



CITY OF SACRAMENTO

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE  
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DEC 23 1980

TRAFFIC ENGINEERING DIVISION  
1023 J STREET — SUITE 202 SACRAMENTO, CALIF. 95814

TELEPHONES (916)  
TRAFFIC ENGINEERING 449-5307  
OFF-STREET PARKING 449-5354  
ON-STREET PARKING 449-5644

December 19, 1980

City Council  
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

SUBJECT: Walnut Grove Line Acquisition

SUMMARY

Caltrans has indicated that they have sufficient funds available to buy the Walnut Grove Rail Line between Miller Park and the town of Freeport to reserve the right of way for future rail and/or bicycle facilities. It is recommended that the City Council endorse the concept and encourage Caltrans to proceed.

BACKGROUND

This matter was discussed at the City Council meeting of December 16th, 1980, and the following major issues were identified:

1. Should the line be purchased by a public agency and held for future transit and/or bicycle use?
2. Should it be purchased by Caltrans or the City?

As stated in the previous report the Southern Pacific Company abandoned rail service on the line about two years ago. At the request of the State Parks and Recreation Department, they have not yet sold any of the right of way.

In order to justify public purchase of the line there must be a valid public use. The most immediate public use of the line is for a bikeway. The Bikeway Master Plan includes an off-street bikeway on most of this line. The Sacramento River Bikeway uses this route from Miller Park to a point just north of Sutterville Road where the railroad line swings east across the freeway. Another off-street bikeway is then shown on the line between Sutterville Road and the town of Freeport. Work is currently underway to implement the Sacramento River portion of the bikeway and the City owns title to this portion of the right of way.

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- The State Parks and Recreation Department proposes to operate a tourist train on the Walnut Grove Line; initially to Land Park and ultimately to the town of Hood. They completed a feasibility study for this project in January 1980. The report recommends that "The property and improvements of the Walnut Grove Branch line between Old Sacramento and Locke, 23.2 miles, should be acquired, with particular priority placed on acquiring the 15.6-mile section between Old Sacramento and Hood Junction."

The third, and possibly most important public use in the long run, may be some kind of urban mass transit rail line. While rail transit can not be justified at present, we must look to the future when confronted with the opportunity to acquire an intact right of way through an urban area. Rapid development is occurring in the south area and there will be opportunities in the future for increased density through infill and development along the line. The I-5 freeway still has considerable unused capacity, but the ramp connections to and from the downtown area are limiting factors for additional urban travel on this facility.

It is felt there is ample justification for a public agency to purchase the Walnut Grove Line and hold it for future rail and/or bicycle use. We are sure that the portion between Miller Park and Sutterville Road will be used for a bikeway, but it may be years before specific plans can be prepared for any of the other uses along this line. Meanwhile, if the Southern Pacific Company sells portions of the right of way for individual developments the opportunities may be lost.

The second issue has to do with who should purchase the right of way. Considerations of time and money clearly indicate that Caltrans is the only agency in a position to do so.

Caltrans has funds available and can start almost immediately. They have already contacted the Southern Pacific Company and have been told they will have to pay for an option on the land in order to hold it until they are ready to buy. Before Caltrans can start negotiating they will have to make an environmental assessment which will take about two months and an appraisal.

Last year State Parks estimated the right of way to be worth \$1,838,560. However, Southern Pacific is asking the Regional Sanitation District to pay \$3,000,000 just for a sewer line easement. Therefore, there will have to be a lot of negotiation and the final price will be in the millions. Southern Pacific representatives have indicated they have been contacted by various developers who want to buy parts of the right of way. We can not expect them to hold it much longer.

The City could apply to the California Transportation Commission for Proposition 5 funds or possibly SB 620 funds to buy the right of way. We would have to know how much we need so we would probably have to negotiate with Southern Pacific before we apply. Considering the statewide shortage of gas tax funds, it is possible that the CTC would take a dim view of tying up Prop 5 funds for a land purchase for a project that has not yet been documented. Furthermore, it takes a fair amount of time to process an application for funds. When we applied for \$150,000 of Prop 5 funds for the I-80 Withdrawal Study it took eight months from the time we decided to apply until we had a final signed contract in hand.

It is unlikely that the City can find any other source of funds for this project so it appears best to encourage Caltrans to proceed.

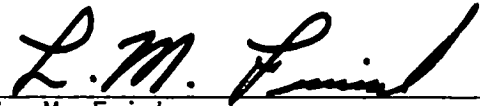
FINANCIAL DATA

None

RECOMMENDATION

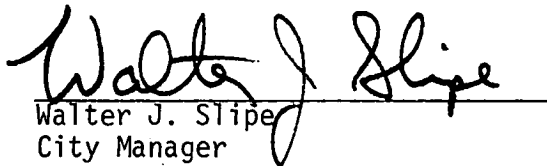
It is recommended that the attached Resolution be adopted endorsing the concept of reserving right of way in the Walnut Grove Line Corridor and requesting Caltrans to proceed with the purchase of said right of way.

