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NEIGHBORHOOD
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

**CITY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA**

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SACRAMENTO, CA
95814

December 3, 1993

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City Council
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members In Session:

SUBJECT: SACRAMENTO RIVER PARKWAY PLAN (M91-006)

LOCATION: Lands Adjacent to the Sacramento River
Freeport to I-80 Overcrossing @ Garden Highway

COUNCIL DISTRICTS: 1, 4, 7

RECOMMENDATION

This staff report is provided for information only at this time. Staff recommends that the Council:

- A) Not take public comment on the Notice of Preparation
- B) Take public comment on the Plan solely to receive a "summary statement of concerns" from affected groups, deferring detailed testimony until scheduled public hearings.

STAFF CONTACT: Scot Mende, Senior Planner, 264-5894
Grace Hovey, Associate Planner, Environmental Services, 264-7601
Michelle Nelson, Parks Division, 264-6028

FOR COUNCIL MEETING OF: December 14, 1993 (afternoon session)

SUMMARY

The *Draft Sacramento River Parkway Plan* has been released for public review. The document will be undergoing environmental review (EIR) and will be refined over the course of the next 9-12 months. This report is presented for informational purposes only; public hearings on the document are tentatively scheduled after preparation of the environmental documents.

CONTINUED
FROM 12-14-93
TO 1-11-94

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION ACTION

The Planning Commission received a briefing on the Sacramento River Parkway Plan Update effort on November 18, 1993. No action was taken by the Commission during that meeting.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The City Planning Commission held public workshops on March 18, 1991; January 30, 1992; and a walking tour of the levee on December 5, 1992. Public comment from these and other meetings has assisted staff in the preparation of the Draft Plan.

Three related documents (see Attachment A) are proceeding simultaneously through the public review process: The Sacramento River Parkway Plan (City); the Sacramento River Greenway Plan (State Lands Commission); and the Sacramento City/County Bikeway Master Plan (City/County). The present document is a *Draft Update* of the 1975 Sacramento River Parkway Plan.

The objectives of the Plan are to preserve protect, enhance and restore the riparian corridor and its associated ecosystems, and to design a system of controlled public access for active and passive recreational uses related to the river.

The Plan includes:

- o description of the existing land uses, facilities, and activities in the area;
- o description of physical, social, economic, resource, and political factors which influence the management, use and enjoyment of the river;
- o goals and policies for the management of the Sacramento River Parkway; and
- o development and implementation strategy for the Parkway.

Land Use Designations

The Plan contains planning area maps and assigns land use designations to all public lands, and to private lands proposed or contemplated for public easements or ownership. The land use categories include:

- o *Riparian Habitat Preserve*: Minimal facilities, managed to protect and restore original habitat.
- o *Nature Study Area*: Includes riparian habitat and other environmentally sensitive areas with special habitat or topographic characteristics capable of sustaining light

to moderate use. Facilities would include trails (non-paved), benches at observation points or rest areas, interpretive signs, water, and portable restrooms.

- o *Recreation areas:* Active recreation allowed without development of extensive facilities. Facilities include bike/hike trails, interpretive signs, picnic areas, restrooms, boat ramps, and parking.
- o *Urban Waterfront Recreation:* Moderate to heavy use by tourists, downtown workers, bicyclists. Activities include picnicking, pedestrian and bicycle use, Marina dockage (short-term or long-term, on-stream or off-stream). This category includes waterfront commercial (restaurants, marinas, retail shops).
- o *Riverfront District:* Unique to South Natomas, this designation allows recreation, commercial, and residential, provided that the development occurs at a scale, design and intensity compatible with the river environment.
- o *Public Utility:* Flood control, transportation, water and sewer service, etc. Generally minimal habitat and recreation value, although some degree of passive recreation may be compatible.

Goals & Policies

Goals and policies for the Sacramento River Parkway are provided to refine the approach to preservation of natural resources, and for acquisition and development of public property. Specific policies are addressed for: trails, public access; urban development compatibility with the Parkway, public safety, security, natural and cultural resource preservation and restoration, and protection from erosion.

Off-Street Trail: The long-term policy is to provide an on-levee (or waterside berm) trail that traverses the entire length of the Parkway. The trail is designed to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and maintenance and emergency vehicles. Feasibility of equestrian use of trail will be studied further at a later date.

Interim Bypass Route: The short-term policy is to rely on an on-street bicycle route for portions of the Parkway where an off-street trail may be undevelopable for a period of time (e.g., Greenhaven / Little Pocket).

Public Access: Public access points shall be logically located and clearly marked so as to accommodate pedestrians, bicycles, and emergency vehicles and to minimize impact upon adjacent land uses. Public access points are categorized as major (allows vehicle access and parking), intermediate (minimal recreation facilities), and neighborhood (low profile connection to trail system).

