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CITY OF SACRAMENTO

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CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

915 "I" STREET
CITY HALL - ROOM 308

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. 95814
TELEPHONE (916) 449-5904

ETHAN BROWNING, JR.
PLANNING DIRECTOR

January 24, 1980

City Council
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

SUBJECT: Proposed Cal/Expo Master Plan

At its January 23, 1980 meeting, the Planning and Community Development Committee recommended approval of the attached report on this master plan. The City Council requested this report at its January 2, 1980 meeting. The Planning and Community Development Committee recommended that the Council approve the transmittal of this report to the Cal/Expo Master Plan Task Force which is currently completing the master plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Tokuo Masuda

Tokuo Masuda
Principal Planner

FOR TRANSMITTAL TO CITY COUNCIL:

Walter J. Slupe
Walter J. Slupe, City Manager

January 29, 1980
All Districts

TM:bw

Attachment

APPROVED
BY THE CITY COUNCIL

JAN 29 1980

OFFICE OF THE
CITY CLERK



CITY OF SACRAMENTO

CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

915 "I" STREET
CITY HALL - ROOM 308

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. 95814
TELEPHONE (916) 449-5004

ETHAN BROWNING, JR.
PLANNING DIRECTOR

January 17, 1980

Planning and Community Development Committee
City Council
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

SUBJECT: Proposed Cal Expo Master Plan.

SUMMARY

The Council requested this report on the proposed Master Plan which is currently being prepared for the future development of Cal Expo. The draft plan currently recommends: 1) the improvement of existing facilities and the addition of new facilities; 2) the reorientation of Cal Expo as an agricultural showcase, as agriculture is the main industry in California; 3) the separation of the 355 acre floodplain area south of the levee from Cal Expo, with its future administration as an open space area; and 4) that interim uses of the Cal Expo facilities be expanded.

If the proposed multi-purpose arena is built, it could affect the City's Memorial Auditorium as the arena would attract some events which are currently using the auditorium. If the State approves the arena, the City would have to re-evaluate the future use of the auditorium. In addition, existing and proposed exhibition facilities could draw events from similar facilities in the Community Center unless rental policies are coordinated.

On January 2, 1980 the City Council approved the general concept of improving Cal Expo. As the Task Force is completing the Master Plan, the Council's action did not apply to specific elements of the proposed plan.

The staff recommends that the Committee approve this report, with any additional comments desired by the Committee, for transmittal to the Task Force for its consideration.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At its January 2, 1980 meeting, the City Council requested this report on this master plan. A 13-member Task Force chaired by Mr. William Penn Mott, Jr. and the consultants (POD, Inc., and Stanford Research Institute) are completing a master plan report which is scheduled to be adopted in mid-February and transmitted to the Legislature in early March.

The local representatives on this Task Force are Mr. William Pond, administrator of the County Community Development and Environmental Protection Agency, and Toke Masuda of the City Planning Department. Both persons served on the earlier (1974-75) Cal Expo Evaluation Committee. In addition, representatives of the City Planning Commission, City Police Chief, Traffic Engineer, and Community Services Department served on sub-committees regarding specific aspects of the master plan.

This Task Force was established by the Legislature, as Cal Expo has had problems since its initial opening at its new site in 1968. These problems are partly due to the fact that Cal Expo has had a negative image since its initial season, when it was opened as a partially completed facility. The physical facilities have never been completed and Cal Expo therefore has fallen far short of anticipated attendance projections.

This has partially been due to frequent management changes, and the lack of staff to promote year-round interim activities. The latter is essential, as the 19-day State Fair basically breaks even from a financial standpoint. However, interim use of a Cal Expo site has fallen far short of expectations, partly because all of the facilities were not built. Examples of interim uses are the Energy Fair, and the Indian Days events. Cal Expo is also a unique public facility, as it was built with special bond funds, and its debt service (approximately 1.4 million dollars per year) is included in its cost revenue evaluation. Most public facilities are gaged on the basis of how well they perform a public function, and the difference between their operating costs and revenues. As Cal Expo has required State funding for both debt service and operating subsidies, several measures have been introduced to close Cal Expo and dispose of the site for private development. One such measure is currently pending before the Legislature.

