city on trails provided by the 20% fund
- There are scooter and horse accessible trails to the Palm Property
- Wheelchair accessible trail at Rancho Canada del Oro
- One parent walks to work on an urban trail built with funding from the Authority
- One parent bikes to work
- The Bay Area Ridge Trail has been completed and another family member is walking the Trail
- The Authority helps to reduce the County’s carbon footprint by providing trails to and from urban areas
- Trails have been built along numerous creeks
- Connectivity to local working lands with agriculture and fresh foods
- Public transit to outdoor education programs
- 100 miles of new Bay Ridge Trail 50% through open space lands
- Guadalupe Parkway: many integration opportunities including flood management, education and environmental restoration, access to farmers’ markets

Education

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- The kids are bussed from schools on a field trip sponsored by the Authority , teachers are from several partner organizations (Audubon, Wildlife Center)
- The kids stay late for a Starry Night program with local astronomers, and camp overnight on lands protected by the Authority
- An outdoor classroom has been established, and offers curricula in multiple languages
- Speaker at the kids' school from the Authority.
- Kids' teacher had helped establish a school garden through partnership of school and the Authority
- Evening talk at local library about local ecosystems, sponsored by the Authority
- Public transit to outdoor education programs
- Science programs on OSA lands
- OSA convenes an annual bioregional summit
- Technologies have been developed that allow residents to experience wildlife real-time including their movement through regional corridors

Local Agriculture

- Local agriculture and local markets are thriving
- Family shopped for fresh County strawberries at a local market
- The Authority has funded establishment of a beautiful facility for education
- The family scattered grandpa's ashes at a local agricultural preserve and celebrated his passing with local produced wine
- One child is part of an integrated international girls group that shares local agricultural practices, paid for by dedicated local tax fund measure
- Robust and vibrant local farm economy
- Local residents consume food grown on lands protected by the Authority
- Authority catalyzed founding of a local slaughterhouse
- Connectivity to local working lands with agriculture and fresh foods

Authority 2043

Both groups also painted a picture of the Authority itself as a thriving organization in 2043:

- The Authority is a recognized leader in the region
- Strong relationships with partners
- Sustained funding through various mechanisms
- The Open Space Authority is now self-funded through new mechanisms including monetization of ecosystem services
- County Chamber recognition for Authority's role in increasing funding and jobs in the County
- New funding from earned income—no more property assessment

A. Our 2043 Vision: Common Themes

- The Authority is a recognized leader in the region
- Thriving protected landscapes and wildlife, healthy creeks

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- Partnerships: with health organizations, water districts, cities, parks departments, public transit, educational organizations, local science and other societies, non-profits and local and regional agencies
- Easy and equitable access to multi-use urban and rural trails
- Thriving local agriculture and markets selling locally grown produce and ranch products
- Education: Local agriculture integrated into local schools educational programs, public transit to OSA-sponsored science programs

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Appendix 1: Agencies and Organizations to Engage

American Farmland Trust	Resource Conservation Districts: Guadalupe-Coyote and Loma Prieta
Association of Bay Area Governments	ROMP
Bay Area Bobcat Project	Sacred Heart Community Services
Bay Area Open Space Council	San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority
Bay Area Puma Project	San Francisco Estuary Institute
Bay Area Ridge Trail Council	Santa Clara Basin Watershed Management Initiative
CA Department of Fish and Game	Santa Clara County Environmental Health Department
California State Parks	Santa Clara County Farm Bureau
CalTrans	Santa Clara County Food Systems Alliance
Cities of San Jose, Santa Clara, Campbell, Milpitas, Morgan Hill	Santa Clara County Parks
CNPS Santa Clara Valley Chapter	Santa Clara County Planning Department
Coastal Conservancy	Santa Clara Fisheries and Aquatic Habitat Collaborative Effort
Committee for Green Foothills	Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
Community Alliance for Family Farmers	Santa Clara Valley Water District
Coyote Creek Watershed Council	Save Our Trails
Felidae Conservation Fund	Sierra Club
Greenbelt Alliance	Silicon Valley Land Trust
Health Trust	Silicon Valley Leadership Group
Joint Venture Silicon Valley	Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAGE)
Living Landscape Initiative	The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County
Metro Transportation Commission	The Nature Conservancy
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District	UCSC Puma Project
National Park Service Rivers and Trails Program	United Neighborhoods
Natural Resources Conservation Service	Universities' Planning and Environmental Studies Programs
Pajaro River Watershed Council	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Peninsula Open Space Trust	
Rangeland Conservation Coalition	

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Appendix 2: Plans and Studies to Integrate

General Conservation

Open Space Authority 5-Year Plan (1996)
Open Space Authority Strategic Planning Process 2010-2011
Santa Clara County Parks Acquisition Plan
Santa Clara County Parks Strategic Plan (2003) and Updated Action Plans (2006)
The Nature Conservancy Central Coast Ecoregional Plan
Bay Area Open Space Council Conservation Lands Network
Land Trust of Santa Cruz County Conservation Blueprint
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Master Plan
Coastal Conservancy Strategic Plan and GAP Analysis

Biodiversity

Santa Clara Valley Draft Habitat Conservation Plan
Bay Area Critical Linkages Project
Santa Cruz Mountains Linkages Conceptual Area Protection Plan
Bay Area Climate Change Consortium

Agriculture

Sustaining Our Agricultural Bounty (American Farmland Trust, Greenbelt Alliance)
Coyote Valley Agricultural Feasibility Study (SAGE)
Rangeland Conservation Coalition Central Coast Plan
Department of Conservation Important Farmland Mapping Program
Open Space Authority CAC Ag Task Force Recommendations

Water

Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan
SCVWD 2010 Urban Water Management Plan
SCVWD South County Water Supply Management Plan
Pajaro and Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plans
SF Estuary Institute Coyote Creek Watershed Historic Ecology Report

