



Report to  
**DESIGN REVIEW AND PRESERVATION BOARD**  
City of Sacramento

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**INFORMATIONAL**  
**August 16, 2006**

Honorable Members of the Design Review and Preservation Board:

**Subject:** A workshop on the Docks Area Redevelopment Project

**Location/Council District:** The Docks Area is south of Capitol Mall, north of the Marina/Miller Park, east of the Sacramento River and west of the I-5 Freeway.

**Council District:** 4

**Recommendation:** The Design Review and Preservation Board is requested to review and comment on the final draft land-use alternatives for the Docks Area Redevelopment Project.

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**Applicant:** The City of Sacramento

**Owner:** The City of Sacramento, The Redevelopment Agency of the City of Sacramento, The State of California, Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E)

**Summary:** In January, the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Sacramento (Agency) approved an Exclusive Right to Negotiate (ERN) with KSWM Docks Partners, LLC (developer) for Phase I of the Docks Area. The developer is finalizing land-use alternatives based on both the 2003 Sacramento Riverfront Master Plan and the 2005 Docks Area Community Planning Process, both of which included significant public participation. The developer has prepared three alternatives to be analyzed in the Docks Area Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Before the draft EIR is released, the developer is seeking additional community input.

**Background Information:** Since early 2005, the City's Economic Development Department has been managing the redevelopment of the Docks Area along the Sacramento Riverfront. In 2005, there was an extensive community planning process based on the 2003 Sacramento Riverfront Master Plan (2003 Master Plan). The Docks Area Community Planning Process has remained committed to key elements of the 2003 Master Plan, including:

1. Public access to the river;
2. Linkages to adjacent neighborhoods;
3. Pedestrian orientation throughout the area; and
4. An animated riverfront district.

The 2005 Docks Area Community Planning Process included community workshops, presentations to the City's Design Review and Preservation Board (Board), Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission and workshops with the City Council. The development concepts for the Docks Area generated from the community include:

- A mixed-use neighborhood with heavy emphasis on residential development;
- Pedestrian and bicycle access integrated throughout the plan area;
- Public and open space including parks and a riverfront promenade; and
- Medium- to high-density development with building heights designed to maximize views.

At the presentation to the Board in June of last year, the City presented two land-use plans for the Docks Area. Feedback from the Board included:

1. Maximize Density
  - Site should support as much high-density residential as possible;
  - High-rise towers in area for structures;
  - Increase height/layers of towers as move east on site, with highest towers along eastern edge/Front Street. Form-based zoning program option; and
  - Don't have to choose between high density or open space - have both!
2. Maximize Water-Dependant Public Spaces and Uses Along the River
  - Incorporate as much public open space as possible;
  - The triangle park area, aka "pizza slice," preferred, with higher density towers to east;
  - More water-edge uses, such as at Old Sacramento;
  - Dock element seems isolated;
  - Integrate water level project components at river water level;
  - Need more water-dependant uses along river, not just "green space;" and
  - Alternatives lack interactive spaces between green spaces and water.
3. Urban Design
  - Support the extension of central city grid pattern/alignments into area;
  - Maintain consistency with riverfront and levy promenade design elements to north;
  - Consider aquatic park in San Francisco with bay-edge park, high rises behind; and
  - Maintain consistency with Riverfront Master Plan design plan by one landscape vs segmentation of styles and design elements.
4. Rail Road Tracks Alignment
  - Existing track alignment may help marina access;
  - Should consider keeping existing alignment;
  - Avoid track transition to Front Street alignment option at Embassy Suites;
  - Greater train grade-crossing impacts on Front Street;
  - Interest for train travelers to be on top of levy at river, existing alignment; and
  - Recognize track alignment changes through time in this area.
5. Activate the Area
  - Utilize excursion train and river otter shuttle to access Docks Area; and
  - Bicycle crossing at R Street trestle crucial.

In January, the Agency selected a developer to negotiate Phase I of the Docks Area. This includes the property north of the Pioneer Bridge. In addition, the Agency has hired a planning firm to design the riverfront promenade as well as the open space south of the Pioneer Bridge.

### The Alternatives

The developer has completed three final draft land-use alternatives for the Docks Area. The alternatives address the constraints of the Docks Area, as well as provide a feasible project that

could be built after entitlements are secured. The Docks Area has numerous constraints including:

- The Pioneer Reservoir, a city facility that must be located north of the Pioneer Bridge;
- Existing distribution lines that pre-determine the alignment of U Street;
- A levee system that forms the western edge of the project area;
- Rail lines that run along the levee;
- Brownfield sites that must be planned judiciously; and
- Existing facilities that must be incorporated into the plan, including the historic Sump 1A Building and the existing PG&E facility, located at the intersection of U and Front streets.