The Task Force and its consultants narrowed the alternatives in November to three basic choices:

1. An urban expo;
2. An agriculture showcase;
3. Recommendation to dispose of Cal Expo.

The Task Force directed its consultants to focus on the agricultural showcase, and deferred the third alternative for consideration only if the first two alternatives were not feasible.

PLAN EVALUATION

The Task Force and its consultants are still in the process of revising sections of the master plan so this evaluation is necessarily general. However, the following elements of the plan are firm:

1. The plan recommends the designation of Cal Expo as an agricultural showcase, promoting all aspects of the agriculture industry. The contacts with the agricultural industry have been favorable, and some of the proposed facilities could be funded from funds allocated for agricultural purposes. This designation ties in with the important function of the University of California at Davis, and the recent opening of the State Farm Bureau office north of Cal Expo.
2. The plan recommends the relocation and reconstruction of the live-stock and agriculture exhibit area on the west side of the site (please see attached map). The present livestock area is relatively inaccessible and exhibitors have commented unfavorably regarding the quality of these facilities.
3. Reorganization of Cal Expo's management is recommended to increase its flexibility and improve operations.
4. The consultants recommend a \$30 million State revenue bond issue for major new facilities and retirement of the existing \$5 million bonded indebtedness. In addition, \$5 to \$10 million is recommended for minor improvements.
5. The plan recommends the construction of multi-purpose arena seating 10,000 persons (8,000 fixed seats - 2,000 temporary seats) at the northwest corner. This multi-purpose arena would allow a wide range of State Fair activities, during the balance of the year.
6. The plan recommends the construction of a floriculture structure at the main entrance. This would replace the inadequate tent which has been serving as displays for floricultural exhibits during the past dozen years. The surveys taken by the consultants indicated that one of the major complaints regarding the Cal Expo site was that it did not provide for exhibits that were provided on the Old State Fairgrounds. Representatives of various garden clubs indicated that this facility would be widely used, both during the State Fair and during the balance of the year.
7. The Plan retains the race track and grandstand.
8. The Plan recommends an improved landscaping program to improve the appearance of the existing site.

9. The Plan provides for a mixture of public and private investment: the play school area, and the specialty commercial area are both recommended for private development on leased land. In addition, the Plan recommends possible leasing of a seven-acre site at Exposition Boulevard and Ethan Way which would not be needed for Expo activities.
10. The Task Force approved the Floodplain Sub-committee's recommendation that the 335 acres south of the American River levee be severed from Cal Expo, and be administered by the State Parks and Recreation Department as an open space area. The proposal is consistent with the American River Parkway Plan adopted by the City and County of Sacramento.

FISCAL IMPACT

The proposed multi-purpose arena and expanded exhibit facilities could attract events from the Community Center, especially if rental policies are not consistent. This is a management policy, but the staff should indicate that this matter be incorporated into the master plan.

From the capitol improvement standpoint, the only concerns expressed by City and County staffs have been regarding the necessity to complete the Interstate 80/Expo Boulevard interchange and possible upgrading of the Expo Boulevard/Arden Way intersection. The Plan recommends both of these improvements.

RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Committee approve the following comments, with any additional comments desired, for transmittal to the Task Force:

