



# Agenda City of Sacramento Parks and Recreation Commission

## COMMISSION MEMBERS

George Azar  
Jonathan Rewers  
Jeff Harris

Cindy Cooke  
Malachi Smith  
Dave Tamayo

Darrel Woo  
Virginia Guadiana  
David Heitstuman

Jay Hansen  
Brandon Beaver

## CITY STAFF:

*Jim Combs, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Lori Harder, Support Services Manager  
Cynthia Ramsey, Administrative Assistant*

**Sierra II Community Center**  
**2791 24<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**August 5, 2010 – 7:00 P.M.**

*The Parks and Recreation Commission is a commission of the City Council that provides recommendations and advise on policies, projects and other matters pertaining to parks, recreation, trees, and human services affecting the City of Sacramento.*

## **NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

You are welcomed and encouraged to participate in this meeting. Public comment is taken **(3 minutes maximum)** on items listed on the agenda when they are called. Public Comment on items not listed on the agenda will be heard at the end of the meeting as noted on the agenda. Comments on controversial items may be limited and large groups are encouraged to select 3-5 speakers to represent the opinion of the group.

**Notice to Lobbyists:** When addressing the Commission you must identify yourself as a lobbyist and announce the client/business/organization you are representing (City Code 2.15.160). **Speaker slips are located in the lobby of the hearing room and should be completed and submitted to the Commission Secretary.**

*Government Code 54950 (The Brown Act) requires that a brief description of each item to be transacted or discussed be posted at least 72 hours prior to a regular meeting. The City posts Agendas at City Hall as well as offsite meeting locations.*

The order of agenda items is for reference only; agenda items may be taken in any order deemed appropriate by the Commission. The agenda provides a general description and staff recommendations; however, the Commission may take action other than what is recommended. The agenda is available for public review on the **Monday** prior to the meeting. Hard copies of the agenda, minutes, and staff reports are available from the Parks and Recreation Department at 915 I Street, New City Hall, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor (25 cents per page). Meeting facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. If you require special assistance to participate in the meeting, notify the Parks and Recreation Department at (916) 808-5200 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

# AGENDA

**August 5, 2010**

**Sierra II Community Center  
2791 24<sup>th</sup> Street**

All items listed are heard and acted upon by the Parks and Recreation Commission unless otherwise noted.

## Call to Order – 7:00 p.m.

### **Roll Call / Commissioner Introduction**

## Public Comments- Matters Not on the Agenda

1. To be announced

## Public Hearings

2. None

## Special Oral Presentation

3. None

## Consent Calendar

All items listed under the Consent Calendar are considered and acted upon by one motion. Anyone may request that an item be removed for separate consideration.

4. **Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes**

**Location:** Citywide

**Recommendation:** Approve commission minutes for July 1, 2010

**Contact:** Lori Harder, Support Services Manager, 808-5172

## Discussion/Action Reports

Discussion/Action reports include oral presentations including those recommending review and comment

5. **Informational Report on the Proposed River District Specific Plan**

**Location:** Council District 1

**Recommendation:** Review and comment

**Contact:** J.P. Tindell, Park Planning and Development Services Manager, 808-1955

6. **Parks and Recreation Director Report (Oral): Review Highlights of July and August, 2010**

**Location:** Citywide

**Recommendation:** Information

**Contact:** Jim Combs, Parks and Recreation Director, 808-8526

**Questions, Ideas, and Announcements of Commission Members**

**Adjournment**



Parks and Recreation Commission  
July 1, 2010

## Meeting Minutes City of Sacramento Parks and Recreation Commission

Agenda Item 4

### COMMISSION MEMBERS

George Azar  
Jonathan Rewers  
Jeff Harris

Cindy Cooke  
Malachi Smith  
Dave Tamayo

Darrel Woo  
Virginia Guadiana  
David Heitstuman

Jay Hansen  
Brandon Beaver

### CITY STAFF:

*Jim Combs, Director of Parks and Recreation*  
*Lori Harder, Support Services Manager*  
*Cynthia Ramsey, Administrative Assistant*

**July 1, 2010**

***Pannell Community Center***  
***2450 Meadowview Road***

All items listed are heard and acted upon by the Parks and Recreation Commission unless otherwise noted.

### Call to Order – 7:00 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chair Rewers at 6:43 p.m. All members were present except Commissioners Beaver and Azar.

### Public Comments- Matters Not on the Agenda

1. None

### Public Hearings

2. **Appeal of a Decision of the Director of the Department of Transportation to Grant a Heritage Tree Removal Request**

Location: 7527 Maple Tree Way

Recommendation: Approve Removal of Heritage Tree

Contact: Joe Benassini, Urban Forest Manager, Department of Transportation, 808-6258

Commissioners confirmed there were no ex parte communications regarding this agenda item. Commissioner Harris stated he made looked at the tree. Mr. Benassini gave an overview. An attorney representing the applicant gave testimony and provided additional photographs. Mr. Mike Hoover, owner of Hoover Horticultural Service, spoke in favor of removing the tree and recommended against root pruning. The appellant, Ms. Merry Severance, spoke against removing the tree and provided photographs. Commissioners asked questions of staff regarding root structure, root pruning, overall

health and stability of the tree, liability, and any damage to the foundation of the residence and paved areas near the tree.

**Action:** Moved, seconded and carried to deny the appeal of Ms. Merry Severance to grant a permit for the removal of a heritage California Sycamore tree located at 7527 Maple Tree Way, and to recommend the Park Place South Homeowners Association, subject to approval by the City of Sacramento, determine an appropriate tree species and locate it within the Association's sphere of influence. (Cooke/Heitstuman: Ayes: Rewers, Cooke, Smith, Woo, Guadiana, Heitstuman; Nays: Harris, Tamayo; Absent: Hansen, Beaver, Azar)

**Action:** Moved, seconded and carried to approve findings and a decision to grant the application for a permit to remove a heritage California Sycamore tree located at 7527 Maple Tree Way per Sacramento City Code section 12.64.050, and to recommend the Park Place South Homeowners Association, subject to approval by the City of Sacramento, determine an appropriate tree species and locate it within the Association's sphere of influence. (Harris/Cooke: Ayes: Rewers, Cooke, Smith, Woo, Guadiana, Heitstuman, Harris; Nays: Tamayo; Absent: Hansen, Beaver, Azar)

### Special Oral Presentation

3. None

### Consent Calendar

4. **Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes**

Location: Citywide

Recommendation: Approve commission minutes for May 5, 2010

Contact: Lori Harder, Support Services Manager, 808-5172

**Action:** Moved, seconded and carried to approve as mailed. (Guadiana/Harris: Ayes: Rewers, Harris, Cooke, Smith, Tamayo, Guadiana, Heitstuman, Hansen; Abstained: Woo; Absent: Azar and Beaver)

5. **Parks and Recreation Approved Operating and Capital Budgets for Fiscal Year 2010/11**

Location: Citywide

Recommendation: Receive and File

Contact: Lori Harder, Support Services Manager, 808-5172

**Action:** Received and filed.

### Discussion/Action Reports

6. **Proposed Master Plan for Parks within Township 9 Development Project**

Location: Council District 1

Recommendation: Support Proposed Master Plan for Parks within Township 9 Development Project

Contact: J.P. Tindell, Park Planning and Development Services Manager, 808- 1955

Mary de Beauvieres, Principal Planner, reviewed the item and introduced Jeff Townsend with Jacobs Engineering Group who represents the project. Commissioners and staff discussed the uniqueness of the development project, including connectivity to the American River Parkway and a new light rail transit station; a large shade structure near the river; tree planting along the levee; lighting and water features in public spaces; concern about the lack of active recreation opportunities within the development; future maintenance assessment funding, service delivery and related standards.