Recreation and Livable Communities

Plan Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy
Greenbelt Alliance Golden Lands / Golden Opportunities
Greenbelt Alliance At Risk Report: Bay Area Greenbelt
MROSD Regional Open Space Study
Bay Area Ridge Trail Master Plan
San Francisco Bay Trail Master Plan
Association of Bay Area Governments PCAs and PDAs Report
BAOSC Green Vision
Santa Clara County General Plan Environmental and Open Space Elements
Santa Clara County General Plan Health Element (Draft)
City General Plan Open Space Elements
Henry Coe State Park General Plan
Santa Clara County Park Master Plans
Santa Clara County Parks Countywide Trails Master Plan / Update

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Appendix 3: Input from the Public

Over the course of the evening workshop, members of the public were invited to provide input as well. While the Board and CAC considered together the core values of the agency, General Manager Andrea Mackenzie led a discussion on emerging trends with members of the public in attendance. Results were recorded on flip charts, summarized here:

Trends

- Lack of knowledge and awareness about open space and the Authority among public officials
- Balancing resource protection and access
- Urban versus rural: need for connecting them to one another
- Losing tribal knowledge
- Aging population
- Increasing numbers of young people (18-28) without cars: mobility affects access
- Local and state water supplies/reliability declining
- Monetary values increasingly will be assigned to ecosystem health
- Importance of breaking down barriers between jurisdictions: breaking down the siloes
- Need for breaking down organizational barriers/consolidation and sharing of resources
- Hispanic majority: language and cultural shift
- Volunteers increasingly seen as an asset
- Sharing of funding across park systems
- Increasingly critical issue of resolving funding for operations and maintenance/stewardship
- State and Federal legislative decision will continue to affect the local picture

Members of the public then brainstormed together their own vision of the Authority in 2043, and identified a list of key partners.

Public Visioning

Results of the public visioning for the Authority were recorded on flip charts and are summarized below:

A Day in the Life, 2043

Open Space and Parks

- Family views Tule elk and Bay checkerspot butterfly while picnicking on the Palm property
- Gilroy has been added to the 20% program (regional protection of Morgan Hill, Gilroy, San Martin)
- Serpentine habitats have been protected
- Backpacking access is available across the County

Urban and Rural Trails & Transit

- OSA coordinated with VTA and CalTrans to develop and implement wildlife-friendly projects
- Fully operating transit to trails
- Family rides bikes on a fully connected trail system in natural surroundings
- BART and Bay Trail are completed

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Education

- OSA has educated the public regarding the natural resource value to the local economy
- OSA has expanded its education for children

Local Agriculture

- Local family starts the day with a fresh, locally grown breakfastFamily grows their own vegetables
- Family visits a local farm that they know well; their kids know where their food comes from
- OSA has promoted relations with farmers regarding the value of conservation easements, and the multiple benefits and ecosystem services provided by open space
- OSA reached out to create a public/private partnership for Coyote Valley

The Authority in 2043

- OSA has successfully expanded its vision and programs to a broader landscape including habitat, agriculture and recreation
- OSA and its partners have been the leaders in regional and sub-regional campaigns
- OSA successfully secured funding for some of its efforts in the federal Farm Bill
- OSA has substantially raised its profile as a regional leader and increased the number of Santa Clara County residents who experienced OSA programs and/or trails
- OSA successful at several additional ballot measures, and has created a diverse funding package
- OSA successfully cultivated support from local philanthropies

Water Resources

- Local drinking water is available from local streams
- Steelhead have been removed from endangered species listing and families fish for steelhead in local streams
- Natural resource protection is seen as disaster avoidance; floodplains are protected

Health

- County has zero cases of asthma; the family breathes clean air
- Cancer rates and obesity rates in the County are low

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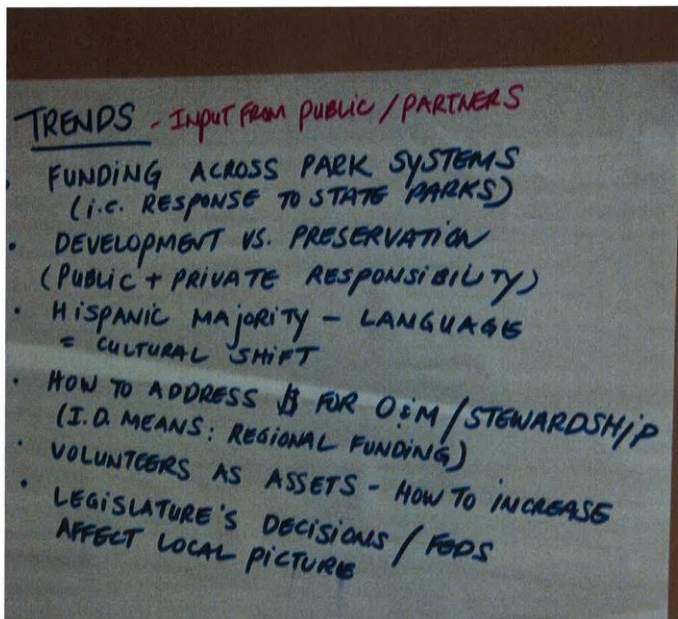
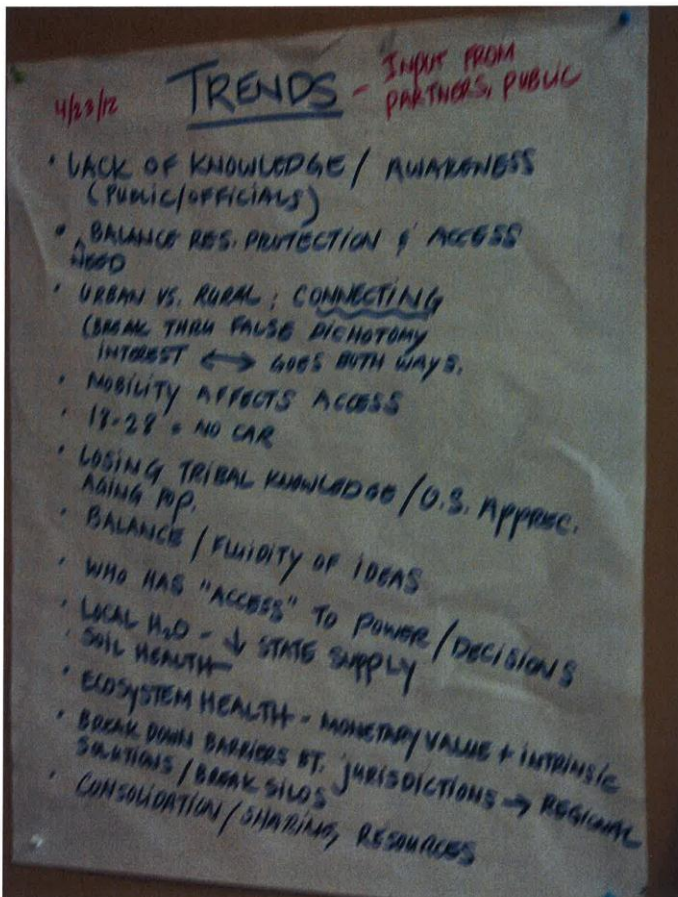
Authority Partners Suggested by the Public Participants