Urban Development: Proposed development in the Parkway should provide visually appealing landscape treatment, should blend and be in scale with the surrounding riverine environment, and should provide open space view corridors.

Public Safety: Policies have been developed to protect the public and landowners from potentially unsafe conditions in the Parkway (including natural hazards such as steep slopes), installation of emergency phones (callboxes) and mileage markers.

Security: The public access points shall be closed at sunset, the parkway shall be patrolled on a regular basis, and boundaries between public and private property shall be clearly identified with fencing and signage.

Natural and Cultural Resources: Preservation and restoration of resources shall be accomplished by emphasizing the importance of retaining native vegetation, and limiting access to areas of high habitat values.

Erosion Control: Trails, fencing and signage shall be appropriately located to channel traffic away from erosion-prone areas. Indigenous grasses and other native vegetation should be used, where feasible, to stabilize slopes.

Implementation of the Plan

The Sacramento River Parkway Plan incorporates strategies to implement the goals and policies. These strategies recognize that full implementation is constrained by acquisition costs and concerns of adjacent homeowners.

Acquisition Priorities: Approximately 75% of the Parkway is currently under public ownership. It is a long-term goal of the Parkway to acquire the balance of the Parkway. The priorities for acquiring this land are to facilitate the connection of recreation facilities or trail systems, to protect riparian habitat, to provide unique recreation opportunities, and where minimal opposition exists from adjacent land owners. The South Pocket area (Arabella Ave. to Freeport Reservoir) is a high priority for acquisition, in that strategic acquisition would close gaps in the existing public ownership pattern. The Little Pocket & Greenhaven areas are not considered as priority areas for acquisition due to a variety of social and economic constraints.

Private Inholdings Area (PIA): The Private Inholdings Area (PIA) concept was developed for the Greenhaven and Little Pocket portions of the Parkway. This designation recognizes the practical limitations to developing this segment of the Parkway, yet maintains the vision of a continuous on-levee trail as a long-term goal. Properties in the PIA would be acquired solely from willing sellers and would not be acquired through eminent domain. The bikeway would divert to an on-street designation for a distance of about 3 miles.

Program of Work and Timeframe for Adoption of the Plan

The Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an Environmental Impact Report was released on November 2, 1993. The comment period for the NOP ends on December 2, 1993. Comments should be submitted to Grace Hovey, Environmental Services Division, 1231 I Street, Room 301, Sacramento, CA 95814. The Draft Environmental Impact Report

(DEIR) is expected to be released in May, 1994. A 45 day commenting period will commence after the release of the DEIR. Approximately 2 months later, the Final EIR will be released. Shortly thereafter, public hearings on the EIR and Plan will be conducted by the City Planning Commission and City Council. See Attachment B.

PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS

During the course of developing the draft Plan, staff has solicited substantial public input. Staff held informational workshops, including:

05/06/92	Sam Branan Elementary School [Land Park]
02/26/92	Rio Tierra Jr. High School [South Natomas]
03/11/92	Kennedy Junior High School [Pocket]
06/13/92	Garcia Bend Park [Pocket]
02/17/93	Marshall Park Senior Center [Central City]
02/24/93	Belle Coolidge Community Center [Land Park/Pocket]
03/04/93	Jefferson School [South Natomas]

Additionally, staff formed a "Working Group" comprised primarily of representatives of City Planning, City Parks, State Lands Commission, Parks & Recreation Citizen Advisory Committee, Old Sacramento Management Board, Sacramento Riverfront Association (homeowners adjacent to river), Sacramento River Parkway Advocates, and the Natomas Community Association. This Working Group provided invaluable insights into various needs and sensitivities of the various agencies and residents. While the document has attempted to reflect the concerns of the Working Group, absolute consensus was not achieved. Following are some of the general concerns expressed:

Equestrian Groups: Various equestrian groups would like to utilize the proposed Sacramento River trail to connect the American River Parkway equestrian trails to the Laguna Creek Parkway trails.

Bicycle Groups: The Sacramento River Parkway Advocates and Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates would like to utilize the proposed Sacramento River trail on-levee with continuous bikeway access.

Adjacent Homeowners: The Sacramento Riverfront Association has expressed concern about potential loss of privacy and security. The raised levees provide unobscured views into backyards, and "backdoor access".

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

Prior to a decision on whether to adopt this Plan, an Environmental Impact Report is required to provide the full range of information for the Commission and Council's consideration.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Implementation of the Parkway Plan is expected to cost \$3 million (p. 76) for land acquisition, \$2.44 million (p. 81) for physical improvements (e.g., restrooms, access, fencing, signage, kiosks, parking areas, etc.). The annual maintenance and security costs, at buildout, are expected to be \$146,000 (p. 88). State and Federal grants and entitlement programs, as well as City Redevelopment funds, Measure A, and Quimby fees comprise the major funding sources.