Respectfully submitted,



L. M. Frink  
Traffic Engineer

Recommendation Approved:



Walter J. Slipe  
City Manager

LMF/vmp  
Attachment

December 30, 1980  
All Districts

**RESOLUTION NO. 80-873**

Adopted by The Sacramento City Council on date of

RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE CONCEPT OF RESERVING RIGHT OF WAY IN THE WALNUT GROVE RAIL LINE CORRIDOR FOR FUTURE TRANSIT AND BICYCLE USES AND ENCOURAGING CALTRANS TO PROCEED WITH ACQUIRING SAID RIGHT OF WAY

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

That there will be a need for transit service and bicycle facilities in the Walnut Grove Rail Line Corridor and that the right of way should be acquired to preserve the opportunity for such development in the future. Therefore, Caltrans is encouraged to proceed with all haste to acquire the right of way and keep it in the public domain for future transportation uses.

The City's continued endorsement in this matter is contingent on Caltrans and the State Department of Parks and Recreation keeping the City informed and consulting with the City prior to making decisions regarding the use of the right of way.

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

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CITY CLERK

**APPROVED**  
BY THE CITY COUNCIL

DEC 30 1980

OFFICE OF THE  
CITY CLERK

# RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by The Sacramento City Council on date of

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MAYOR

ATTEST:

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CITY CLERK

3317



# CITY OF SACRAMENTO

TRAFFIC ENGINEERING DIVISION  
1023 J STREET — SUITE 202 SACRAMENTO, CALIF. 95814

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE  
**RECEIVED**  
DEC 9 1980

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December 9, 1980

City Council  
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

SUBJECT: Caltrans' Purchase of the Walnut Grove Rail Line

SUMMARY

Caltrans has indicated that they have sufficient funds available to buy the Walnut Grove Rail Line between Miller Park and the town of Freeport to reserve the right of way for future rail and/or bicycle facilities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Before it was abandoned, the Walnut Grove Rail Line connected the City of Sacramento with the community of Walnut Grove. It started in Old Sacramento at its northerly end, proceeded south on Front Street, crossed Broadway, traveled east of Miller Park, crossed the I-5 freeway north of Sutterville, passed the City Treatment Plant, proceeded due south to a point opposite Bing Maloney Golf Course where it then paralleled Freeport Boulevard to and beyond the south city limits.

The Southern Pacific Company abandoned rail service on this line south of Miller Park about two years ago. They still operate between Old Sacramento and Miller Park to serve industries south of Broadway and west of 5th Street.

The State Department of Parks and Recreation has been considering the possibility of operating a steam-powered excursion train on this route. Their thoughts are to initially operate the train between Old Sacramento and Land Park. In the more distant future, they are considering operation all the way to the town of Hood. Through cooperation between the Southern Pacific Company and State Parks, none of the right of way along this line has been sold.

The City and County Parks and Recreation departments have been developing the Sacramento River Bikeway which involves the Walnut Grove Rail Line

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DEC 16 1980

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BY THE CITY COUNCIL

DEC 23 1980

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*12-23-80*  
*DEC 16 1980*

December 9, 1980

right of way between Miller Park and a point just north of Sutterville Road. They have also been working with the Southern Pacific Company regarding use of the right of way.

It has been recognized for some time by transportation planners that the Walnut Grove Rail Line has potential for a future rail transit service between downtown and the rapidly growing residential areas to the south. Last January, the Traffic Engineering division made application to the California Transportation Commission to have this line included with other lines around the State for funding to acquire the right of way. At that time, we were not prepared to develop a full application but we expressed a desire for this line to stay on the state-wide list.

On December 1st, Caltrans indicated to representatives of the City, County and Regional Transit that they have the necessary funds to purchase the right of way on the Walnut Grove Rail Line between Miller Park and the town of Freeport. Subsequently, a meeting was held with representatives of State Parks to be sure that such a move would not conflict with their plans. All of the representatives attending these meetings have endorsed the idea and have encouraged Caltrans to proceed. The Caltrans representatives indicated that they will proceed and requested official endorsement of the concept from the various public agencies. This matter, therefore, is being taken before the Northeast Corridor Study Committee, City Council, County Board of Supervisors and the Regional Transit Board for their endorsement.

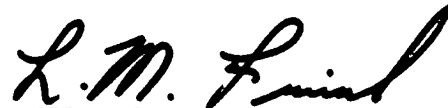
#### FINANCIAL DATA

None.

#### RECOMMENDATION

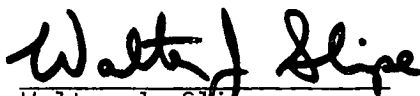
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Respectfully submitted,



L. M. Frink  
Traffic Engineer

Recommendation Approved:



Walter J. Slife  
City Manager

LMF/mf  
Attachment

December 16, 1980  
All Districts

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MAYOR

ATTEST:

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