The following is a list of partners that was generated by the members of the public. Some of these suggestions were also included on the poster of key partners that was posted on the wall at the workshop.

- Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley
- Chambers of Commerce
- School systems/community colleges
- City governments/county government
- SCVWD
- SVLG
- POST
- Mid-Peninsula Open Space District
- Farm Bureau/Cattlemen/FFA
- Joint Venture SV
- IBM
- Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition
- Working Partnerships USA
- Amah Mutsen/Tribes
- "Let's Move"
- NMFS/NOAA
- USDA local/NRCS
- Kaiser/Health Trust/public health departments
- Corporate foundations
- UCCE
- VTA/CalTrain
- Clean Tech/solar/wind/compost
- Socially responsible investors
- Venture capitalists

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Appendix 4: Photo Notes – Input from the Public



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YEAR IS 2043 - PARTNERS / PUBLIC

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

- LOCAL FRESH BFAST
- RIDING BIKES ON A FULLY CONNECTED TRAIL SYSTEM IN NATURAL SURROUNDINGS
- COUNTY HAS ZERO ASTHMA - FAMILY BREATHE CLEAN AIR
- CANCER RATES / OBESITY RATES LOW
- VISITING / KNOWING LOCAL FARMS
- FAMILY GROWING OWN VEGGIES
- BACKPACKING ACROSS CO. ALONG COMPLETED B.A.R.T. / BAY TRAIL
- DRINKING WATER FROM STREAMS
- FISHING FOR STEELHEAD - REMOVED FROM LISTINGS
- TRANSIT TO TRAILS
- KIDS KNOW WHERE FOOD COMES FROM
- SERPENTINE HABITAT PROTECTED
- ZERO WASTE DEVELOP. - FAMILY LIVES IN ENERGY EFFICIENT HOME
- FAMILY LIVES IN AGE INTEGRATED COMMUNITY
- FAMILIES / COMMUNITIES ENGAGED IN DECISION MAKING
- PEOPLE / WILDLIFE / CATTLE SHARE TRAILS

COYOTE VALLEY WAS PRESERVED AS AG/GRV. RES. AREA - AG DISTRICT

PUBLIC (PARTNERS TABLE)

SEEING VIEW OF TULE ELK / BAY CHECKERS/OT PICKNICKING ON "PALM" - CONNECTED TO ALL SURROUNDINGS

NAT. RES. PROTECTION SEEN AS DISASTER AVOIDANCE - NO FLOODING W/ FLOODPLAIN PROTECTED.