**Action:** Moved, seconded and carried to support the proposed master plan for parks within the Township 9 Development project, with an exception of Riverfront Park, and to recommend park spaces be maintained by City of Sacramento personnel.

(Hansen/Woo: Ayes: Rewers, Harris, Cooke, Smith, Tamayo, Guadiana, Heitstuman, Hansen, Woo; Absent: Azar and Beaver)

**Action:** Moved, seconded and carried to support the Riverfront Park master plan within the Township 9 Development project, to recommend the park be maintained by City of Sacramento personnel, and for staff to return to the Parks and Recreation Commission for further consideration should the County of Sacramento, during its review, make suggestions warranting any significant changes to the park's master plan. (Harris/Tamayo: Ayes: Rewers, Harris, Cooke, Smith, Tamayo, Guadiana, Heitstuman, Hansen, Woo; Absent: Azar and Beaver)

## 7. **Oakbrook Park Master Plan Update**

Location: Council District 1

Recommendation: Support Staff Recommendation

Contact: Tin Wah Wong, Associate Landscape Architect, 808-5540; J.P. Tindell, Park Planning and Development Services Manager, 808-1955

Gary Hyden, Supervising Landscape Architect, reviewed the plan. Commissioner Cooke requested staff remove the rectangular line drawing that appears to indicate the designation of a sports field in an area designated as open space. Staff will follow up and remove the line drawing.

**Action:** Moved, seconded and carried to support the Oakbrook Park Master Plan Update. (Guadiana/Woo: Ayes: Rewers, Harris, Cooke, Smith, Tamayo, Guadiana, Heitstuman, Hansen, Woo; Absent: Azar and Beaver)

## 8. **Long Term Planning for the Future of the Sacramento Zoo**

Location: Citywide

Recommendation: Review and comment

Contact: Scot Mende, New Growth and Infill Manager, Community Development Department, 808-4756; J.P. Tindell, Park Planning and Development Services Manager, 808-1955

Scot Mende, New Growth and Infill Manager with the Community Development Department and Mary Healy, Sacramento Zoo Director, reviewed the item. Commissioners and staff discussed past planning efforts related to capital development needs, environmental studies, on site expansion or relocation, current study site options and related pros and cons, desired acreage needs, any direction from the City Council on what type and size of zoo is needed for Sacramento, potential shared amenities and revenue opportunities, future accreditation considerations, and consistency with the

City's General Plan regarding the zoo. Parking, access, pedestrian safety, attendance and funding at the current location were also discussed.

Representatives from the Sacramento Zoological Society spoke to the need to keep the zoo open and viable and challenges with the current location. Land Park residents spoke against expanding into William Land Park and/or the need to relocate. Midtown residents spoke to concerns about relocating the zoo to Sutter's Landing Regional Park and impacts on either recreation and sports activities or wildlife.

**Action:** Moved, seconded and carried to recommend the City Council establish a process to determine a location, size and type of zoo for Sacramento. (Tamayo/Woo: Ayes: Rewers, Harris, Cooke, Smith, Tamayo, Heitstuman, Hansen, Woo; Naves: Guadiana; Absent: Azar and Beaver)

**9. Parks and Recreation Director Report (Oral): Review Highlights of June and July, 2010**

Location: Citywide

Recommendation: Information

Contact: Jim Combs, Parks and Recreation Director, 808-8526

Director Combs spoke to facility dedications and recent staffing changes.

**Questions, Ideas, and Announcements of Commission Members**

Chair Rewers requested staff report back on the Commission's recommendation to explore a property assessment increase for park and recreation purposes.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Lori Harder, Support Services Manager  
Department of Parks and Recreation

Approved by:

Jonathan Rewers, Chair  
Parks and Recreation Commission



Parks and Recreation Commission  
July 1, 2010

Agenda Item 5

DEPARTMENT OF  
PARKS AND RECREATION

CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
CALIFORNIA

915 I STREET  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
SACRAMENTO, CA  
95814

Park Planning & Development  
Services

PH 916-808-5200  
FAX 916-808-8266

July 19, 2010

Parks and Recreation Commission  
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

**SUBJECT:** Informational Report on the Proposed River District Specific Plan

**LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT:** The River District Specific Plan area is bounded by Downtown and the Railyards on the south, the Sacramento River on the west, the American River on the north, and 16th and 18th Streets on the east / Council District 1

**RECOMMENDATION:** Review and comment.

**CONTACT PERSON:** Mary de Beauvieres, Principal Planner, 808-8722;  
J.P. Tindell, Park Planning and Development Manager, 808-1955

**FOR COMMISSION MEETING:** August 5, 2010

**SUMMARY:**

City staff recently completed efforts to draft a Specific Plan, Design Guidelines, and Special Planning District for the River District; public review of these documents is currently underway. The River District Specific Plan Area is shown in Attachment 1. The River District Specific Plan establishes policies to guide future growth of the River District area. At buildout, the River District Specific Plan envisions the 748 acre River District area as a transit-oriented mixed use community that would include 8,000 dwelling units, 3.9 million square feet of office, 850,000 square feet of retail, 1.4 million square feet light industrial, and 3,000 hotel units. The Specific Plan and Design Guidelines are available on the Community Development Department website and may be accessed at: <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/dsd/projects/riverdistrict.cfm>. Chapter 6 of the River District Specific Plan, Parks and Open Space is Attachment 2.

The River District Specific Plan addresses zoning, historic resources, infrastructure, circulation, parks and open spaces, and urban design. Accompanying the Specific Plan will be an updated financing plan for public infrastructure to establish development impact fees and an updated nexus



*Optimize the Experience of Living!*

study which will examine the costs of public infrastructure and fairly distribute those costs between Downtown, the River District, and the Railyards. Staff is seeking comments on the River District Specific Plan, particularly as it relates to the provision of parks and recreation services for the River District Area. The Commission's comments will be forwarded to the City Council when it considers adoption of the Specific Plan and related docs.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

### History

The Richards Boulevard Area Plan (RBAP) was adopted by City Council on December 13, 1994, to guide development of the area now known as the River District. For a variety of reasons, the RBAP was never fully realized. On December 11, 2007, the City Council adopted Resolution 2007-915 directing staff to proceed with an update to the RBAP. Since that time, City staff has worked with stakeholders and property owners to develop a Specific Plan, Design Guidelines and Special Planning District for the River District. An overview of the Specific Plan process was presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission at its May 7, 2009 meeting. Commissioner comments focused on strengthening the connectivity between parks, public walkways and the rivers, as well as connectivity with Sutter's Landing Regional Park.

