

American River Parkway Plan Update Citizen's Advisory Committee

Meeting Highlights—June 20, 2005

Key Outcomes

- UCAC members reviewed and commented on the revised habitat and circulation concepts for IAP.
- UCAC members reviewed and commented on the PMT's suggested criteria for judging controversial proposed uses.
- UCAC members reviewed and commented on the PMT's analysis of the appropriateness of building the California Indian Heritage Center (CIHC) in the IAP area. A large majority of members present indicated in a straw poll that they would support having the CIHC in the Parkway, under certain conditions (yet to be worked out.)

Decision Items for June 27 Meeting at the Sacramento City Council Chambers, 730 I Street.

- Proposed uses in IAP: off-leash dogs and off-paved-trail cycling.

Announcements

The third Integrated Area Plan (IAP) community meeting has been moved to July 18.

June 27 will be used for an Update Committee meeting, if needed, to complete tonight's agenda.

A hardcopy mailing with materials for this meeting was sent to committee members and the interested public list. If it did not arrive, contact Sunny Williams.

Concept Plan Development

Daniel Iacofano (MIG) presented revised concept maps (habitat concept and circulation concept) showing changes from the last version of the maps. The maps are available in hardcopy from Sunny Williams or online at the project website www.americanriverparkwayupdate.org.

Daniel explained that the concept map was designed to be useful for planning, independent of the UCAC's decisions on controversial uses. (For example, the map shows multi-use trails but does not define what uses are acceptable. That is a policy decision). Daniel stated that the concepts stand on their own based on lay of the land and the design-with-nature principle. The concept map was designed to give clear direction but allow some flexibility for day-to-day management decisions, e.g. trail opening or closure. The UCAC will continue discussion on Parkway-wide policies into the fall and end by the close of 2005.

Modifications to the habitat concept map: MIG met with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), Sacramento City and Metro Fire Departments, and the Sacramento City Utilities Department to

ensure that the proposed habitat concepts were supported and consistent with their management objectives. The proposed treatment wetlands were realigned to be consistent with how water flows in this area, availability of water from City sumps, and ACOE plans for restoration. MIG added a layer to the map to show tree cover. Modifications were made to proposed woodland areas to stay clear of power lines. A modification was made to provide continuity of riparian habitat on the north bank of the beach by Cal Expo.

UCAC and public comment:

- West Bushy Lake drains into a concrete channel that flows to the river. The lake is owned by Cal Expo and provides habitat for river otter. It should be considered in the same manner as Bushy Lake. Answer: MIG recorded the comment and noted that there is a mitigation site at the far left corner of Cal Expo property that they tried to avoid in the alignment of the treatment wetland.
- The proposal calls for creating a pond and stream area in Woodlake. Wouldn't that interfere with the equestrian trail? Answer: The horse trail will be moved on the next diagram to avoid that conflict.
- If you relocate the drainage canal, will that affect the water in Bannon Slough? Answer: Not necessarily. That is under discussion right now as to how much water is available and how it would flow. The diagram might change. Any modifications will be designed as an enhancement that will also protect the existing slough.
- The ACOE has an authorized restoration project in Woodlake. Is this map consistent with their latest concept? Answer: Yes. MIG has discussed the details with the ACOE to ensure consistency.
- Will you explain the principles of urban runoff treatment in the text of the plan? Answer: Yes. It will be explained and diagramed in the text of the plan what an urban stormwater runoff treatment wetland is and how it would apply in the Parkway. This will apply to Bushy Lake too; there is a small treatment wetland on the far right side of the project area where runoff settles before it goes into the lake.
- How will you ensure that urban runoff doesn't pollute the Parkway? Answer: Heavy metals are the pollutants of concern, e.g. mercury. Treatment wetlands are good at getting heavy metals out of the water. You do need to maintain the wetlands by getting rid of the contaminated muck at the bottom. The City of Sacramento currently operates other treatment wetlands and can dispose of the muck by maintenance without it being hazardous waste.

Modifications to the circulation map: MIG talked with the City Fire Department which does emergency response in the Parkway, utilities who need access to power lines, and County staff to ensure that the trails make sense for management. Trail closures were adjusted based on needed utility line access. The equestrian trail was pulled south to get away from wetlands. The Jedediah Smith trail was realigned slightly to avoid crossing the multi-use trail. Fire access routes were modified based on fire department input. Some trail alignments were modified slightly to improve safety (e.g. they moved Jedediah Smith slightly to avoid a proposed small parking area near Gardenland). Trails were moved to avoid a restoration site near the Cal Expo beach.