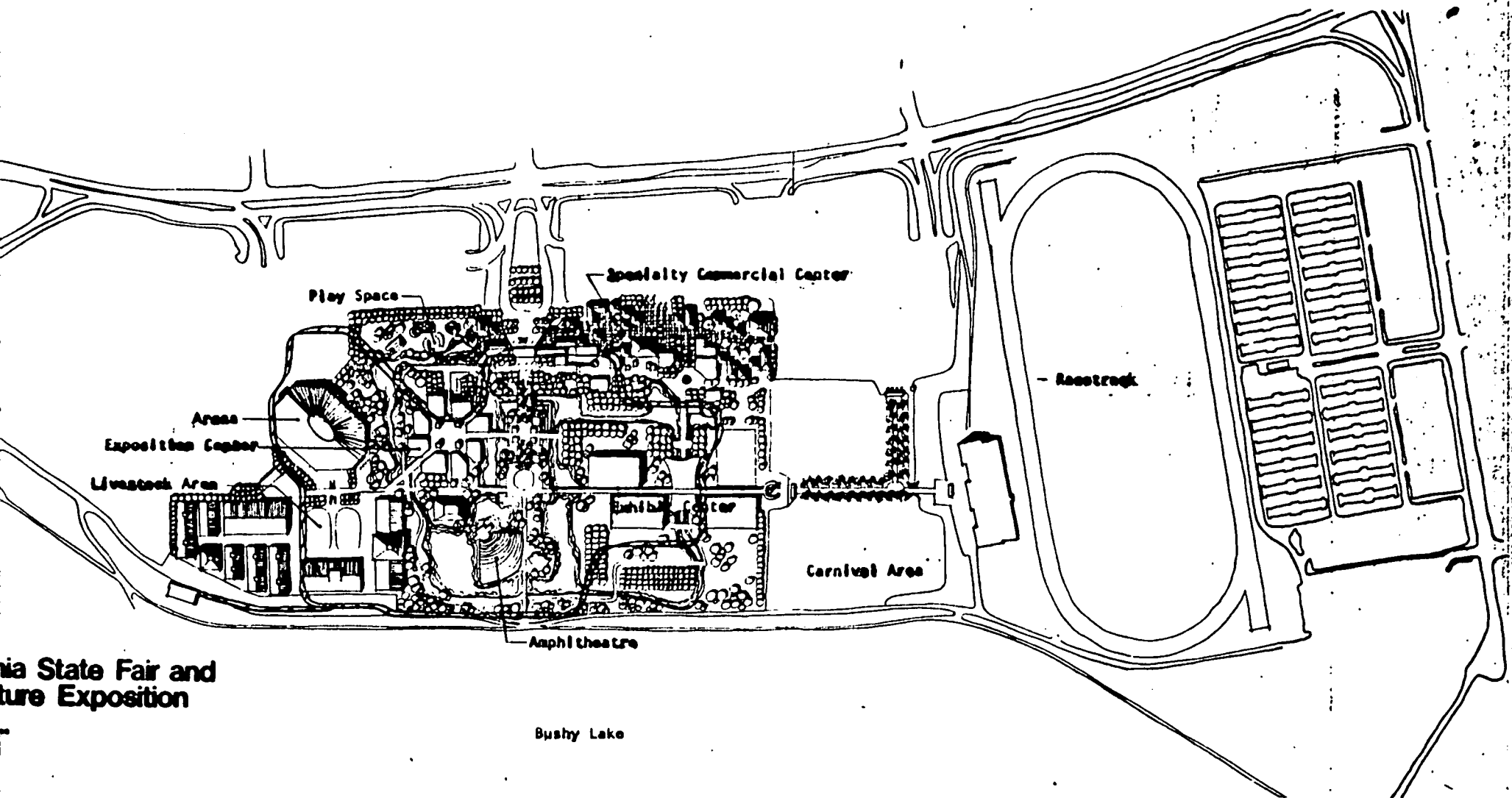
1. The leasing policies for the arena and exhibition facilities should be coordinated with the Community Center, so the operation of these two facilities would complement, rather than compete with, each other.
2. The proposed administration of the Cal Expo Floodplain area as open space is consistent with the American River Parkway Plan.
3. It is recommended that the Task Force and its consultants consider a phased development program which does not rely on approval of a large bond issue, as uncertainty regarding the feasibility of such a bond issue may defer improvements indefinitely.

Respectfully submitted,

Tokuo Masuda

Tokuo Masuda
Principal Planner

TM:bw



Virginia State Fair and Agriculture Exposition

Bushy Lake