The River District is currently developed with 386 residential units, approximately 5 million square feet of industrial uses, 250,000 square feet of retail/wholesalers, and 850,000 square feet of office. Recent development activity in the area includes the following:

- Township 9: A 65-acre mixed use development approved for 2,350 housing units and 950,000 square feet of commercial retail and office. Two parks (Riverfront Park and the North 7<sup>th</sup> Street Median) will be constructed as part of the Proposition 1C funded improvements; construction is anticipated for completion in late 2011.
- 'Green Line': Sacramento Regional Transit District is currently under construction of the 'Green Line', (formerly known as the Downtown / Natomas / Airport, or DNA line). This transit line will connect the River District to Downtown via one mile of new track that extends from H Street to Richards Boulevard, via 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Completion is anticipated for January 2011.
- Continental Plaza Planned Unit Development (PUD): Continental Plaza has recently reopened as the California Highway Patrol (CHP) Headquarters.
- Discovery Centre PUD: Includes the City's Office Building at 300 Richards Boulevard, which currently houses the City's Community Development Department, Parking Services and a Police Station. Plans are also underway to add a new Greyhound Bus Terminal to the PUD. It will be located adjacent to the City's Office Building.
- California Lottery Headquarters: A new lottery headquarters building is currently under construction on North 10th Street.

### Public Outreach

Preparation of the River District Specific Plan has included public outreach with stakeholders and property owners during the nearly two year process. Staff has met regularly with the River District Development Committee, a group of River District property owners. In addition, over twenty public workshops and stakeholder meetings have occurred, including meetings with staff from Sacramento County Regional Parks and the County's Regional Parks Advisory Group.

### Existing Park Development in the River District

The City has a service level goal of 2.5 acres of neighborhood parks and 2.5 acres of community parks for every 1,000 residents. As in other parts of the City, neighborhood and community parks will typically be acquired through dedication during the residential development process. Neighborhood parks are generally ten acres or smaller and serve residents and employees within a one-half mile radius. Community parks range from 10 to 60 acres with a service area of two to three miles.

The City also has service level goals for regional facilities. The City's regional parks and parkway goal is eight acres of regional parks or parkways, and 0.5 miles of trails for every 1,000 residents. Regional parks serve all City residents (and beyond) and are generally the City's largest parks. Unlike neighborhood and community parks, regional parks do not have a dedicated funding source for acquisition or development, depending instead on grants or other funding sources.

Existing parks in the River District Area include the 14.4 acre Tiscornia Park (managed by Sacramento County as part of the American River Parkway), a regional park; and the 8.1 acre Robert T. Matsui Waterfront Park, a community park. Planned parks within the River District Area include the parks to be developed within the Township 9 development project. As the project builds out, the Township 9 development project will dedicate 11.4± acres of parkland to the City. Of the 11.4± acres, 7.5 will be community-serving and 3.9 will be neighborhood-serving.

In addition, the Two Rivers Trail extends 1.7 miles from its beginning at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers to Highway 160, along the southern bank of the American River. There are long range plans to extend the trail to Sutter's Landing Regional Park and the H Street Bridge. There is also an existing multi-use trail along the western boundary of the River District. The Sacramento River Parkway Trail extends from the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers to the southwestern border of the River District (and beyond).

### Park Need within the River District

Staff anticipates 5,400 new multifamily residential units will be added to the River District at full buildout, which equates to a need for an additional 24 acres of neighborhood parks and 24 acres of community parks.

### Proposed Park Development in the River District

Public access to the Sacramento and American Rivers will be encouraged through the development of a series of passive and active parks that will be located at roughly one-quarter-mile increments along both the American and Sacramento Rivers. This spacing equates to an approximately five to ten minute walk between parks along each riverfront, extending from Old Sacramento and the Robert T. Matsui Waterfront Park to the Highway 160 Bridge spanning the American River, a distance of nearly three miles.

Staff has also identified potential park sites totaling 25± acres within the interior of the River District. The largest park may connect the proposed parks in the Railyards with proposed parks in the River District near the existing City water treatment facility. As envisioned, this would be the largest public park in the River District at around 10 acres in size. Its size would make it a community park and would allow the development of some sport fields and more active recreational amenities.

Additional park acquisition and development in the River District will primarily occur in conjunction with new residential development. Residential development in the River District will primarily be mixed use development on redeveloped infill sites. As such, projects will most likely occupy smaller areas (several acres at most). While most parkland in new development is acquired through on-site dedication by the project's developer, in the River District, this would likely result in many very small park parcels. This is less than ideal for a variety of reasons: smaller parks are more costly to develop and maintain and may not accommodate the type of recreational amenities that are needed by the residents.

In order to acquire and develop parks as the population of the River District increases, the City will likely be acquiring a greater percentage of its parkland in the River District through an acquisition program. This also increases the likelihood that the parks will occur in their planned locations. City staff is currently exploring Financing Plan mechanisms that will commit parkland dedication in-lieu fees to the River District Specific Plan Area to be used for the acquisition of the River District Specific Plan parks. The remainder of the neighborhood park acres (7 acres) will likely be located in the eastern half of the Plan area, in the event the Dos Rios Housing Project redevelops, while the remainder of the community park acres (14 acres) would most likely be developed outside the River District. The additional community park need could be met through the acquisition of an additional community park outside the River District Specific Plan Area, or through the development or renovation of community amenities in nearby community or regional parks (Robert T. Matsui Waterfront Park or Sutter's Landing Regional Park).

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Approval of the River District Specific Plan does not obligate the City financially; rather, it provides policies to guide future development. A Draft Financing Plan to identify the costs and funding sources for the public facilities and infrastructure is being prepared. It identifies a total of approximately \$365 million needed to fund backbone infrastructure costs for improvements

such as utilities (storm drainage, sanitary sewer, and water), transportation and parks. Of the \$365 million, park dedication, acquisition, design and development accounts for approximately \$45 million.

The Draft Financing Plan indicates that adequate funds will be available to fund acquisition and development of the parks. The Financing Plan assumes the City will amend the Quimby Ordinance to suspend use of the outdated average land values by community planning areas or update the figures to reflect actual land values for purposes of calculating parkland dedication in-lieu fees. Staff is currently working with a consultant to complete an updated Park Development Impact Fee Nexus Study. One of the tasks the consultant is undertaking is developing a methodology that can be used to regularly update the average land values used in determining the parkland dedication in lieu figures.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):** A master EIR has been prepared for the River District Specific Plan. The EIR considers issues such as traffic, land use, air quality, noise, historic resources and parks. It was released for a 45 day public review period on July 27, 2010. It is posted on the Community Development Department's website at <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/dsd/planning/environmental-review/eirs/index.cfm>.