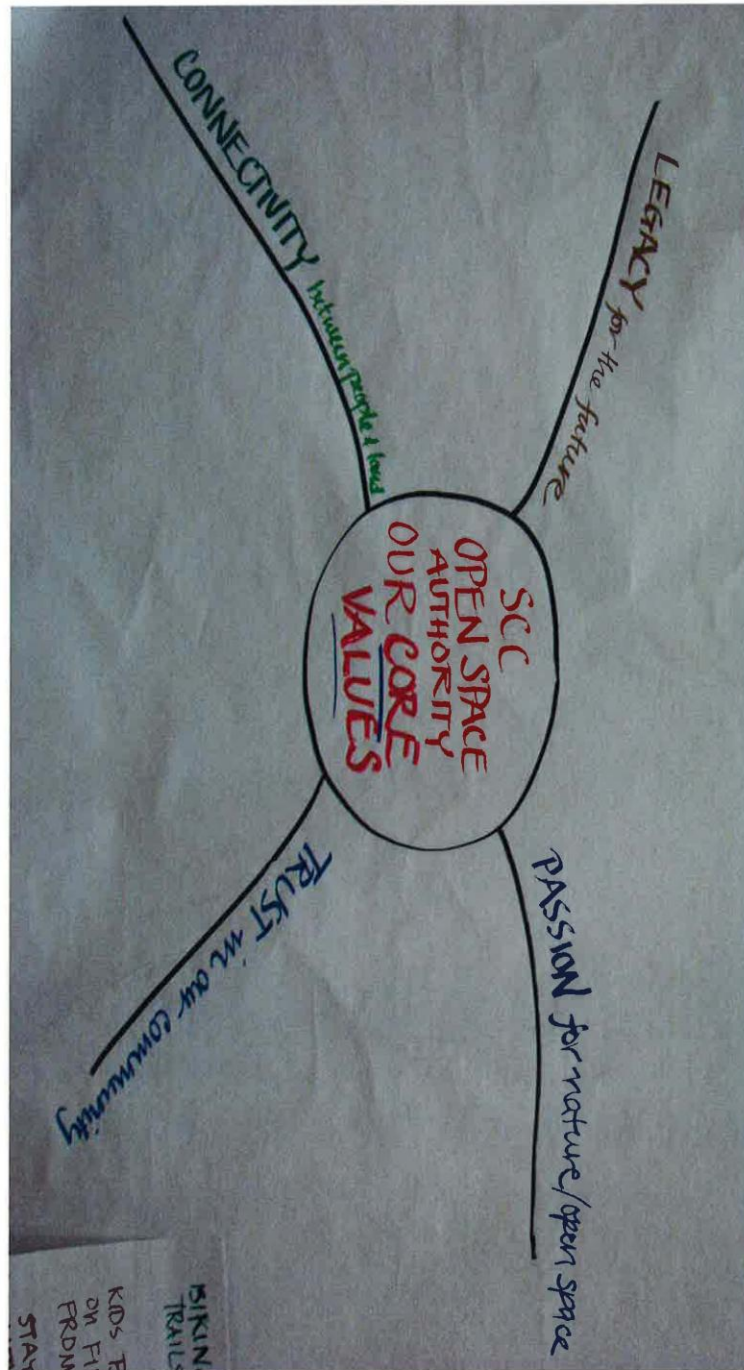
WHAT WE DID TODAY

- OSA EXPANDED VISION / PROGRAMS TO A BROADER LANDSCAPE - HABITAT, AG, REC
- OSA EDUCATED PUBLIC RE: NAT. RESOURCE VALUE TO ECONOMY
- 20% PROGRAM - GILROY ADDED
- [REG. PROTECTION OF MORGAN HILL / GILROY / SAN MARTIN]
- OSA PROMOTED RELATIONS W/ FARMERS RE: CE VALUE
- MULTI-BENEFITS OF D.S. / ECO-SERVICES
- [OSA & PARTNERS LEAD REG. + SUBREGIONAL CAMPAIGNS]
- OSA SECURED FARM BILL \$\$\$ TO IMPLEMENT
- OSA REALLY RAISED PROFILE & PUBLIC AWARENESS
- [MORE PEOPLE HAD DIRECT EXPERIENCES]
- EDUCATION - KIDS
- REACHED OUT TO CREATE PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR COYOTE VALLEY
- COORDINATED W/ VTA, CALTRANS FOR WILDLIFE FRIENDLY PROJECTS
- OSA SUCCESSFUL AT BALLOT / DIVERSE FUNDING
- PHILANTHROPY FUNDED KEY PROJECTS

PARTNERS

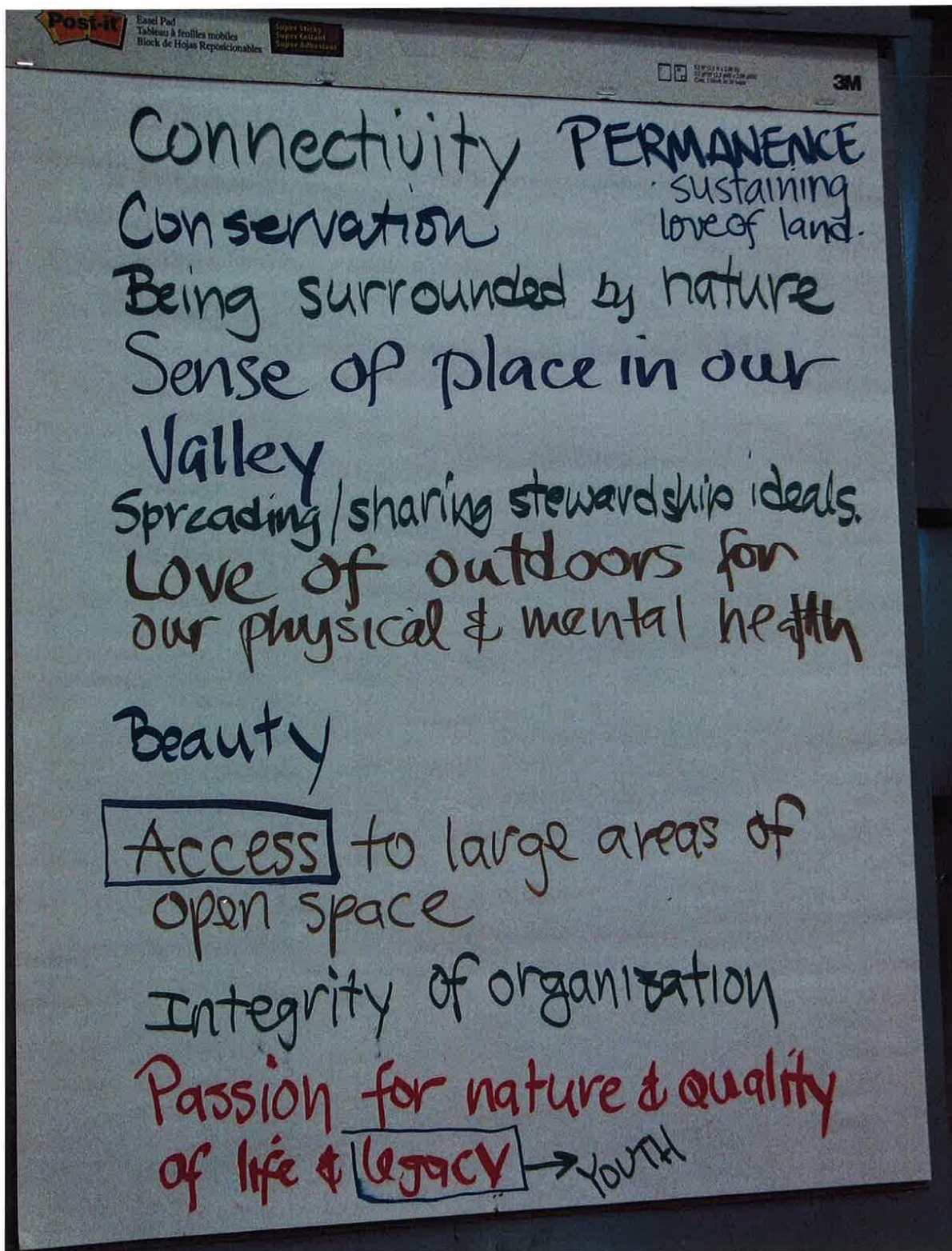
- HISPANIC FOUNDATION SILICON VALLEY
- CHAMBERS
- SCHOOL SYSTEMS / COMMUNITY COLLEGES
- CITY GOVTS. / COUNTY GOVT.
- SCVWD
- SVLG
- POST
- MIDPEN.
- FARM BUREAU / CATTLEMEN / F.F.A.
- JOINT VENTURE SILICON VALLEY
- IBM
- SILICON VALLEY BIKE COALITION
- WORKING PARTNERSHIPS USA
- REAL ESTATE
- AMAH MUTSEV / TRIBES
- N.M.F.S. / NOAA
- "LET'S MOVE"
- USDA - LOCAL FOOD / NRCS
- KAISER / HEALTH TRUST / PUBLIC HEALTH / CDC
- CORPORATE FOUNDATIONS
- UCCE
- VTA / CALTRAIN
- CLEAN TECH - SOLAR, WIND, COMPOST
- VENTURE CAPITAL
- SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTORS

