

American River Parkway Plan Update Citizen's Advisory Committee (UCAC)

Meeting Highlights—February 7, 2006

Key Outcomes

- UCAC members agreed to several changes to the Cal Expo and Woodlake area plan policies and maps. Changes that were affirmed by the Committee as a whole, or direction that was given for any other staff action, are listed in the notes with exclamation point bullets and bold type. These changes and actions will be pursued by staff.

Additional changes were suggested by some members, but due to time constraints were not affirmed or rejected by the Committee as a whole. These are listed in normal type with round bullets. These changes will be considered by staff as they update the area plans.

Decision Items for February 28 Meeting @ 828 I Street, Sacramento Public Library Galleria

- UCAC priority issues re: agricultural activities in the Parkway, permanent structures for the sale of food and beverages, coordination among public safety agencies, and the feeling of safety and security/impact of illegal camping.

Announcements and Updates

- *Rancho Cordova tour and comment opportunity.* A tour of the Rancho Cordova area of the Parkway was held on Saturday, February 4. Notes from the tour are forthcoming. Kathleen Franklin is the contact for submitting additional comments, kfranklin@cityofranhocordova.org or 916-231-3348. Staff from Rancho Cordova and the Update team will use these comments while planning what to propose to the full UCAC at a later UCAC meeting.
- *Board of Supervisors budget hearing 2/14/06 to obtain additional funds for the Update.* Sunny Williams (County Planning) reminded the Update Committee that the Update process was extended by several months, and the County needs to go back to their Board to ask for more money to support the process. Update Committee members and the public, if they are so inclined, can contact their Board representative to urge support for the Update. County staff will be going to the Board on Tuesday, February 14 to request the additional funds, and to formally acknowledge Annemarie Vincent as the Parkway Foundation representative to the Update Committee. The Board hearing starts at 9 AM on Tuesday, and the budget item is on the consent calendar.

- *Timeline and strategy for an efficient completion of the Update.* Sharon Huntsman (Center for Collaborative Policy) informed the group that staff and facilitators have been strategizing about ways to make the process more efficient. She stressed that the Committee needs to hear all relevant comments and have a full dialogue, but be sensitive to the wise use of time. Sharon presented a calendar of the remaining meeting dates and topics. February 28 through March 27 are scheduled for Update Committee review of new revised chapters. April 4 through May 2 are reserved for finalizing drafts of all chapters. Staff will probably add a meeting on May 22 or May 30.

Sharon acknowledged that UCAC members were frustrated by discussions at the last meeting. She affirmed that staff received good input on substantive changes for Discovery Park, such as “if, then” language regarding the light rail bridge, supportive language on the Two Rivers trail, and a new general policy on private land acquisition that states it should be managed as part of the Parkway and consistent with the Parkway Plan. The Committee did not agree on a policy regarding the floor space or massing of an interpretive center, therefore they currently do not have a policy on that. Committee members and their constituents who want a policy recommendation on size, scale, or massing of an interpretive center are encouraged to work outside of UCAC meetings to try to develop a proposal that could be brought back to, and supported by, their fellow UCAC members.

Sharon stated that the following “keys to success” remain important to the UCAC as they finish the Update:

- **Prioritization:** Address highest priority policies in time available.
- **Constructive discussion:** State support or concerns succinctly; avoid repeating comments; offer suggestions for win/win solutions.
- **Getting closure:** Straw poll to test suggestions for support, and if the discussion is not productive, the Committee should make a collective decision to move on. On some items, there may not be a UCAC recommendation, in which case the range of concerns and ideas would be summarized by staff.
- *Maps for the meeting.* Gregg Ellis (Jones and Stokes Associates) reviewed the three maps in use tonight: the draft Cal Expo area map; draft Woodlake area map; and a composite map of all three draft area plans which uses hatch marks to indicate areas that have proposed land use changes. Gregg pointed out one mistake on the map: North of Riverdale a limited recreation area is shown hatched, which would indicate a changed designation; however it should not be hatched because the limited recreation area is an existing, unchanged designation.

Cal Expo Area Plan

Gregg reviewed the proposed policies for the Cal Expo area, as presented in the document entitled “Draft ARPP Area Plans: Discovery Park, Woodlake, and Cal Expo”.