**Sustainability Considerations:** The River District Specific Plan will contain goals, policies, and implementation measures pertaining to sustainability. Providing parks and recreation facilities is consistent with the City's strategic plan to achieve sustainability and liveability and to expand economic development throughout the City.

#### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:**

The River District Specific Plan (Plan) includes a comprehensive set of goals and policies to achieve the Plan's vision and guiding principles. The policies are consistent with the recently adopted 2030 General Plan as well as with other guiding policy documents, such as the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2005-2010 Technical Update* and the *American River Parkway Plan 2008*.

The proposed land use concept is also consistent with the 2030 General Plan Goal 2.2:

- General Plan Goal 2.2 is to *preserve and enhance Sacramento's riverfronts as signature features and destinations within the city and maximize riverfront access from adjoining neighborhoods to facilitate public enjoyment of this unique open space resource*. The River District Specific Plan will increase public access to the American and Sacramento Rivers and will guide future development in a manner that makes these exceptional resources available for the enjoyment of Sacramento's residents and visitors alike.

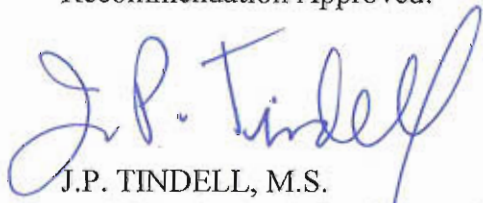
**CONSISTENCY WITH GOALS OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO GREENPRINT:**

The goals of the Greenprint are to optimize the benefits of trees throughout our region, to create sustainable urban forests, and to build community-wide appreciation for our urban forests. The River District currently has a limited urban forest because it is primarily a warehouse district consisting of large buildings and limited landscaping. Redevelopment will include requirements to add more landscaping and trees.

**ESBD CONSIDERATIONS:**

Not applicable.

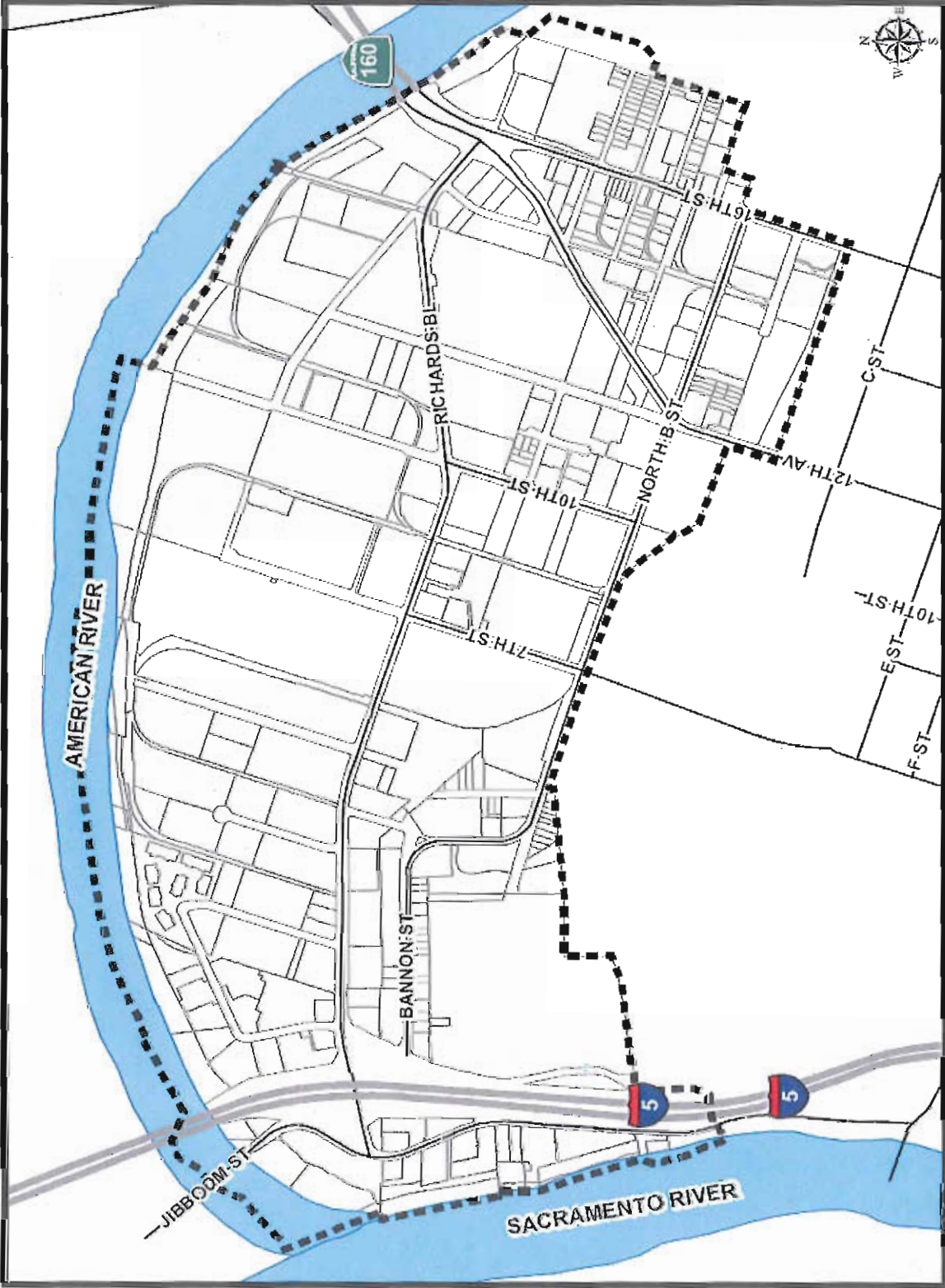
Recommendation Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J.P. Tindell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

J.P. TINDELL, M.S.  
Park Planning and Development Manager

Attachment 1 – River District Specific Plan Area  
Attachment 2 – River District Specific Plan

Attachment 1: River District Specific Plan Area



Map Created 3-26-09

River District Specific Plan (RDSP) Boundary





# RIVER DISTRICT SPECIFIC PLAN

Administrative Draft July 2010



CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
DEPARTMENTS OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
300 Richards Boulevard  
Sacramento, CA 95811

---

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### City Council

Kevin Johnson, Mayor

Ray Tretheway, District 1

Sandy Sheedy, District 2

Steve Cohn, District 3

Robert King Fong, District 4

Lauren Hammond, District 5

Kevin McCarty, District 6

Robbie Waters, District 7

Bonnie Pannell, District 8

The River District Specific Plan was a city-led, cross-functional planning effort. The City of Sacramento would like to acknowledge the contribution of the following staff and contributors:

### The Core Team

Greg Taylor, Urban Design; Rachel Hazlewood, Economic Development; Evan Compton, Stacia Cosgrove and Gregory Bitter, Community Development