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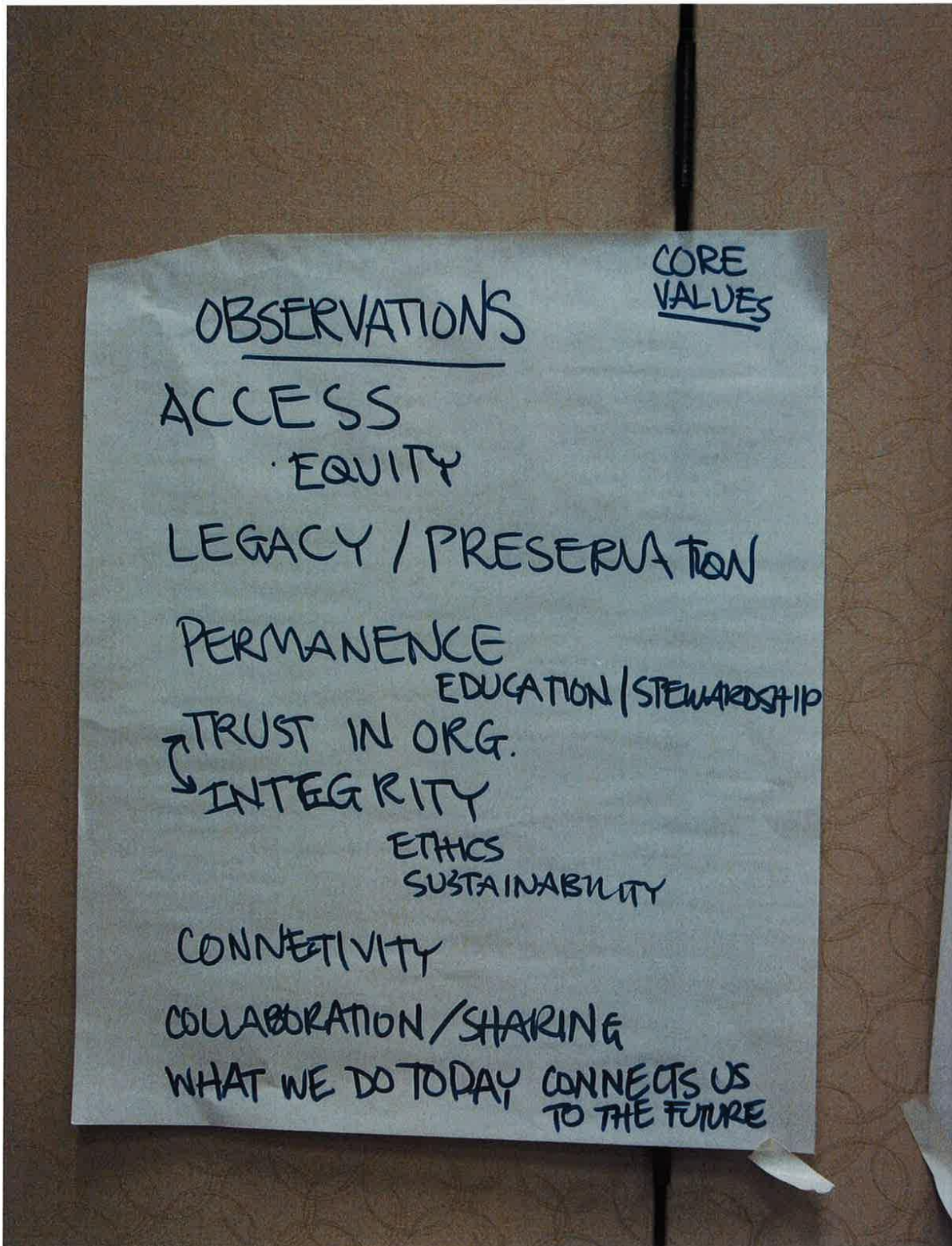
Appendix 6: Photo Notes – Core Values



