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DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS AND RECREATION

CITY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA

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DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATION

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October 25, 2001

City Council
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

**SUBJECT: INFORMATION – REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT
RIVER CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE LOWER
AMERICAN RIVER**

LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT:

This project encompasses the entire American River Parkway. The portion of the American River Parkway that is within the City limits is located in Council Districts 1, 2, 3, and 6.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an informational item. No action is requested at this time beyond receipt and consideration of the Draft RCMP.

CONTACT PERSONS: Rich Ramirez, Interim Director, Department of Parks and Recreation

FOR COUNCIL MEETING OF: November 6, 2001

SUMMARY:

This is an informational item regarding the Draft River Corridor Management Plan (RCMP) for the Lower American River (LAR). The Draft RCMP provides a framework for improved management of the Lower American River Parkway and represents the first step in what is expected to be a three-year effort to update the 1985 American River Parkway Plan. Although not legally binding, the Draft RCMP is designed to promote multi-agency collaborative, comprehensive, proactive management of Lower American River resources. The Draft RCMP addresses environmental commitments contained in the Water Forum Agreement and builds on the recommendations of the Floodway Management Plan for the LAR prepared for SAFCA in 1998 and the American River Parkway Financial Needs Study prepared for the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors in 2000. The Draft RCMP includes recommended actions that can be implemented within the next three years, prior to the completion of the Parkway Plan Update. The subsequent American River Parkway Plan update process will address outstanding recreation, land use, resource management and Parkway administration issues that have accumulated since the Parkway Plan was last updated in 1985.



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COMMITTEE/COMMISSION ACTION:

Parks and Recreation staff shared the draft RCMP summary with the Parks and Recreation Citizens Advisory Committee.

BACKGROUND:

The RCMP drafting process is being funded by a grant from the CALFED Bay-Delta Program and contributions from the Water Forum, SAFCA, Sacramento County, City of Sacramento, and Cal Expo. Participants include the 18 Federal, State, and local Governmental agencies with significant management responsibilities affecting the LAR and more than 17 community based organizations with a strong interest in the environmental, recreational and flood control issues addressed by the Draft RCMP. The list of participating entities is included in the attached Executive Summary of the Draft RCMP. The drafting process is consensus-based, with the LAR Task Force serving as the central forum. Focused working groups have developed baseline information, technical analysis and a separate report for each of the four elements of the Draft RCMP: fisheries and in-stream habitat; vegetation and wildlife; flood management; and recreation management. These technical reports are being circulated as appendices to the Draft RCMP.

Each element of the Draft RCMP identifies relevant management challenges created by historical human modifications to the American River watershed and the physical and operational constraints currently imposed on the river and also outlines the goals, objectives and recommended actions for addressing these challenges. The collective result is a single blueprint for preserving and enhancing the LAR's fish and wildlife habitat, flood conveyance capacity, and wild and scenic recreational values. This integrated approach to resource management reflects the shift in public policy that has occurred in the aftermath of the floods of 1986 and 1997, the passage of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act in 1992, and the initiation of the CALFED ecosystem restoration process in 1994. These developments post-date the 1985 Parkway Plan, but are reflected in the RCMP. Thus, the Draft RCMP, although generally consistent with the resource management provisions of the Parkway Plan, is both more detailed and more comprehensive in this regard.

Moreover, the participants in the RCMP Recreation Working Group have identified a number of important land use, recreation, and administration issues that are not adequately addressed in the current Parkway Plan, in light of today's knowledge of resource management. Accordingly, this group has developed a series of recommendations for updating the Parkway Plan that will be very helpful in structuring the update process.

The Draft RCMP has been available to participating entities and other interested parties for review and consideration for approximately 120 days. During this period, the Draft RCMP has been the subject of more than two dozen presentations to various stakeholder organizations and interested community organizations, as well as three community meetings. This public outreach has produced a number of comments and suggested revisions. These comments will be addressed by the focused working groups of the LAR Task Force and appropriate revisions to the draft report will be made by the end of November.

Staff will ask the City Council, the Board of Supervisors and the SAFCA Board of Directors for their endorsement of the revised RCMP in December, and a formal endorsement ceremony for all of the participants in the LAR Task Force will be held in January, 2002.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

There are no financial considerations at this time.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The Environmental Services Manager has determined that the actions of authorization to review and consider a draft plan do not require environmental evaluation.

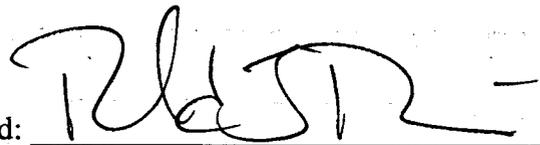
POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

The RCMP is consistent with the City's strategic goals and objectives, particularly those pertaining to regional partnerships, open space, and quality of life. The RCMP is also generally consistent with the American River Parkway Plan.

ESBD CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

Respectfully Submitted:



Richard Ramirez, Deputy City Manager/
Acting Director

APPROVED:



ROBERT P. THOMAS
City Manager

Attachment A: Draft RCMP Summary

Attachment B: Draft RCMP

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Sacramento Commission of History and Science

Representing the communities of Sacramento County, the City of Sacramento, Folsom, Isleton, and Galt

September 6, 2001

Ms. Valerie Burrowes, City Clerk
915 I Street, Room 304
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Ms. Burrowes:

The Sacramento Commission on History and Science has been privileged with a presentation of the Lower American River Draft River Corridor Management Plan ("RCMP"), as well as had the opportunity to review and discuss the RCMP. Although we frequently emphasize the "history" aspect of the Commission's charge, the Commission is also tasked with comment on scientific progress in the Sacramento area.

The Commission applauds the entities that participated in the RCMP and believes that the major benefit of the RCMP is the commitment of the entities to a singular, cohesive, cooperative RCMP. Such planning is long past due, and can only benefit our region.

Some of the Commission's concerns with the RCMP focus on elements that are excluded, rather than those that are included. Specifically, the RCMP, written within the framework of the 1985 Parkway Plan, does not address the impact on agricultural, historical or cultural resources. The Commission urges that the stakeholders and responsible agencies emphasize a broader spectrum of issues in an updated American River Parkway Plan. The Commission looks forward to revisiting the issues in the future.

As stated at the outset of this letter, the Commission supports the RCMP as written and encourages the Council and Board to fully participate in its implementation. If practical, the Commission would like to see the scope of an updated American River Parkway Plan expanded to include its additional concerns.

Thank you for your consideration of the RCMP and your continuing support of the Commission's activities.

Sincerely,



Richard M. Glovin,
Chairman

RMG:ww

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