### The Technical Advisory Team

Jennifer Hageman, Environmental Planning Services; Mary de Beauvieres, Parks; Jesse Gothan and Aelita Milatzo, Department of Transportation; Melissa Marshall, Dave Schamber, Tony Bertrand, Utilities; Roberta Deering, Sean DeCourcy, Historic Preservation; Mark Griffin, Finance; Christine Hewitt, Long Range Planning; Jason Hone and Nedziene Ferrario, Community Development

### The River District Stakeholder Committee

Patty Kleinknecht, Bud Applegate, Ernie Gallardo, Steve Ayers, Steve Goodwin, Al Esquivel and Johan Otto

### Consultants

Alison Bouley, Harris Consulting; Tim Youmans and Amy Lapin, Economic & Planning Systems; Suzanne Enslow, AECOM; Mark Bowman, Dowling Associates; Paula Boghosian, Historic Environment Consultants

---

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	vii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 History of the Area	2
1.2 The River District Today	3
1.3 What is a Specific Plan?	5
1.4 Specific Plan Process	6
1.5 Consistency with the General Plan and Other Plan Efforts	7
1.6 How to Use the River District Specific Plan	8
CHAPTER TWO: VISION	
2.1 River District Principles, Goals and Policies	10
2.2 Guiding Principles	10
CHAPTER THREE: LAND USE	
3.1 Development Influences in the River District	14
3.2 Land Use Program	14
3.3 Development Standards	15
3.4 Mixed Use Development	15
3.5 Streetscape Standards	16
3.6 Land Use Designations	17
3.7 Subareas within the River District	17
3.8 Housing	22
3.9 Social Services	24
3.10 Sustainability	25
3.11 Nonconforming Land Uses	25
CHAPTER FOUR: HISTORIC RESOURCES	
4.1 Historic Resources	28
4.2 Listing of Historic Resources	29
4.3 Landmark and Historic District Designations	34
4.4 North 16th Street Historic District Plan	35

---

## CHAPTER FIVE: CIRCULATION

5.1	Development of Access in the River District	38
5.2	Former Richards Boulevard Area Plan Circulation Network	40
5.3	Establishing a New Grid for the River District	40
5.4	Alternate Modes in the River District	48

## CHAPTER SIX: PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

53

6.1	Parks and Plazas	55
6.2	River Parkways and Trails	58
6.3	Development Adjacent to Levees	60

## CHAPTER SEVEN: PUBLIC SERVICES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

7.1	Public Safety	66
7.2	Schools	69

## CHAPTER EIGHT: UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

8.1	Water Supply and Distribution	74
8.2	Storm Drainage and Sanitary Sewer Collection Systems	75
8.3	Levees	79
8.4	Electricity and Natural Gas	79

## CHAPTER NINE: IMPLEMENTATION

9.1	Special Planning District and Zoning	84
9.2	Design Guidelines	84
9.3	Historic Designations Ordinance	84
9.4	Finance Plan	84

## APPENDICES

1:	Community Outreach and Public Meetings	86
2:	Goals and Policies	88

---

## LIST OF TABLES, PHOTOS, DIAGRAMS, AND MAPS

### Chapter One: Introduction

- | No. | Caption/Source   |
|-----|--|
|     | The River District Specific Plan Area Boundary   |
| 1.1 | The River District Specific Plan Area's Location within Sacramento   |
| 1.2 | 1868 Map Showing the Original Route of the American River  |
| 1.3 | "Daughter of migrant Tennessee coal miner, living in American River camp near Sacramento, California," by Dorothea Lange |
| 1.4 | In 2008 General Produce Celebrated its 75th Anniversary  |
| 1.5 | Regional Transit Green Line to Sacramento International Airport  |
| 1.6 | Community Visioning Workshop, Held in February 2008  |
| 1.7 | Walkability Expert Dan Burden Measuring Potential Bike Lanes   |
| 1.8 | American River Parkway Plan - Discovery Park Area  |

### Chapter Two: Vision

- \* The Sacramento River Water Intake Facility
- \* Downtown Ford has been Located in the River District since 1975

### Chapter Three: Land Use Program

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
|     | The New Lottery Headquarters is under Construction, 2010  |
| 3.1 | Railyards Specific Plan Area  |
| 3.2 | Table: River District Specific Plan Land Use Program<br>Pedestrian Friendly Street in Orenco Station, Oregon  |
| 3.3 | River District Zoning Designations  |
| 3.4 | PG&E Plant, Station B, on Jibboom Street  |
| 3.5 | River District Specific Plan Subareas   |
| 3.6 | California Highway Patrol, New Headquarters on<br>North 7th Street. Source: Patty Kleinknecht   |
| 3.7 | Former Dos Rios Elementary School, now Smythe Academy.<br>Source: Kent Lacin Media Services   |
| 3.8 | Brick Buildings, such as Crest Carpets, line North 16th Street<br>Excelsior and Grand, St. Louis Park, Minnesota<br>Nova Townhomes in Seattle, Washington |

### Chapter Four: Historic Resources

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
|     | Cartouche from the old PG&E Power Station           |
| 4.1 | Location of the River District's Historic Resources |

- 
- 4.2 Table: Recommended River District Individual Landmarks
  - 4.3 Sacramento Water Treatment Plant
  - 4.4 Pipeworks Fitness, on North 16th Street. Source: Kent Lacin Media Services
  - 4.5 North 16th Street Historic District
  - 4.6 Table: North 16th Street Historic District Contributing Resources
  - 4.7 Table: North 16th Street Historic District Non-Contributing Resources and Vacant Parcels
  - 4.8 Elevated Docks are Common in the Historic District

#### Chapter Five: Circulation

- Regional Transit Has a Major Presence in the River District
- 5.1 Plan for Sacramento, 1873
- 5.2 Circulation Plan from the Richards Boulevard Area Plan, 1994, Superseded by the River District Specific Plan
- 5.3 River District Specific Plan Circulation Plan
- 5.4 Richards Boulevard street section
- 5.5 North 7th Street, north of Richards Boulevard, Rendering
- 5.6 Township 9, a mixed-use development, is a Planned Unit Development approved in 2007
- 5.7 The Subarea west of North 7th Street will focus on the future Green Line Light Rail Station on Sequoia Pacific Boulevard
- 5.8 Concept for Promenade Boulevard, future redesign of Twin River Housing Project
- 5.9 North 14th Street Tunnel, closed in 1994
- 5.10 Preferred Alternative, Highway 160 American River Bridge
- 5.11 Roundabouts Calm Traffic and Reduce Delays
- 5.12 The River District's Bicycle Network

#### Chapter Six: Parks and Open Space

- Robert T. Matsui Waterfront Park on the Sacramento River
- 6.1 Existing and Future Parks in the River District
- 6.2 Existing Parks in the River District
- 6.3 Robert T. Matsui Waterfront Park
- 6.4 Tiscornia Park is Enjoyed by Families and Boaters
- 6.5 Sacramento River Parkway, a Class 1 Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail
- 6.6 Mint Plaza, San Francisco
- Looking South towards the American River, the River District and Downtown