He reminded the Committee that in addition to the Parkway Plan, there is the Bushy Lake Preservation Act (BLPA) which governs the Bushy Lake area in the Cal Expo portion of the Parkway. Some proposals being vetted by the UCAC would require a modification to the BLPA as well as the Parkway Plan. Cal Expo will be working on putting forth language for changes to the BLPA. All staff are acting under the assumption that the spirit of the BLPA will be maintained; the purpose of the changes is to accommodate new items from the Update. In the end, the BLPA may refer to the Parkway Plan so there is one document, consistent with the BLPA, for management of the area.

UCAC Comment on the Cal Expo area plan map

- Near Lot A parking, there is a land use designation change from nature study to limited recreation. Is that inside or outside the levee? –Staff replied that it is inside the levee and part of the Parkway. Parking would be outside of the Parkway. The land use designation change is to accommodate access to a major trailhead. There is no proposal to drive cars over the levee, but perhaps some kind of facilities would be associated with the trailhead, requiring a limited recreation designation.
- ! On the map, on the south side of the river, the solid orange line to Sutter’s Landing seems to show a paved trail. **Staff agreed that the map needs to reflect the reality that it is not currently a paved trail the whole way.**
- ! The map key shows “potential” road and trails. That language isn’t meaningful as planning language. Does “potential” mean “proposed”? –**Yes, staff will change this to “proposed.”**

UCAC Comment on Policy 9.16

- ! I am supportive of rehabilitating Bushy Lake and enhancing accessibility for the study of the environment, and we need to stop eutrophication in the lake, but we’re getting ahead of ourselves by relying on waters from Chicken Ranch Slough and Strong Ranch Slough. I have not seen anything conclusive to indicate it is actually feasible. This project could be too expensive; it just shifts the burden of pumping costs. –**Staff agreed to change the wording to indicate that restoration techniques “may include” filtration wetlands.**
- Jeff Hart did a study with regard to treatment of water from the sloughs into serpentine channels going into the river and possibly some into Bushy Lake. There was also work done in the River Corridor Management Plan (RCMP) on this issue. Consultants should research that. Serpentine channels would also act as firebreaks. I would support the previous suggestion.
- Do we need to include language that describes the goal? Bushy Lake as a natural resource has been decaying and needs rehabilitation. The lake over the years has accumulated silts and is shallow. When you introduce urban runoff, you also introduce nutrients which, combined with sunshine, induces growth of algae. This leads to over consumption of oxygen (eutrophication) that needs to be reversed. You’re not just putting water in there; it requires technical knowledge. The question is, is this the best means to do it? If you look at the size of the basin and

its relative elevation, water would need to be pumped into the lake. Who will pay for that?

- In the dry season, sloughs are low, but the watershed is fed by urban uses that go into the system year round.

UCAC Comment on Policy 9.20.1

Sharon introduced the staff language as well as UCAC member Bob Horowitz's suggested revisions. The staff draft ends with the phrase, "and are subject to immediate closure to bicyclists in the event the Parkway managers determine that bicycling on these trails poses an unacceptable maintenance and/or management burden, or begins to degrade natural resources." This phrase is struck in Bob's proposal.

Sharon reminded the group that through the Integrated Area Planning process (IAP), UCAC members achieved consensus on permitting off-paved-trail bicycling in Cal Expo and Woodlake. In December, the UCAC gave direction on policy language that the use is at the discretion of Parkway manager, on designated emergency access and maintenance roadways. Hence, the question before the UCAC is how to designate the use.

UCAC members discussed the two proposal variations on policy 9.20.1. Comments included the following.

