



REPORT TO COUNCIL

City of Sacramento

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STAFF REPORT
September 25, 2007

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Title: The Sacramento Railyards – A Progress Report

Location/Council District: East of Sacramento River, just north of the Central Business District in Downtown Sacramento/Council District 1.

Recommendation: Receive and File

Contact: Nedzlene Ferrario, Senior Planner, (916) 808-7826; Gregory Bitter, Principal Planner, (916) 808-7816

Presenters: Gregory Bitter, Principal Planner

Department: Development Services

Division: Current Planning

Organization No: 4881

Description/Analysis:

Issue: Since the May 29, 2007 City Council meeting, significant milestones have occurred relative to the project.

- A community meeting was held on June 7, 2007 for the purposes of receiving community input on the plan. A summary of the key points raised during the meeting is attached to this report. (Attachment 1)
- Public Review Drafts of the Specific Plan, Design Guidelines and Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) have been made public. The DEIR has been delivered to the Council and the Specific Plan and Design Guidelines are attached to this report. Public Drafts of the Special Planning District and Infrastructure Finance Plan are anticipated at the end of September.
- Staff has scheduled three joint meetings of the Design, Preservation and

Planning Commissions in order to facilitate and streamline the hearing process. The schedule and discussion topics are as follows:

- Tuesday, September 11, 2007:
Smart Growth
Connectivity and Circulation (Vehicular, Bike, and Pedestrian)
Historic Preservation
The Riverfront
- Monday, October 2, 2007:
Open Space
Remediation
- Monday, October 22, 2007:
Housing
Public Facilities

The September 11, 2007 Joint Commission meeting staff report is attached (Attachment 2).

Policy Considerations: The proposed project remains consistent with the City's Vision and Guiding Principles, the City's Infill Strategy, the City's adopted Sustainability Master Plan and City Council's Strategic Plan focus areas of sustainability and livability, affordable housing, economic development, and culture and entertainment. Complete policy analysis will be generated as the project progresses.

Committee/Commission Action: None

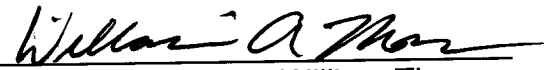
Environmental Considerations: This progress report will not have any negative effect on the environment and does not constitute a "project" as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(3); 15378(b)(2). The Sacramento Railyards Specific Plan project Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) preparation was released for public review on August 20, 2007, and public comment period closes on October 3, 2007. A public hearing regarding the DEIR is scheduled for September 13th, 2007.

Rationale for Recommendation: No recommendation necessary. The purpose of the meeting is strictly informational.

Financial Considerations: Not applicable

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): Not applicable

Respectfully Submitted by: 
David Kwong
Planning Manager

Approved by: 
William Thomas
Director of Development Services

Recommendation Approved:


RAY KERRIDGE
City Manager

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Attachment 1**June 7, 2007 Community Meeting Summary**

A community meeting on June 7, 2007 was held at the Southern Pacific Depot. About 175 members of the public gave input on the new Railyards plan. Members of the public were invited to browse maps exhibiting the current project plans and post their comments. People were excited about the walkable design and connectivity aspects of the plan, historic grid extension and the high density mixed-use transit oriented vision for the site. Below is a sample of the key points raised:

Circulation and Alternative Modes:

- Extend streetcars in to Railyards project area. Utilize restored streetcars - similar to those on the Embarcadero in San Francisco.
- Connect Alkali Flat with pedestrian bridge across the tracks at 10th Street.
- Incorporate pedestrian friendly amenities such as pedestrian scaled lighting, safety controls at intersections, and mid-block pedestrian short cuts.
- Preference for one-way streets in general and two-way streets in residential areas.
- Maintain the Jibboom Street viaduct as opposed to removal.
- Study 5th Street under-crossing instead of over-crossing; eliminate some streets that cut through box parks and freeway access concerns.
- Construct additional bridges across the American and Sacramento River.

Celebrating City's Heritage:

- Locate the Railroad Technology Museum in the Railyards, rename the streets to railroad-themed street names and incorporate all of the Railroad Masters (Hopkins, Stanford, Huntington and Crocker).
- Include a museum to commemorate the Chinese immigrants who worked in the historic Railyards.
- Preserve the historic structures on the site such as the 7 historic shops, water tower, historic track alignment and reconstruct the Roundhouse.
- Preserve views of the Central Shops by lowering new construction heights around the Shops.

Land Use & Density:

- A variety of land use types were suggested: farmers market, university/college, medical facilities, senior recreation, horse track, grocery stores, a variety of local restaurants, day-to-day services and small local businesses.
- Include a public school and day care facilities.
- Feature a variety of housing types and affordable housing at all levels including very low. Ensure high-quality design of affordable housing.
- Locate the Arena on the Intermodal site or on Vista Park.
- Redistribute the densities away from the Alkali Flat neighborhood.

Parks and Open Space:

- Many questions were posed about what the purpose or intent is behind areas designated “open space/green”, especially around the Central Shops area.
- Maintain the riverfront parcels as open space.
- Design park space for large gatherings, community gardens, amphitheater or outdoor performances and for all ages. Incorporate historical elements in to park design.

Design & Green Planning Practices:

- Become a model of Green Principles such as grey water re-use in landscaping, green streets, green roofs and permeable paving.
- Set architectural design excellence to raise Sacramento’s image and blend with downtown.

Intermodal Facility:

- Leave the Southern Pacific Depot where it is, accommodate high speed rail, and work closely with transit operators to design the Intermodal transit hub.