- 
- Hornblower on the Sacramento River. Source: Christine M. Suarez-Murias
- 6.7 The River District will be Bordered by a Ribbon of Parks
  - 6.8 Township 9 will Berm up to the Levee Top

**Chapter Seven: Community Facilities and Public Services**

- Fire Station #14 on North C Street. Source: Kent Lacin Media Services
- 7.1 Police and Fire stations in the Central City
  - 7.2 Fire Station #14. Source: Kent Lacin Media Services
  - 7.3 300 Richards Boulevard Interim Police Substation
  - 7.4 Dos Rio Elementary School, now Symthe Academy
  - 7.5 Schools Serving the River District
  - 7.6 School District Boundaries
  - 7.7 Table 7.7: Projected Students

**Chapter Eight: Utility Infrastructure**

- Detail from Building at the Sacramento Water Treatment Plant
- 8.1 Sacramento River Water Treatment Plant
  - 8.2 Sacramento River Water Intake Facility
  - 8.3 Proposed and Existing Water Supply System
  - 8.4 Proposed and Existing Sewer System
  - 8.5 Proposed and Existing Storm Drainage System

**Chapter Nine: Implementation**

- Light Rail Line being Laid on North 7th Street for the First Stop on the Green Line



---

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The River District Specific Plan establishes the overarching policy for the development of the River District area. It establishes planning and design standards for the redevelopment of approximately 740 acres of land located at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers, north of the downtown core of the City of Sacramento. The area is generally defined on the north by the American River, on the west by the Sacramento River, on the south by the recently adopted Sacramento Railyards Specific Plan area and on the east by parcels contiguous to North 16th Street. The land is mostly developed and divided into approximately 400 separate parcels held by over 200 property owners.

### CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Chapter One establishes the purpose of the Plan, its physical context, and its relationship to other regulations and planning documents, including the City's 2030 General Plan. The Specific Plan will serve to guide future decisions regarding land use, intensity of development, circulation, public spaces, urban design and the necessary infrastructure improvements to support future development. The Plan will provide a mechanism for ensuring that future development and infrastructure will be feasible, coordinated, and efficient.

The River District envisioned in the Specific Plan will be a vibrant, mixed-use community connected to the surrounding neighborhoods by a network of local streets, light rail transit, and bicycle and pedestrian pathways. It will be bordered by a ribbon of parks at the rivers' edge and will have a wide range of employment, entertainment and housing options for families and individuals.

### CHAPTER TWO: VISION

This chapter provides the guiding principles for development within the River District area. The principles are based on input from community stakeholders, City staff, technical consultants, the City Council and Commissions, and requirements of State law and City policies and regulations. The principles provide the broadest and most overarching set of guidance for the development of the River District Area. The goals and policies implementing each of the guiding principles are listed in Appendix A and are discussed more fully in the related chapters of the Specific Plan. These topics include Land Use and Cultural Resources, Circulation, Parks and Open Space, Community Facilities and Public Services, Utility Infrastructure and Implementation. Urban design is discussed in the River District Design Guidelines, which accompany this document.

---

The goals and policies represent statements of intent that will guide the development of the River District. They establish a framework upon which measures for implementation of the Specific Plan are developed. The goals and policies supersede goals and policies contained in the Richards Boulevard Area Plan and were developed to work in conjunction with the policies of existing City documents.

### CHAPTER THREE: LAND USE AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

This chapter describes the land use designations, allowable development intensities in the River District Specific Plan area. The land use designations and development program correspond to and implement the development concepts for the River District and each of its subareas described in this chapter. A comprehensive list of development standards that are specific to the River District Area is located in the River District Special Planning District (SPD), Section 17.120 of the Sacramento City Code.

The River District consists of a variety of subareas, the boundaries of which are based upon existing building patterns within each area. The River District Specific Plan seeks to preserve and enhance each subarea to capitalize on its unique character while improving the attractiveness and livability of the River District.

### CHAPTER FOUR: HISTORIC RESOURCES

The area's ties to the Sacramento and American Rivers, the development of levees, the growth of the railroads and the development of Sacramento as an agricultural and canning center and transportation hub, reflect the area's transformation over the years. The Specific Plan's goals and policies related to historic and cultural resources primarily address the preservation, rehabilitation and opportunities for the adaptive reuse of historic properties within the River District.

The Plan proposes to help revitalize the North 16th Street Historic District into a vibrant mixed-use arts, retail, residential and commercial subarea. The historic resources of the River District, including individual landmarks and the historic district, are also described.

### CHAPTER FIVE: CIRCULATION

This chapter describes the circulation improvements needed to support the River District Specific Plan. The improvements are necessary to provide a framework for the growth which is projected within the District and enhance the connectivity of the entire city center. A key principle of the Specific Plan is the long term transformation of the current industrial circulation network to one that places high priority on the pedestrian. The new street network is envisioned to balance the needs of an increasingly diverse land use base while at the same time maintaining the viability of the street network for businesses that use large vehicles in their operations.

---

## CHAPTER SIX: PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The greatest natural assets of the River District are the two rivers that form its northern and western boundaries – the American and the Sacramento Rivers. Hidden from view by elevated flood protection levees, the unique opportunity presented by the River District's location at the confluence of these major California rivers has not yet been fully realized. The River District Specific Plan sets the stage for a future district that is able to capitalize upon the regional benefits of these resources.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES

This chapter of the River District Specific Plan describes the community facilities and public services that will be provided in the District as new development occurs.

As newer, more intensive uses are developed in the River District there will be increased demands for expanded schools, police and fire services. Beyond the community facilities that will be developed to meet the specific demands of planned development in the area, the Specific Plan also provides for new facilities which will be of benefit to the larger region.

## CHAPTER EIGHT: UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The Utility Infrastructure chapter of the River District Specific Plan establishes plans, goals, and policies for the orderly upgrading, replacement, and/or expansion of public utility infrastructure such as water, sanitary sewer, and storm drainage systems. The existing and future plans for electric, natural gas and telecommunication systems within the River District will also briefly be discussed in this chapter. The proposed plans for each of these public infrastructure elements will provide individual property owners and developers, as well as the City, with a framework of improvements necessary to support future development in the Specific Plan area.

## CHAPTER NINE: IMPLEMENTATION

The River District Specific Plan is a long range policy and planning document that is intended to guide development in the River District planning area over the next 20 to 25 years. The Specific Plan replaces the Richards Boulevard Area Plan, which was repealed as part of the Specific Plan adoption. This chapter describes the steps needed to implement the River District Specific Plan and the proposed financing measures for public improvements.

Chapter Nine summarizes the development review process for the River District Specific Plan area and outlines additional policies necessary to implement the Specific Plan.



FIGURE 1.1

THE RIVER DISTRICT SPECIFIC PLAN AREA'S LOCATION WITHIN SACRAMENTO

---

## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

---

The greatest natural assets of the River District are the two rivers that form its northern and western boundaries – the American and the Sacramento Rivers. Hidden from view by elevated flood protection levees, the unique opportunity presented by the River District's location at the confluence of these major California rivers has not yet been fully realized. The River District Specific Plan sets the stage for a future district that recognizes and maximizes the regional benefits of these resources.