- I agree with Bob Horowitz's proposed language. (Four UCAC members seconded this statement).
- ! A UCAC member raised the concern that the staff language implies that opening the trail to bicyclists has the potential to create environmental impact. This, combined with the fact that specific trails have not been designated on the map for this use, implies that the Parks Department will have to have environmental review and public input before making that designation for each trail. **Staff and UCAC members decided that the best way to alleviate this concern is to designate on the map specific maintenance and emergency roadways (existing or proposed) that could be opened to bicyclists; the updated map will go through environmental review for the Parkway Plan Update.**
- What is the process for specific trails opening and closing? Is that part of local adoption? –Gary Kukkola (County Parks) answered that if at some point there appears to be impact to Parkway resources, Parks will not arbitrarily close a trail. There needs to be a monitoring program with established criteria against which to assess impacts.
- If I were a bicyclist advocate, I would want the map to show exactly where I could ride and have it analyzed and sanctioned and approved.
- If the Parkway manager will allow a maintenance road, aren't impacts already considered? If they will allow a truck to go through, they should allow a bicycle. Why have "adequate buffers" language? Remove the phrase. And why have bicycling singled out for "subject to immediate closure"?

- There were concerns during IAP about how to contain the use so it doesn't spread out and harm habitat. The policy might need to be rephrased, but it should reflect this concern.
- End the sentence at bicyclists and refer back to policy 5.15. "At discretion of Parkway managers and subject to 5.15."
- There is no question that Parks has the authority to shut down the use.
- If the use is found to be degrading of a certain area, why would it be extended to another area? Is shutting it down just in a certain area or can the use be shut down altogether throughout the Parkway? –Gary Kukkola responded that if there were a segment of the trail that was a problem, it would be up to Parks to close that trail and look at the possibility of rerouting. There is no talk about closing down the use completely at that point.
- Keep the staff's version of 9.20.1.
- If people are not utilizing the roads appropriately, that's a separate issue. Let's embrace this use, and let the Parkway manager work with the bicycling community.
- These versions are confusing. Don't take action on this until it's all clear. Right now I'm not prepared to make a decision.
- The most important phrase in Bob's language and staff's is "discretion of Parkway managers." Do we trust them to make a good decision 20 years from now? If we trust them, we can adopt the staff draft. I'm a fan of keeping the language in. If it is redundant, it doesn't hurt the mountain bikers but makes other people feel more comfortable.
- I do not agree with the alternative proposal. The reason why we're so careful is because illegal off-road activity has caused damage. We need to make sure it's very clear that Parkway managers have that authority.
- "At the discretion" does provide that authority as long as the trust remains strong. There could always be the suggestion that Parkway managers didn't give a fair chance or use the right criteria for evaluation. There needs to be some analysis that supports the intent of the policy. That's part of the management plan that follows adoption of the Parkway Plan.

Public comment:

- The first Parkway manager we had went into a protected area and started putting in picnic tables and driveways. We got rid of that Parkway manager. Don't worry about the managers. We have the Board of Supervisors and the Parkway Commission; anyone can go to them and get inappropriate things stopped.
- I support existing staff language even though I don't like the idea of allowing off paved trail bicycling to start with.
- The assumption with allowing trucks is that the trucks will stay on the trail. The concern is that bicyclists might not stay on the road. If you bike through elderberry restoration land, it is required that there be a buffer on either side of the trail.
- The staff draft makes it clear that the use shall be permitted at the discretion of Parkway manager, but it also makes it clear that it can also be closed. I don't care

where you put this, it could be in chapter 5 to make it applicable to all area plans. I do have complete trust and faith in the Parkway managers.

- I concur with the staff draft that states what penalties might occur if there are infractions. There are no other activities that are as controversial as off-paved trail cycling, so it's good to keep it in there at this stage of a new plan. If they do nothing bad, there's nothing to worry about.
- Adequate buffers should be defined for protection of areas from off-paved-trail bicycles.

At this point in the discussion, staff called a break and worked to draft language they felt would be acceptable to the UCAC and address concerns on all sides of the issue. Their proposal is below:

New staff proposal for language for off paved trail cycling:

- Add at the discretion "and authority" of Parkway managers, these roadways may be opened, consistent with Policy 5.15 and the conditions therein. These roadways may be closed to bicycle use if the conditions in Policy 5.15 are not met.
- Add into Policy 5.15 that Parkway managers have the authority to open and close.