UCAC and public comment:

- Is an off-pavement bike trail included? Answer: That will be discussed during the policy discussions. It is not designated now, but bicycling could be allowed on any or all of the multi-use trails.
- The Fire Department wanted paved trails. Will they accept dirt trails? Answer: Yes. They were happy to have a conversation about this and ensure they can do their job. MIG discussed fire access with Metro Fire as well as City Fire. They came to a common understanding about the Parkway and were very supportive.
- What about the other side of the river, Sutter's Landing and Tiscornia? Answer: Tiscornia is defined as an area for protection or restoration. There is a lot of SAFCA mitigation going on in this area. The Richard's Blvd redevelopment plan is addressing access on south side of the river. South of Woodlake, redevelopment is less clear. South of Cal Expo, access could be improved. Glen Hall Park provides a great access point. The UCAC can state that they want to see improved access as Richards' Boulevard redevelops.
- Are wide multi-use trails discussed in the current plan? Answer: The only two trails designated in the 1985 plan are the equestrian trail and Jedediah Smith. The other trails are volunteer pedestrian trails, fire breaks, and service roads. A pedestrian trail was called for in the 1985 Plan. The Parks Department decided years ago that they could not maintain separate pedestrian trails due to budget. Instead, decomposed gravel trails were created on the shoulder or next to the Jedediah Smith trail. This new concept plan proposes to give direction to County managers about the multi-use trails.
- I would resist the implication that we have no ability or reason to make recommendations to areas immediately adjacent to the Parkway that will have an impact on Parkway uses. Answer: This project doesn't have planning authority for those areas but can provide input.
- Is boat access proposed at Cal Expo and Highway 160? Answer: Yes.
- Can staff or MIG define what the trails and different modes of circulation are? Answer: The updated Parkway Plan will need to provide direction on different trail concepts and sections and use patterns. We will bring that into the public meeting and it will be part of the final document.
- I would like to agendaize the issue of the footprint of the Parkway. The Plan is the vehicle for changing that footprint. In 1985, the Plan outlined a Parkway that was not all in public ownership. We should do the same and outline the potential Parkway, be visionary. Answer: yes we will agendaize that.
- I disagree with adding the Parkway footprint to the agenda. We have a certain amount of time and we do have a geographical area to deal with and its issues. It's a slippery slope when you do land use planning for areas that have their own master planning process as part of the General Plan Update.
- New boat access is proposed in the "triangle" at Highway 160 and the railroad bridge. You are proposing a significant change to increase recreational use there, and also at Cal Expo. The trailheads by Ethan Way and Highway 160 are not user-friendly right now. You need to develop concepts to create more off-Parkway parking. Also, look at likely constructive ways of getting good access from Richard's Blvd area.
- The map is missing a few access points at 5th and 10th and 7th and 10th in the Richard's Boulevard area. The Plan does include new access as development occurs.
- There are many types of urban adjoining uses that could adversely impact the Parkway, which we should address for all parts of Parkway.

- For the Two Rivers Trail at Sutter's Landing, will the bike trail go on the lower unpaved road or on the levee? Answer: It's the existing trail on the levee. There is a break in the levee for the freeway and railroad tracks where cyclists must drop down. Two Rivers Trail will be equal in class to the Jedediah Smith trail.
- Can we get an opinion from City and County attorneys on planning areas outside ARP? What are the boundaries and jurisdiction? Answer: Even if we have no legal authority, there is nothing to prevent group from providing commentary from the point of view of Parkway.
- The 1985 Woodlake area is a one sentence description that plans for restoration in that area, even though it wasn't owned by the County at the time the Plan was written. We could use this as a model for making recommendations on land that isn't currently owned.
- Sutter's Landing is an example of encouraging nearby compatible land use. It would be an excellent portal to a part of the Parkway that is underserved. There are also 3 or 4 parcels downstream of Sutter's Landing, almost to 19th street. If they were to be acquired and added to Sutter's Landing, it would be great.

Unresolved plan components

Criteria

Daniel explained that the Project Management Team (PMT), which is composed of staff and management from the sponsoring agencies, crafted a list of criteria for judging the appropriateness of different proposed uses. The criteria were based on PMT's members' listening to the UCAC and the public as well as their own expertise. The intention is to provide an objective framework for gauging the appropriateness of proposed uses and for minimizing impacts. The goal was to have criteria that make sense on their own merits and are not biased to favor one use or another. The list of criteria is available from Sunny Williams or on the project website www.americanriverparkwayupdate.org.