ROBERT T. MATSUI WATERFRONT PARK ON THE SACRAMENTO RIVER



FIGURE 6.1

EXISTING AND FUTURE PARKS IN THE RIVER DISTRICT

The River District will be comprised of neighborhoods with the need for parks, bikeways and green spaces (Figure 6.1, previous page). The River District Specific Plan balances the need for regional amenities, urban public spaces, and neighborhood and community parks.

**6.1. PARKS AND PLAZAS**

City parks in Sacramento are classified as neighborhood, community or regional. Neighborhood parks, at up to ten acres in size, are the smallest sized park and serve residents and employees located within a half mile radius. Neighborhood parks are usually designed toward small children and their families and typically include such features as a tot lot or adventure play area, un-lighted sport fields or sport courts, a group picnic area, landscaping and walkways. Community parks are larger parks, usually in the ten to sixty acre range and draw from a two to three mile radius. These parks have the same amenities as neighborhood parks, as well as facilities that serve a broader audience with amenities such as a lighted sports field, large picnic area with a shade structure, community garden, restrooms, on-site parking, nature area, skate park, a water element, dog park or community center.

**GOAL POS 1**

**Provide a community park of ten acres or larger to serve the River District.**

**Policy P 1a**

Provide a community park consistent with the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2005-2010.

**Policy P 1b**

Provide active play areas in the community park that will serve residents within a two to three mile area.

**GOAL POS 2**

**Provide neighborhood parks within one-half mile of all residences in the River District.**

**Policy P 2a**

Locate neighborhood parks within residential areas and on secondary streets.

The two parks in the River District are the Robert T. Matsui Waterfront Park, located at the Water Intake Facility on Jibboom Street, and Tiscornia Park, located at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers (Figure 6.2). The eight acre Robert T. Matsui Waterfront Park is a community park and was completed in 2007.



**FIGURE 6.3** Robert T. Matsui Waterfront Park

It features an interactive water fountain, a grassy area overlooking the Sacramento River and a network of pedestrian walkways, benches and shade trees (Figure 6.3). The Water Intake Facility has been incorporated into the park by providing visitors a unique overlook on the Sacramento River.

Tiscornia Park, pictured in Figure 6.4, is almost 10 acres in size, has a sandy beach, picnic area and boat access to the American River. Both parks are connected via the Sacramento River Parkway, a Class 1 bicycle and pedestrian trail running along the Sacramento River Parkway, seen in Figure 6.5. In addition, while not included within the boundaries of the River District Specific Plan area, the Sutter's Landing Regional Park is located about a mile and a half upstream along the American River. Plans are in place to connect Sutter's Landing Regional Park to the River District via an extension of the Two Rivers Trail.



**FIGURE 6.4** Tiscornia Park is enjoyed by families and boaters



FIGURE 6.2

EXISTING PARKS IN THE RIVER DISTRICT



**FIGURE 6.5** Sacramento River Parkway, a Class 1 Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail

The City of Sacramento’s parkland dedication requirements are outlined in the 2030 General Plan, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2005-2010 and City Code, Chapter 16.64. The City’s service level goal for neighborhood and community parks is five acres of park for every 1,000 residents. In redevelopment or infill areas of the City it may be difficult to reach this goal as development projects tend to be located on smaller tracts of land than developments in suburban locations, thereby having less of an opportunity to dedicate land. As a result, parks may be smaller or may be developed in a more intense fashion fitting to the surroundings. In this kind of urban setting, recreation facilities may also include indoor gyms, urban plazas or rooftop gardens.

In infill or redevelopment areas, the City may require the dedication of parkland to meet the neighborhood requirement only, or 2.5 acres for every 1,000 residents, with the remainder of the parkland dedication requirement to be met through the payment of in-lieu fees. The in-lieu fees may be pooled and used for acquisition of a community park site to serve the area or to make improvements to existing parks serving the area. The projected development of the River District will require a minimum of 35 acres of neighborhood parks. Neighborhood parks should be located within one-half mile of all residents within the District; a community park should be located within two to three miles of all River District residents.

As redevelopment begins to occur in the River District, demand will increase for both neighborhood and com-

munity parks. Because this Specific Plan envisions the River District as an urban setting of mixed uses with residential densities rivaling the central business district, neighborhood parks and public spaces will likely be smaller and more compact and have a more urban character than their suburban counterparts.

The City’s Small Public Places program recognizes that for infill areas not well served by existing parks, a traditional community or neighborhood park may not be possible due to land constraints and the lack of large undeveloped parcels. In these situations a small park, such as a plaza, tot lot or sculpture garden, can help meet the neighborhood need for a public gathering place. The area to the east of North 12th Street in the River District is largely developed and, other than the Two Rivers Trail, lacks a park or public space. This area would benefit from the type of park envisioned in the Small Public Places program, such as that pictured in Figure 6.6.

When fully developed, the River District is envisioned to be a mixed use community that is home to higher density residential and job-generating uses. The 2,300 residential units approved in the Township 9 planned unit development on the western side of North 7th Street is balanced by the 900 jobs generated across the street at Continental Plaza, the headquarters for the California Highway Patrol. North 7th Street will be constructed to include a pedestrian walkway that will provide a connection to the river. This will be an amenity serving both populations – providing an enjoyable walk for employees at lunch as well as a stroll for residents in the evenings.



**FIGURE 6.6** Mint Plaza, San Francisco

**GOAL POS 3**

**Provide parks, open spaces and gathering areas easily accessible to the employees working in the District.**

**Policy P 3a**

Encourage riverfront development to incorporate open spaces along the river for public enjoyment.

The River District has the opportunity to develop public facilities which will serve more than one function. The development of joint use facilities is supported by the 2030 General Plan and can include joint facilities such as libraries located adjacent to schools, or parks and detention basins co-located together. Joint use facilities are efficient ways to use public land and resources in a cost effective manner.

**GOAL POS 4**

**Seek opportunities to maximize public spaces through partnerships for joint use facilities.**

**Policy P 4a**

Encourage joint use of public facilities such as detention basins, parks and open space.

**6.2. RIVER PARKWAYS AND TRAILS**

The uniqueness of the River District is defined by its proximity to the American and Sacramento Rivers. Yet currently a visitor to the River District could be situated almost anywhere within the District and be unaware of the closeness of these two major rivers. These natural resources will guide the framework for the new district – with increased access, parkland and development facing the rivers.

The natural configuration of the American River was historically different than it is today. Originally the American River emptied into the Sacramento River further south through Sutter Slough, near the current Historic Railroad Depot. In 1868 a new channel was dug to the north, creating the present confluence point of the American and Sacramento Rivers. Levees created for flood protection in the early 1900s provide a visual and physical barrier to the rivers.