UCAC comment on the new staff proposal:

- Looks good. Need to reconcile 9.12. 9.12 recognizes that there are unsurfaced roads designated to be eliminated and rehabilitated, they will not be available for bicycle use. Reconcile 9.20 and 9.12.
- This is great. It can even be shortened since it is redundant.
- "Protect sensitive habitat" does not say the same thing as closing the trail to off-paved-bicyclists if they degrade the habitat. That's why I like the original draft. It gives specific criteria for closing the trail.
- I am extremely frustrated. The new staff proposal adds more restrictions, which are coming from UCAC members who did not support bringing the use to begin with. There might have been consensus at the beginning of the meeting to adopt Bob's changes. This goes backwards. "May be opened" is not as strong as "should be accessible".
- 9.20.1 is clear, there's nothing wrong with being redundant. It is less clear when you refer to other policies. Retain the staff draft. (seconded)

Sharon called for a poll for whether UCAC members could live with each of the three alternatives: staff's original proposal, Bob's proposal, and the new staff proposal.

Poll results: 14 members (of 16 present) could live with the original staff draft; 6 could live with Bob Horowitz's draft; and 9 could live with the revised staff draft. UCAC member Peggy Berry went on record as saying she can't live with any of these alternatives since she does not support off paved trail cycling in the Parkway.

Woodlake Area Plan

Gregg Ellis provided an overview of the draft Woodlake Area Plan policies as presented in the document entitled “Draft ARPP Area Plans: Discovery Park, Woodlake, and Cal Expo”.

UCAC Comment on Policy 9.13

- This policy mentions seasonal wetland habitat. I am concerned that we are creating a new environment that will be in conflict with off-paved trail cycling. Staff answered that the seasonal wetland is an already existing feature of the area.
- There is a large amount of illegal camping in the area. The best way to keep that use away is to have a seasonal wetland.
- Will this feature be included on maps? Staff answered that it could be put there, but after more discussion UCAC members decided this would be too much detail on the map.
- Why not give it the designation of nature study? Staff replied that a lot of things can happen in a wetland without degrading it, and a protected area designation gives the area a stronger level of protection than it currently has.
- **UCAC members agreed that no change is recommended.**

UCAC Comment on Woodlake Map

- There has been a large re-designation of limited recreation to protected area. Did we agree to that? Staff answered that the protected area designation is consistent with IAP discussion regarding the potential for using this area as a restoration area. Designating this area as protected is consistent with mitigation plans of the Corps and bringing VELB into the area. Having it be protected area also helps avoid USFW requests for conservation areas. The remaining areas of limited recreation in the draft are those areas that are least suitable for restoration or which are needed to buffer from developed recreation to protected area.
 - I am concerned that making all this area protected will weaken the ability to open the area to off paved trail cycling. Staff clarified that trails of all kinds are permitted in a protected area, so this designation would not preclude off paved trail cycling.
 - I am concerned that leaving any limited recreation areas leaves the door open for facilities in this area. Equestrian staging would be of particular concern.
 - ! I want to make sure we are not writing a conflict into the plan with off-paved trail cycling. I'm okay with the protected designation as long as we are not doing that. **The UCAC agreed that they are okay with the protected designation on the draft map, provided trails that may be open to off-paved cycling are already designated on the map.**
- ! A parking area adjacent to the proposed walk in is proposed in a developed parcel outside of the Parkway, in the City. Also way-finding signage should be designated. Staff replied that the intention is to negotiate to share existing parking in that location as a joint use. **Staff will add a W for wayfinding on the map.**

- There is boating designated on the south side of the river where the skate facility is – have we discussed this? Has the City already put one in there? Staff answered that this is a walk-in launch. There is no need for change on the map.
- There is a narrow pedestrian trail along the river. We never agreed as to the designation of this trail. With the exception of a few spots, the trail is very wide. How did it get designated as a narrow trail on the map? I believe because of the width of the trail that it could be multi-use trail (open to equestrian and off-paved cycling). Staff replied that MIG (the consultant for the IAP process) proposed to narrow this trail in places. Staff acknowledged that, in accordance with previous discussions, there is no consensus among the UCAC about opening this particular trail to bicyclists. UCAC members who would like to change the current map designation of a pedestrian trail, are encouraged to work outside of UCAC meetings to try to develop a proposal that could be supported by their fellow UCAC members. Facilitators are available to help any such effort.