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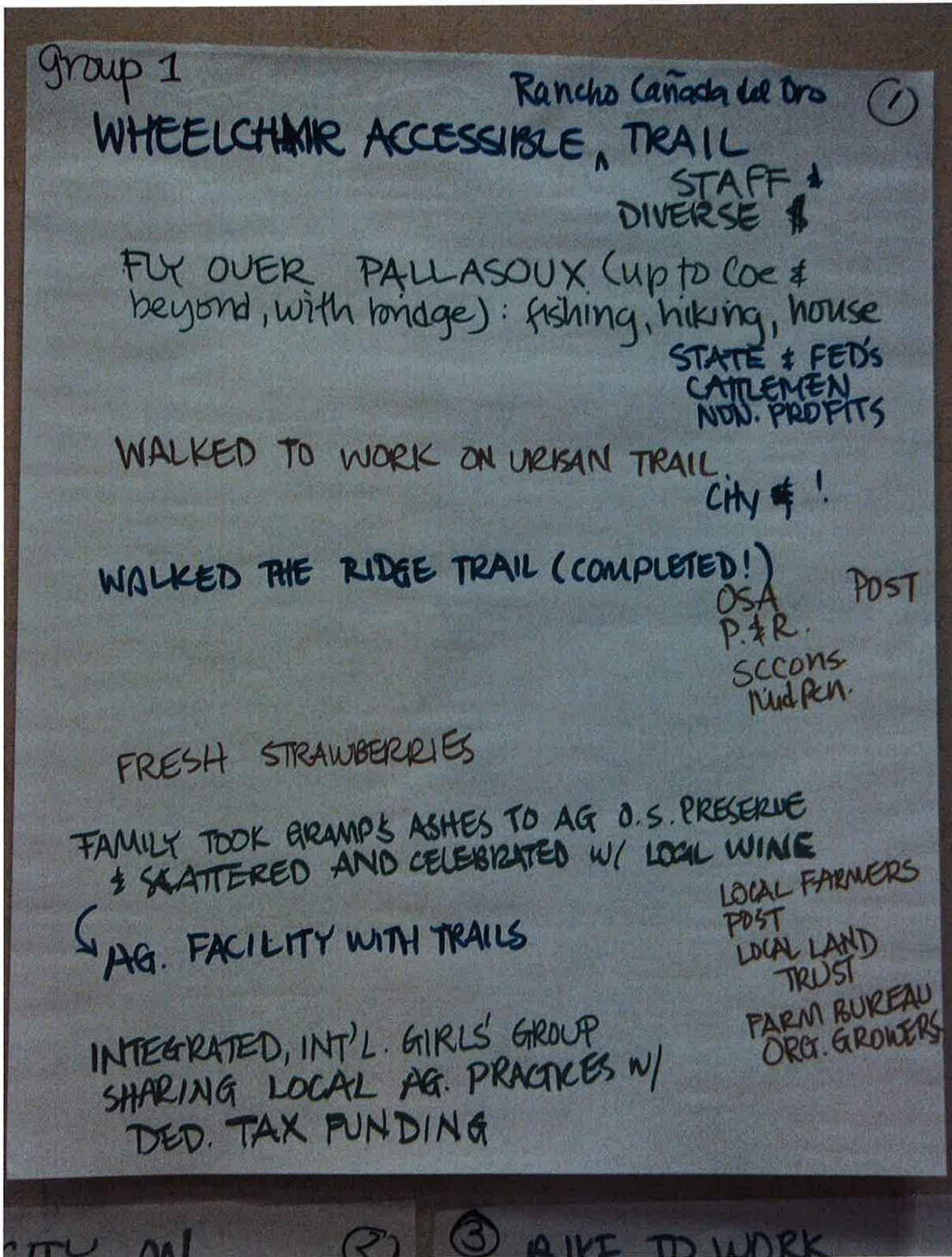
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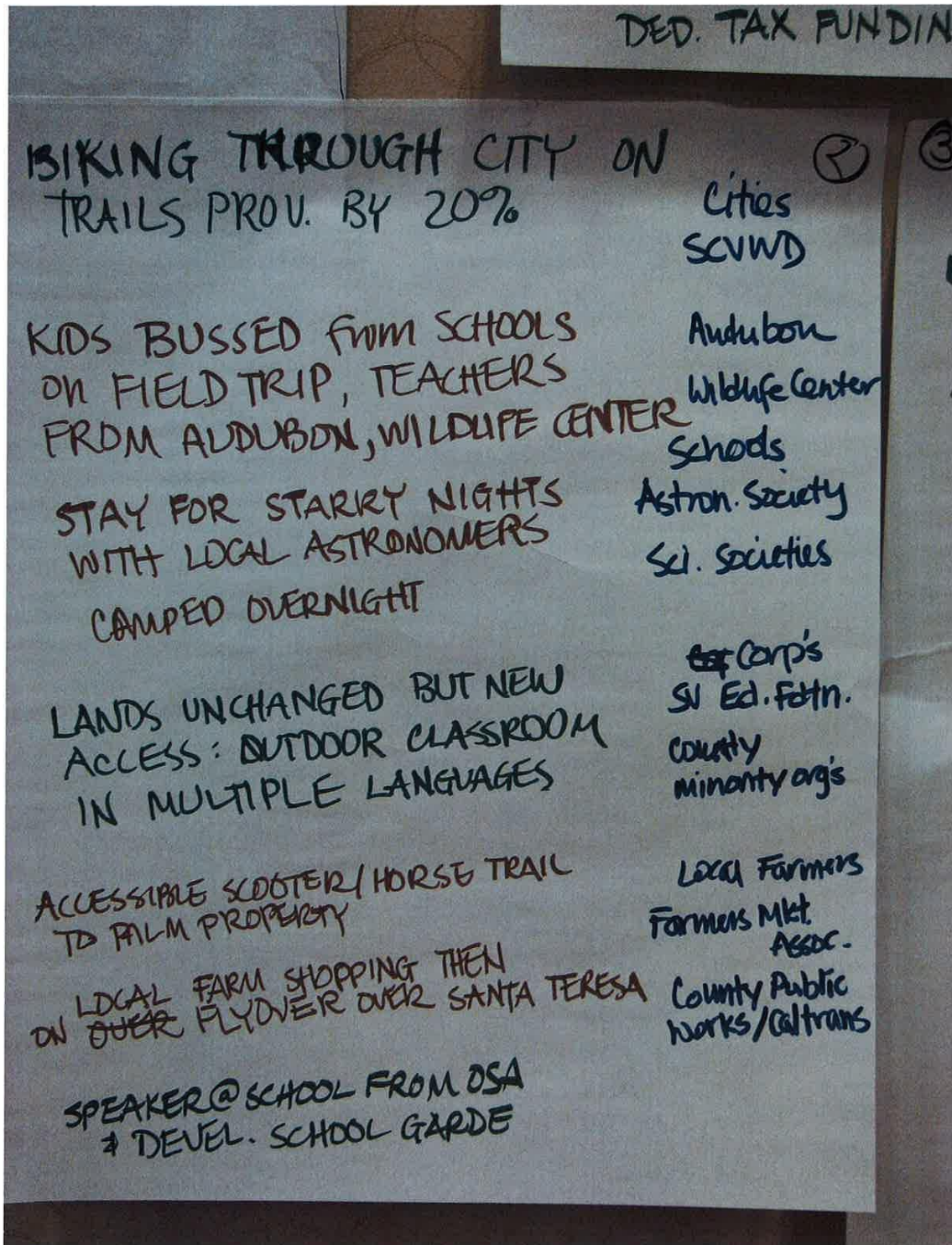
Appendix 7: Photo Notes – 2043 Brainstorming – Groups 1 and 2