The American and Sacramento Rivers are viewed as very different types of rivers. The American winds down from the Sierra Nevada Mountains with river forks, rapids,



Looking south towards the American River, the River District and Downtown

lakes and reservoirs that provide recreation, power, irrigation and drinking water to the region. The banks of the American River largely retain their riparian vegetation and are considered to be sensitive habitat requiring set backs and protection from development. The American River is classified as both a State and Federal Wild and Scenic River, a river classification system that was created in 1968 to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. The section of the American River that borders the River District is classified as a Recreational River within the designation. The American River Parkway Plan 2008 is the local guiding policy document for activities along this portion of the river.

The Sacramento River which slowly flows south along the Sacramento Valley floor has traditionally been a source of water for farming and a transportation and commerce corridor connecting the valley to the San

Source: Christine M. Suarez-Murias



Hornblower on the Sacramento River

Francisco Bay Area. Urban development is considered appropriate along the river's edge and the Sacramento Riverfront Master Plan, developed jointly by the Cities of West Sacramento and Sacramento, strongly advocates for high-quality riverfront public spaces with surrounding vibrant urban neighborhoods.

**GOAL POS 5**

**Activate the River District's connection to the rivers.**

**Policy P5a**

Encourage riverfront development to "face" the American and Sacramento Rivers with active uses.

**Policy P5b**

Require riverfront development to include access to the rivers for bicycles and pedestrians where appropriate.

**GOAL POS 6**

**Create active and passive points of interest along the American and Sacramento Rivers.**

**Policy P6a**

Feature activity nodes at intervals of approximately one quarter mile that include recreational parks, nature areas and cultural destinations.

**Policy P6b**

Ensure that activity nodes are accessible to bicycles and pedestrians.

**GOAL POS 7**

**Respect riparian habitat, critical environmental areas, and views of the River.**

**Policy P7a**

Protect natural habitat areas along the riverfront.

The American River Parkway is a regionally acclaimed open space greenbelt that extends from the American River's confluence with the Sacramento River, upstream to Folsom Dam. Within the River District, the American River Parkway includes the Two Rivers Trail, located on the southern levee of the American River and all land north of the levee along the shore of the river. The Sacramento County Regional Parks Department has primary management responsibilities over the Parkway.

The American River Parkway Plan considered the redevelopment and increasing urbanization of the River District. The Plan identifies the area between the Highway 160 Bridge and the confluence of the two rivers as surrounded by an urban neighborhood where increased access and connectivity are to be promoted, which is consistent with the River District Specific Plan.

The River District's situation on the shores of the Sacramento and American Rivers brings opportunities for regional connections to the City's bikeway system. Regional trails within the Parkway extend the length of the American River Parkway, a distance of 23 miles. Planned city multi-use trails, following the south shore of the American River and the east shore of the Sacramento River, will ultimately extend the regional bikeway

system to the far reaches of the city limits. The River District's location at the hub of these two planned regional links will offer future River District residents endless options for recreational outings along with bicycle commuting opportunities.

A Class 1 bicycle and pedestrian trail already winds along portions of the American and Sacramento River levees in the River District. The Two Rivers Trail extends from Tiscornia Park to the Highway 160 Bridge. Completed in 2006, it is the first phase of a planned project that will extend the trail to Sutter's Landing Regional Park and ultimately to the H Street Bridge that crosses the American River near California State University, Sacramento. Currently, the Class 1 trail ends at the Highway 160 Bridge and connects to the Sacramento River Parkway trail via on-street facilities. The Two Rivers Trail also connects to the Sacramento River Parkway trail which follows the Sacramento River downstream through Old Sacramento to Miller Park and beyond. Plans to extend this trail to the southern boundary of the City will someday become a reality.

These bicycle and pedestrian trails will serve as conduits to move recreation-minded people from one park or open space to another. The River District Specific Plan envisions active and passive public spaces along the trails at regular intervals, approximately a 10 to 15 minutes walk apart (Figure 6.7). These recreational opportunities may range from a staffed science center with dining and parking to quiet sitting areas from which to contemplate the surrounding river views. Residents and workers-alike will be able to enjoy the parkway and access to the rivers.

The Township 9 mixed-use development provides a model for integrating development with the American River riparian corridor. The plan calls for raising the land side of the levee to create a gentle slope to the levee top, allowing for improved river connection and visibility as demonstrated in Figure 6.8. This model, whenever feasible, will be encouraged to improve the River District's connection to the river.

New development, both commercial and residential, configured to promote critical pedestrian linkages, particularly to the river pathways, will create a walkable

district. Public walkways fill a niche in an urban community with a mix of populations and needs.

### 6.3. DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO LEVEES

Careful consideration must be given to new development within proximity to the two rivers. The 2030 General Plan directs that new development not occur within 50-feet of the landside toe of the levee. This applies to both the Sacramento and the American Rivers. The River District Special Planning District (SPD), located within the City of Sacramento Zoning Ordinance, and the River District Design Guidelines further define what this setback area, or "transition zone," may look like and the uses that may be included within it. For example, it is anticipated that a gravel roadway will be (and currently is) located on the landside of the levee for maintenance purposes. Other acceptable uses may include landscaping, fencing, directional or educational signage, or limited paved roadways. The type of trees and other plantings, including the method of planting, allowed in this area will be determined, as sites develop, in consultation with the staff and requirements of the local flood control agency.

#### GOAL POS 8

**Create an open space transition zone between the river and private development.**

##### Policy P8a

Set back buildings a minimum of 50 feet from the toe of the land side of the levee ("transition zone"), as directed by the 2030 General Plan.

##### Policy P8b

Encourage property owners to raise the landside of the levee as demonstrated in the Township 9 Design Guidelines, in order to raise development to the height of the levee. In this case, the 50-foot transition zone shall be measured from the former location of the toe of the levee, prior to the increase in elevation.

##### Policy P8c

Incorporate uses within the transition zone that are complementary to the Parkway. These uses may include, but are not limited to, landscaping, fencing, directional or educational signage, and a limited amount of paved roadway area. Buildings are not allowed within the transition zone.



FIGURE 6.7

THE RIVER DISTRICT WILL BE BORDERED BY A RIBBON OF PARKS



FIGURE 6.8  
TOWNSHIP 9 WILL BERM UP TO THE LEVEE TOP

**Policy P8d**

Incorporate riparian species into landscaping in the transition zone that complements the adjoining river front vegetation.

Allowable heights adjacent to the levees are contained within the River District SPD in the City Zoning Ordinance.

Safe parks are created through thoughtful design and an active community. The Specific Plan encourages the implementation of "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design" principles to ensure ample visibility into park spaces from the street and adjacent residential development, appropriate lighting, and strategically placed structures and landscaping.

**GOAL POS 9**

**Create safe parks and riverfront environments.**

**Policy P9a**

Maintain clear lines of sight and visibility into parks and open spaces.

**Policy P9b**

Support implementation of CPTED standards along the American River Parkway, as appropriate.

**Policy P9c**

Provide lighting for paths and walkways that provides safety without glare and obstruction into the natural landscape.

**Policy P9d**

Encourage residential view corridors such as balconies and picture windows overlooking open space areas to provide additional surveillance.