UCAC and public comment:

- Please include the idea of using the Parkway as an education resource.
- Are you saying that contributing funders (the sponsoring agencies) were given consideration in developing the criteria? Did giving money mean they got special concessions? Answer: The sponsoring agencies are the City of Sacramento, the County of Sacramento, Cal Expo, the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA), and the Water Forum. These are public agencies who are reflecting their public mandates.
- I want to see something about wildlife (endangered and not).
- Add bicycle transportation as well as bicycle recreation.
- Spell out Riverdale and Uruttia as examples of private in-holdings.
- I disagree with using specific examples in the criteria. The criteria should be a framework for judging specific cases. You taint the framework by putting in the specifics.
- I fear that the first bullet on the surrounding community could imply land use planning for areas outside Parkway.
- I agree that we don't want to second-guess City or County land use plans for surrounding areas. Answer: These criteria came from staff discussion. There was no intention on their part that they'd be planning for other jurisdictions.

- Did the PMT look at funding sources for the work? Answer: Yes. This was factored into the criteria that states “consider direct and indirect costs and benefits.”
- There will be tradeoffs with the criteria, maybe some conflicts. It’s not black and white.

PMT analysis of the CIHC

Daniel introduced the PMT analysis paper whereby PMT members applied the criteria to the proposed California Indian Heritage Center (available on the project website or from Sunny Williams).

UCAC discussion:

- The paper should use “shall” instead of “should.”
- Need to be more specific about the allowable footprint for an interpretive center.
- “Allow local control” should be “require local control.”
- I thought that the UCAC would make a recommendation first, then the PMT would respond. It feels like the PMT short-circuited the UCAC process. Answer: This analysis was done after listening to the UCAC. It is not a recommendation. It is an analysis of use. UCAC members can also use the comment card to weigh in.
- I’d like to be more generic in recommending “an interpretive center” rather than the CIHC specifically, since the CIHC might not happen.
- I am concerned about building in the floodplain. The building should be outside the floodplain so it doesn’t have to be elevated. Answer: We would have to look at the hydrology elevation map. Riverdale is a higher elevation site within the Parkway. From a flood standpoint, it is better to have a building closer to the river at that site than at a lower site.
- I agree about the size limitation. Effie Yeaw is 5000 sq ft.
- It would be helpful to know the footprint of Riverdale, and whether the footprint includes the structures as well as parking.
- I agree with the concept of reducing the footprint from what exists now at Riverdale. Maybe provide a ratio of how much it must be reduced. Answer: We will do that calculation.
- Why did the PMT decide do an analysis of the CIHC instead of a generic interpretive center? Answer: The CIHC is what has been talked about so that is what was put forward. Alternately, it could be a generic center. The PMT considers that an interpretive center is appropriate, which is stated in the analysis.
- The CIHC has a project on the books, they are looking to us for guidance, we owe them a specific response. Richard’s Blvd supports this from a community development and business point of view. Give them guidelines so that we can work with them. Being too prescriptive sends the message that they can’t make the deal. We want to keep the major civic and cultural facilities close to downtown, smart growth, and keep downtown as a cultural center for the region. I agree that the County should be the landowner but I am concerned that it might kill the deal.
- A 60,000 square foot facility at Northgate was the original CIHC project. Talking about a split facility (partly in the Parkway, partly outside) was a big step forward. This is a step forward to clarification. At the last CIHC Task Force meeting, they said they would revisit the Lake Natoma site and might also revisit Stone Lakes as alternatives to building in the Parkway. Their next meeting is the 3rd week in July. If they say they will go elsewhere, this

becomes moot. But we still need to say we want to acquire Riverdale and have an interpretive center there.