Group 1, page 1



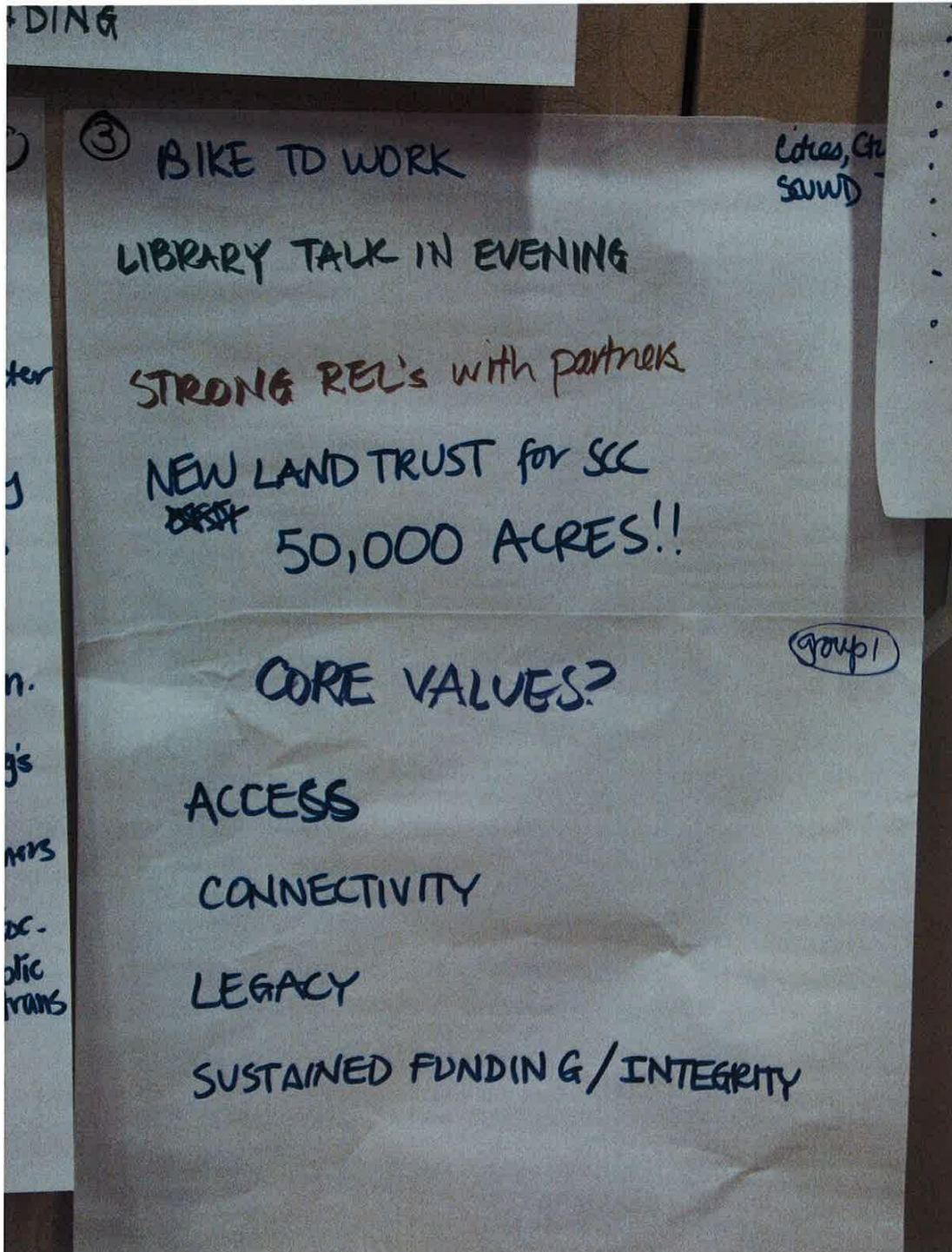
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Group 1, page 2