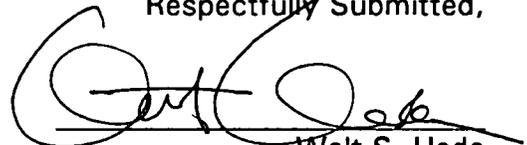
POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The goals of the Plan are consistent with the General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element overall goal to: "Achieve and maintain a balance among the conservation, development and utilization of planned open space and natural resources."

MBE/WBE

Not applicable.

Respectfully Submitted,



Walt S. Ueda

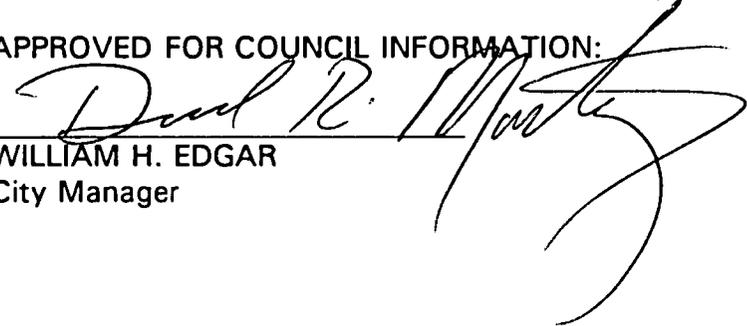
Deputy Director of Parks & Community Services

APPROVED:



DAVID R. MARTINEZ
Deputy City Manager

APPROVED FOR COUNCIL INFORMATION:



WILLIAM H. EDGAR
City Manager

for:

Attachment A

SACRAMENTO RIVER PARKWAY PLAN RELATED DOCUMENTS

Sacramento River Parkway Plan (1975)

The City undertook a Master Plan in 1975 of the Sacramento River Parkway. This Master Plan identified potential bicycle routes and natural areas, and instructed the City to determine easements for proper access to parkway resources. The study, however, did not address South Natomas (except for Discovery Park). The study boundaries begin at Discovery Park and encompass the areas south to the City limits. The *Draft Update* expands the boundaries north of the confluence with the American River and provides more refined policy guidance and implementation strategy.

Sacramento River Greenway Plan

State Lands Commission is coordinating a study of the 30 mile stretch of the Sacramento River (from the I-5 overcrossing northwest of the airport, to the southern City limits) that spans from the levee top on the Yolo side to the levee top on Sacramento side. Using the framework of a Cooperative Management Agreement (CC93-090; AG93-033), the cities of Sacramento and West Sacramento, the counties of Sacramento and Yolo, and the State Lands Commission have issued a Draft Greenway Plan (December, 1992). The schedule for adoption of the Greenway Plan is substantially parallel to the schedule for adoption of the Sacramento River Parkway Plan.

The differences in the land use designations and the study boundaries between the Greenway Plan and the 1975 Sacramento River Parkway Master Plan, prompted staff to begin an update of the City's document.

Sacramento City/County Bikeway Master Plan

A proposed bikeway along the Sacramento River is reflected in the Draft Bikeway Master Plan. This Plan is proceeding towards adoption by the County and by the City. The County Board of Supervisors took testimony on the EIR but postponed certification of the EIR document and adoption of the Plan until later this month. The EIR document would also require certification by the City; similarly, the City would also have the authority to adopt the Bikeway Master Plan.

Attachment B

**SACRAMENTO RIVER PARKWAY PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW/PLAN ADOPTION TIMEFRAME**

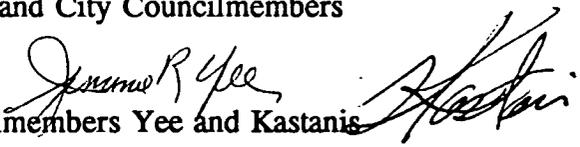
<u>PLAN TASK</u>	<u>TENTATIVE DATE</u>
Notice of Preparation (NOP)	
Notice of Preparation (NOP) Released	11/2/93
NOP Comment Period Ends	12/2/93
Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)	
DEIR Released for Public Review/Comment	5/12/94
DEIR Comment Period Ends	6/29/94
Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR)	
FEIR Released	8/26/94
Public Hearings by the City Planning Commission	10/94
Certification of the Environmental Document and Adoption of the Parkway Plan by the City Council	11/94

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 14, 1993

TO: Mayor and City Councilmembers

FROM: Councilmembers Yee and Kastanis



SUBJECT: LANGUAGE TO BE ADDED TO SACRAMENTO RIVER PARKWAY PLAN

Chapter 5 Acquisition, Page 71; Section 5: **Eminent Domain.**

Add the following at the end of this section:

"This method of acquisition shall not be undertaken until the City has acquired, through fee or easement, fifty-one percent (51%) of the lineal area along the river in the PIA."
(see page 60)

TK:kgs/y