- This is way to specific. This is entering into planning. They already have to comply with City and County planning laws. There shouldn't be a condition on here that they have to build at Riverdale. That property might not be for sale, or the sale price might shoot up if there is no alternative. Requiring that the County be the landowner might kill the deal too. The State will not buy land and give to Parks. Let the County and State work out the deal.
- I thought the CIHC would be more natural facilities within the Parkway for interpretation. Now I'm looking at a structure and parking.
- I'm concerned about this location since it is next to a prime restoration area.
- Is the presumption that the CIHC would help buy the Gardenland property? Answer: Yes.
- I am concerned about visitors going through a sensitive habitat area in order to go back and forth from the structure at Riverdale to the Gardenland pond. Thousands of kids could be destructive of habitat. Answer: The Everglades are an example where use patterns are very controlled even though number of users is very high.
- This is not just a structure, but also a nature area? Answer: The CIHC's description of use is vague at this point.
- I think we should be adamant that this should not go in the Parkway. It is not compatible with habitat and sets a precedent. I'd be for an interpretive center outside the Parkway. There is limited habitat in the Parkway, we don't want to give away 20 acres of habitat. Riverdale is not that offensive; it is small and has no traffic. I'd like to get rid of it altogether, but if I had a choice I'd say keep Riverdale.
- The 1985 Parkway Plan calls for an interpretive center in this area.
- This project could be the single biggest force for good in this part of the Parkway if you look at the big picture. An Indian museum could do almost everything on the criteria list, such as bring in resources that we don't have. There is currently a lot of illegal camping by Riverdale, which could be alleviated if the CIHC goes in. I feel the Indians have a legitimate cultural claim on the land and could be good stewards.
- This is a floodway designed to flow up to 150,000 cubic feet per second (cfs). There is high ground around Riverdale, but it is still below the levee level. A split facility is probably workable, but you don't put high value structures in the floodway that are in the way of a river that might move, resulting in the structures being damaged or cut off etc. The concept of a floodway is to let the river do what it wants between the levees. There will be a levee failure point of 180,000 cfs if SAFCA finishes its work to improve the levees, and this is the type of flood that might be experienced. I'm not saying you can't put a nature center here, but should have a light footprint and be as high and dry as possible, and it shouldn't be so valuable or close to the riverbank that you have to armor the bank if the river decides to move. Armoring the north bank would put additional stress on the south bank.
- The CIHC would be a foot above the levee and will be in the bridge abutment (bridge "shadow") where velocities are slow. State Parks is working with the Department of Water Resources on building in this location, and so far it looks like it might be possible. We do have structures in the water already such as the water treatment plant. Building in the floodway is a design challenge, but it is one State Parks is prepared to take on.
- A criteria should be that there will be no altering of the floodplain to accommodate the project. Answer: The Reclamation Board of California has the final say on this since they would have to grant a permit, and they are notoriously protective of the floodway. The

project proponents would need to do hydraulic modeling to ensure that the structure would not impede flood flows or damage the banks or riverine environment.

- Clarification: there is no parking or structure proposed in the high value habitat areas.

Straw poll on CIHC

Daniel took a straw poll of the Update Committee members present to gauge their level of agreement with the PMT analysis:

Agree as written (1)

Agree with some conditions or qualifications (13)

Can live with it / not opposed (0)

No, I don't like direction / don't support (2)

Undecided (2)

Daniel encouraged UCAC members to come to the next meeting with their ideal version of the text on the CIHC. UCAC members should use the comment form to comment on the PMT analysis of all three uses.

Paul Curfman (MIG) clarified that dark green areas on the map do not imply sensitive habitat. This color indicates habitat in transition to a woodland environment. The site proposed for the CIHC is high in relative elevation, and the water table underneath it is dropping over time. Vegetation is stranded there and will eventually die off, leaving a new woodland habitat to evolve there. This area is currently designated in the 1985 Plan as developed recreation.

Special Interest Areas

Daniel explained that MIG is aware that they need to blow up and add more detail to the maps in four areas: Highway 160 on both sides including the triangle, the Gardenland pond trailhead, the West Cal Expo trailhead, and the Ethan way trailhead. On the green form, UCAC members can comment on additional special interest areas to consider and categories to address.

Public comment

- I am opposed to the CIHC. Development of structures in the Parkway is not appropriate. I'm part Indian and I think it's a great idea but not here.
- I'm a member of SARA and other environmental organizations. I am opposed to the CIHC concept. I agree that no structure should be built. I also am not happy with the planning for Gardenland Pond. There have been no comments on the Audubon Society paper, which suggests that the pond should be used as still-water wildlife habitat, which is very scarce in the Parkway. I support keeping this area as a nature area, not developed.
- I like the diagrams although the different shades of green are not well defined.
- I'm a little nervous about having the ACOE come in and do work without taking a good look at their plans. The ACOE has a reputation for being destructive to riparian. I want to see more detail on their plans.
- The PMT paper does not talk about positive aspects of having an off-leash dog area. It only says it is not appropriate and why. Please keep that in mind for next week.