UCAC Comment: Additional Woodlake Policies

- **At a UCAC member suggestion and UCAC concurrence, staff agreed to add “endangered species such as VELB” into a Woodlake policy and the special importance of the archeological site into a Woodlake policy.**
- ! The 20th street bikeway is not addressed here. It is outside of the Parkway, but I believe it should be incorporated into the Parkway. It is the major entrance into the Parkway from downtown. Can we say “explore”, or “support”, or something that indicates the policy direction. **Staff agreed to develop a policy suggestion to support the intent of this comment.**

Public comment:

- Why construct a Class 1 bike trail on the north levee from Del Paso? I don’t see the need.
- ! Need to maintain a wildlife corridor through the area. **UCAC directed staff to examine the map of Woodlake, particularly the developed recreation area at the “triangle,” and recommend ways to ensure connectivity for wildlife.**
- Mountain bikers don’t want flat trails, they want elevation changes and twisty single track.
- Hikers cause impacts too; you see them covered in mud from going off trail.

Chapter 6: Non-Recreational Use was deferred to a future meeting.

- ! Process notes: Staff discussed with the UCAC members that, for important issues they cannot get consensus on, staff are willing to work with UCAC members outside of meeting time to try to help them build proposals that could be approved by the UCAC. Any new proposal developed in this manner would be brought to the UCAC in a full UCAC meeting for consideration. Issues that have already been decided by the UCAC by vote or consensus can only be reopened if at least half of UCAC members present at a meeting decide they wish to revisit the topic. **Staff will be**

developing a list of important issues that have already been vetted by the UCAC, but for which no recommendation was agreed to.

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Action Items & Follow-Up

Who	What	When
Staff	Change draft area plans to respond to UCAC comments with exclamation point bullets, and other comments as appropriate.	May
Staff	Develop and circulate a list of important issues that have been vetted by the UCAC for which there was no agreement and therefore no recommendation	March

Meeting Materials

- Agenda
- Chapter 6 Draft 1/31/2006
- Woodlake and Cal Expo Off Paved Trail Cycling Policies January 31, 2006 / Chapter 5 Revised Policy and text resulting from Dec 6, 2005 UCAC meeting
- Meeting Highlights January 24, 2006
- Figure 4: Lower American River Proposed Land Use Changes

Materials from the previous meeting, also used tonight:

- Figure 2: Draft Woodlake Area Plan
- Figure 3: Draft Cal Expo Area Plan
- Draft ARPP Area Plans: Discovery Park, Woodlake, and Cal Expo (Policy and text of the area plans, draft 2/7/2006)

Topics for February 28, 2006 Update Committee Meeting

- UCAC priority issues re: agricultural activities in the Parkway, permanent structures for the sale of food and beverages, coordination among public safety agencies, and the feeling of safety and security/impact of illegal camping.

Attendance

Members: X=Present, Alt=Alternate present

	Name		Representing
X	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)

X	Michael	Gunby	Sacramento City Appointments
	Lou	Heinrich	American River Natural History Association
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
	Connie	Miottel	Sacramento City Appointments
	Mark	Murray	Buffalo Chips Running Club
	Ted	Sheedy	Sacramento City Appointments
X	Janel	Silva	Sacramento Area Dog Owners Group (SACDOG)
	Greg	Speicher	Boating
	Ron	Stork	Friends of the River
	Peter	Tateishi	Dist 3 - Supervisor Johnson Appointment
X	Renée	Taylor	Dist 4 - Supervisor Niello Appointment
X	Annemarie	Vincent	American River Parkway Foundation
X	Frank	Wallace	California Native Plant Society (CNPS)
	Art	White	Sacramento County Recreation and Parks Commission: ex-officio
X	Melinda	Williams	Sacramento City Appointments

Others

Leighann Moffit, County Planning
 Tim Washburn, SAFCA
 Brian May, CalExpo
 Bob Overstreet, City Parks
 Teresa Haenggji, City Parks

J.P. Tindell, City Parks
 Kathleen Franklin, City of Rancho Cordova
 Steve Launey, CalExpo

Betsy Weiland
 Burt Hodges
 Bill Griffith
 Patty Kleinknecht
 Marti Ikehara
 Susan Oldland
 Michael Lee
 Elhmer Aldrich

Maxine Clark
 Dave Tamayo
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