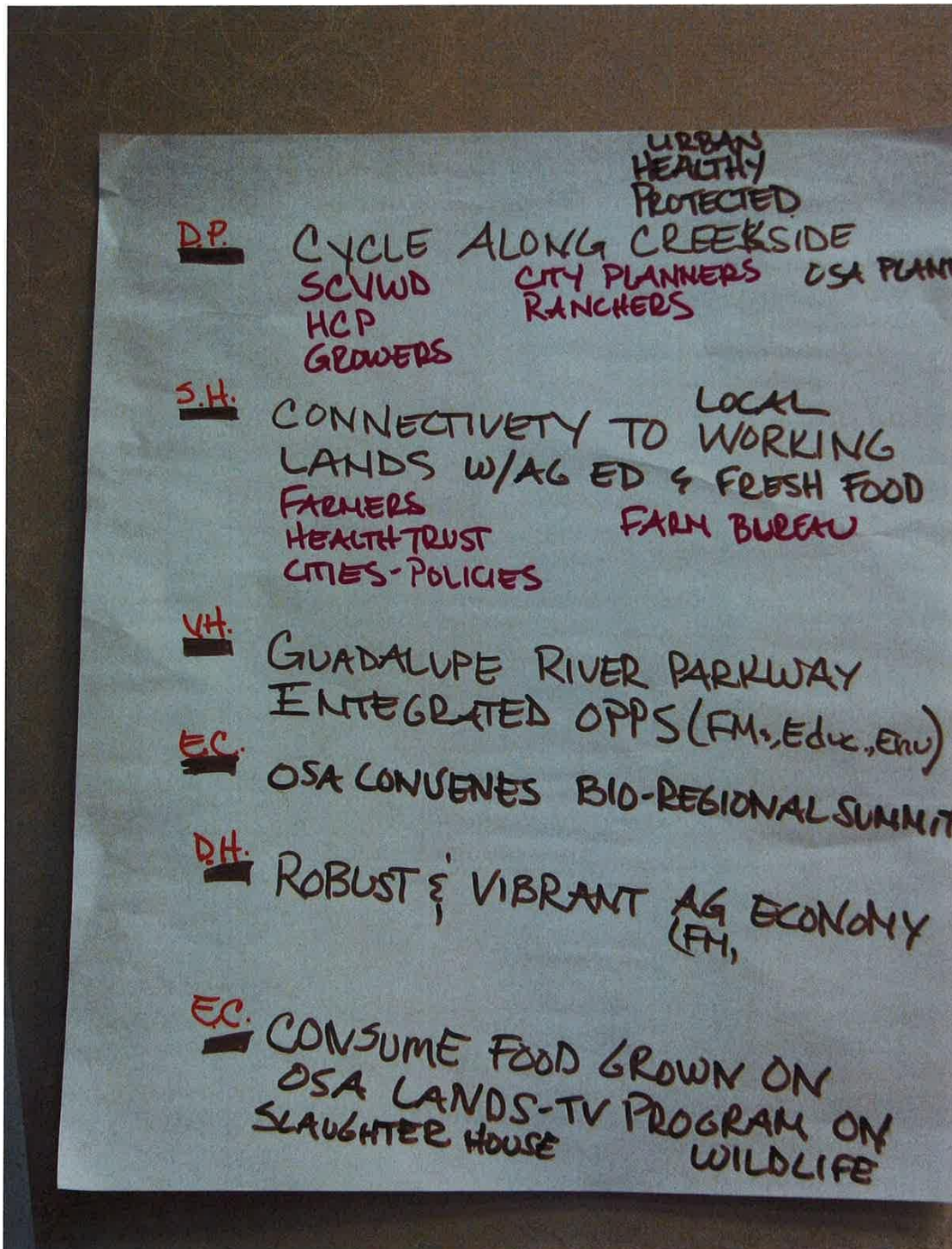
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Group 1, page 3



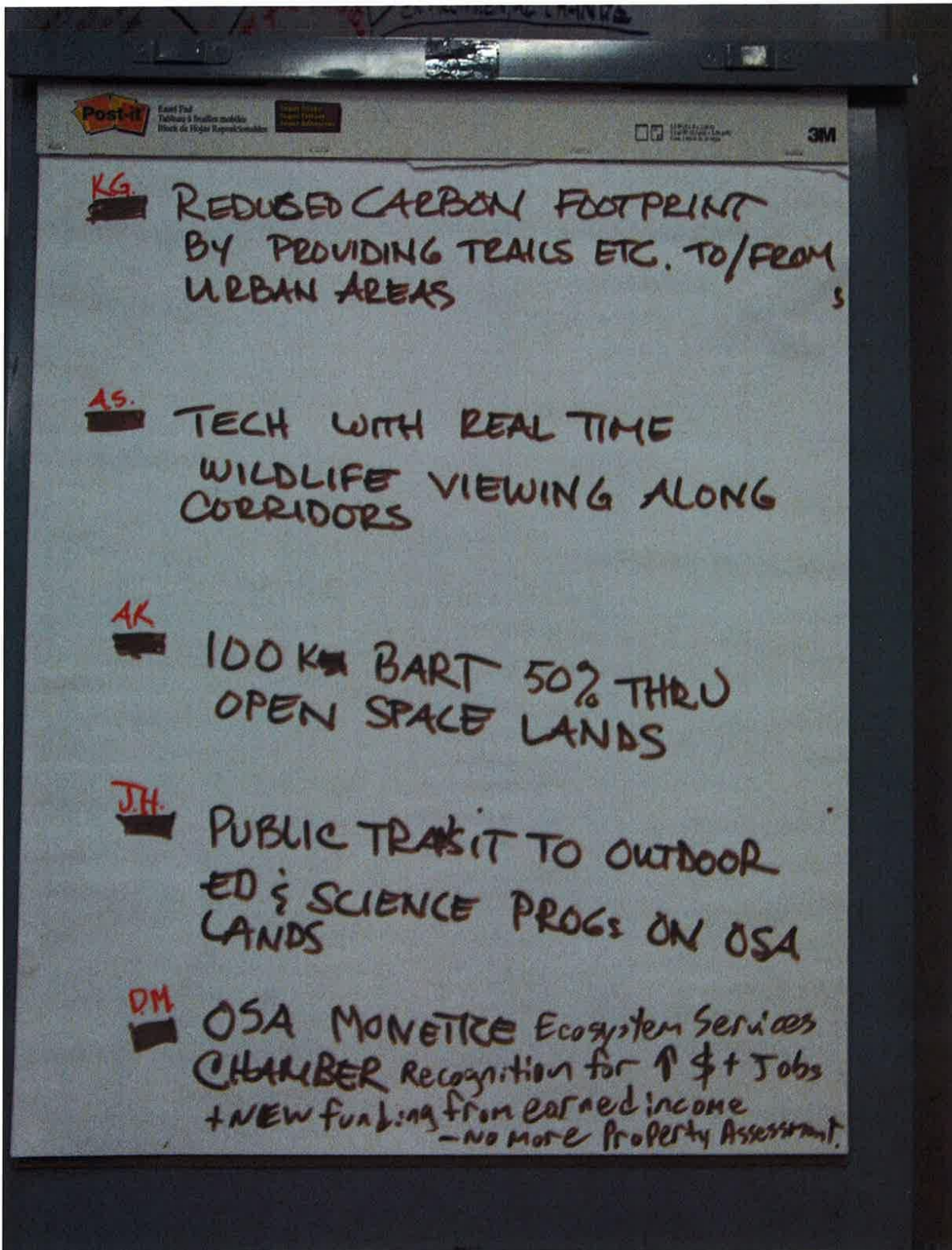
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Group 2, page 1



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Group 2, page 2



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Appendix 8: Photo Notes – Themes