Next meeting

Next week on July 27 the UCAC will meet at the Sacramento City Council Chambers, 730 I St. This is the old police station and the interim City Chambers. Meters are free after 6 PM.

Action Items & Follow-Up

Who	What	When
MIG	Move the horse trail on the maps to avoid conflict with wetlands in Woodlake	For next meeting
MIG	Explain urban wetland concept in the text of the Parkway Plan	For final strikeout text of the Plan
MIG/Staff	Define standards and acceptable uses for multi-use trails	For final strikeout text of the Plan
Staff	Add potential expansion of Parkway footprint to list of policy issues. Get input from City and County on UCAC's jurisdiction to make recommendations on areas outside the Parkway.	For post-IAP policy discussions
MIG	Add existing access points in Richard's Boulevard area to the maps	For next meeting
UCAC members	Use comment form to comment on the text of the PMT analysis for all three uses and criteria	Prior to next meeting, June 27
UCAC members	Use comment form to provide input on Special Interest Areas for MIG to map in more detail	Prior to next meeting, June 27

Meeting Materials

(All available from the project website www.americanriverparkwayupdate.org)

- Agenda
- IAP Mapping Updates June 2005
- Evaluating Unresolved Plan Components for IAP: Criteria and analysis of CIHC, off-leash dogs, and off-paved-trail cycling (Provided by PMT)
- Charrette Program Component feedback summary and Community Workshop feedback analysis
- Response Form for criteria and analysis of CIHC, off-leash dogs, and off-paved-trail cycling
- Comment Card on Special Interest Areas
- Save the American River Association position paper (Provided by SARA)
- American River Parkway Foundation position paper (Provided by ARPF)
- CBC news article "Study examines trail damage from biking, hiking" and The News Journal article "When bikers, hikers, and riders share the same space" (Provided by Bob Horowitz, SAMBA)
- Opinion paper provided by Valerie Gates, member of the public.

Topics for June 27 Update Committee Meeting

- Special Interest Areas
- UCAC discussion of PMT analysis of off-leash dogs and off-paved-trail cycling

Attendance

Members: X=Present, Alt=Alternate present

	Name		Representing
	Jerry	Ahlin	City of Rancho Cordova Appointment
X	Katie	Baygell	American River Parkway Volunteer Equestrian Patrol
X	Peggy	Berry	District 2 - Supervisor Collin Appointment
X	Lea	Brooks	Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates (SABA)
X	Frank	Cirill	Save the American River Association (SARA)
X	Dave	Ford	California Fly Fishers Unlimited
X	Al	Freitas	Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS)
	Michael	Gunby	Sacramento City Appointments
X	Lou	Heinrich	American River Natural History Association
X	Ken	Miller	American River Parkway Foundation
X	Bob	Horowitz	Sacramento Area Mountain Biking Association (SAMBA)
X	Eric	Johnson	Dist 1 - Supervisor Dickinson Appointment
X	Eddie	Kho	Dist 5 - Supervisor Notolli Appointment
X	Connie	Miottel	Sacramento City Appointments
X	Mark	Murray	Buffalo Chips Running Club
X	Ted	Sheedy	Sacramento City Appointments
X	Janel	Silva	Sacramento Area Dog Owners Group (SACDOG)
	Greg	Speicher	Boating
X	Ron	Stork	Friends of the River
X	Peter	Tateishi	Dist 3 - Supervisor Johnson Appointment
	Renée	Taylor	Dist 4 - Supervisor Niello Appointment
X	Frank	Wallace	California Native Plant Society (CNPS)
X	Art	White	Sacramento County Recreation and Parks Commission: ex-officio
X	Melinda	Williams	Sacramento City Appointments

Others

Jim McDonald, Sacramento City Planning
 Helen Selph, Sacramento City Planning
 Bob Overstreet, Sacramento City Parks
 Steve Launey, CalExpo
 Ron Suter, Sacramento County Parks

Teresa Haenggi, City Parks
 Kathleen Franklin, City of Rancho Cordova Planning
 Leighann Moffitt, Sacramento County Planning
 Robert Sherry, Sacramento County Planning

Jim Morgan
 Jim Alford
 Bert Hodges
 Rick Bettis

Betsy Weiland
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