All of the land-use alternatives include the following elements:

1. High-density, mixed-use development with an emphasis on residential development;
2. A variety of heights and residential products, designed to ensure a diverse neighborhood that relates to the historic use of the site;
3. A pedestrian orientation and scale;
4. A riverfront promenade that incorporates the excursion train lines, landscaping, a multi-use path and additional sidewalks and circulation elements;
5. Access to the riverfront;
6. Street alignment designed to accommodate future public transportation routes;
7. Linkages to adjacent neighborhoods; and
8. A range of high-quality open/park space including:
  - Plazas/small public spaces, such as pedestrian alleyways and the plaza at the northern end of the project that connects the area to the future R Street pedestrian crossing;
  - Neighborhood parks, including the shared green spaces tucked away on the inside of residential blocks, landscaped areas and pedestrian pathways;
  - Community parks; including the town square/commons;
  - Regional parks, including the open/park space south of the Pioneer Bridge; and
  - Parkways, including the riverfront promenade.

#### Alternative A-1 and A-2

The distinguishing elements of Alternatives A-1 and A-2 include:

- The open space has been centrally located;
- The Pioneer Reservoir has been relocated under the proposed central park space. The variations in the two alternatives (A-1 and A-2) address the need to present two different options for the layout of a new reservoir facility; and
- The central open space connects directly to the riverfront promenade, yet still provides for an “animated riverfront” by allowing private development adjacent to the promenade.

#### Alternative B

The distinguishing elements of Alternative B include:

- The open space has been extended along the length of the promenade, allowing for a larger section of open/park space directly adjacent to the riverfront;
- The Pioneer Reservoir has been relocated to the existing animal shelter site; and
- Development on both sides of the riverfront, providing addition security and animation.

### Alternative C

The distinguishing elements of Alternative C include:

- The Pioneer Reservoir remains in its existing location, but has been retrofitted to support open/park space on the roof of the facility;
- Due to the reservoir remaining in its existing location, the large park space is located in the southern corner of the development, adjacent to the Pioneer Bridge; and
- A public plaza which provides a transition from the street to the park on top of the reservoir

In addition to the Phase I development north of Pioneer Bridge, the City is also seeking to rezone the property south of Pioneer Bridge in anticipation of redeveloping the property where the oil company tank farms are currently located.

### **Environmental Considerations:**

A Master EIR is being prepared for the Docks Area project.

### **Policy Considerations:**

*City of Sacramento Strategic Plan:* The Docks Redevelopment Project will meet goals stated in the City's 2005 Strategic Plan including 1) Achieve sustainability and liveability; 2) Increase opportunities for all Sacramento residents to live in safe and affordable housing; and 3) Expand economic development throughout the city.

*General Plan, Smart Growth Principles:* The City Council has also adopted "smart growth" principles in planning for the future of the City, including more dense development in infill areas. It is the City's policy to "Foster walkable, close-knit neighborhoods through a system of fully connected activity centers, streets, pedestrian paths and bike routes...Concentrate new development and target infrastructure investments within the urban core of the region to allow for the efficient use of existing facilities, infill and reuse areas."

*Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2005-2010):* The Docks Area, a significant infill site, will include high-density, mixed-use development. However lack of large, greenfield type land necessitates more unique park and recreation facilities in order to meet park and open space needs. Policy 13.5 of the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan specifically acknowledges the legitimate role of urban public parks in the City's parks and recreation system including:

"At the sole discretion of the City, accept parkland dedications or acquire neighborhood park sites less than five acres in size that meet specialized neighborhood needs, considering the following circumstances:

- Scale and features are consistent with the character and urbanized areas of infill and mixed-use development, and provide needed relief from the hardscape and intensity of denser land-use patterns;
- Sites are visible and serve as positive gathering places for persons living, working or visiting nearby;
- Larger land areas are not available or desirable;
- In general, a City adopted Community/Specific Plan identifies such sites to address future growth and are integral to the nature of planned development. Exceptions made be made at the sole discretion of the City;
- Where feasible, the City may require development and maintenance of these smaller sites to be provided by private interests in accordance with City standards, ensuring they are continuously open to the public."



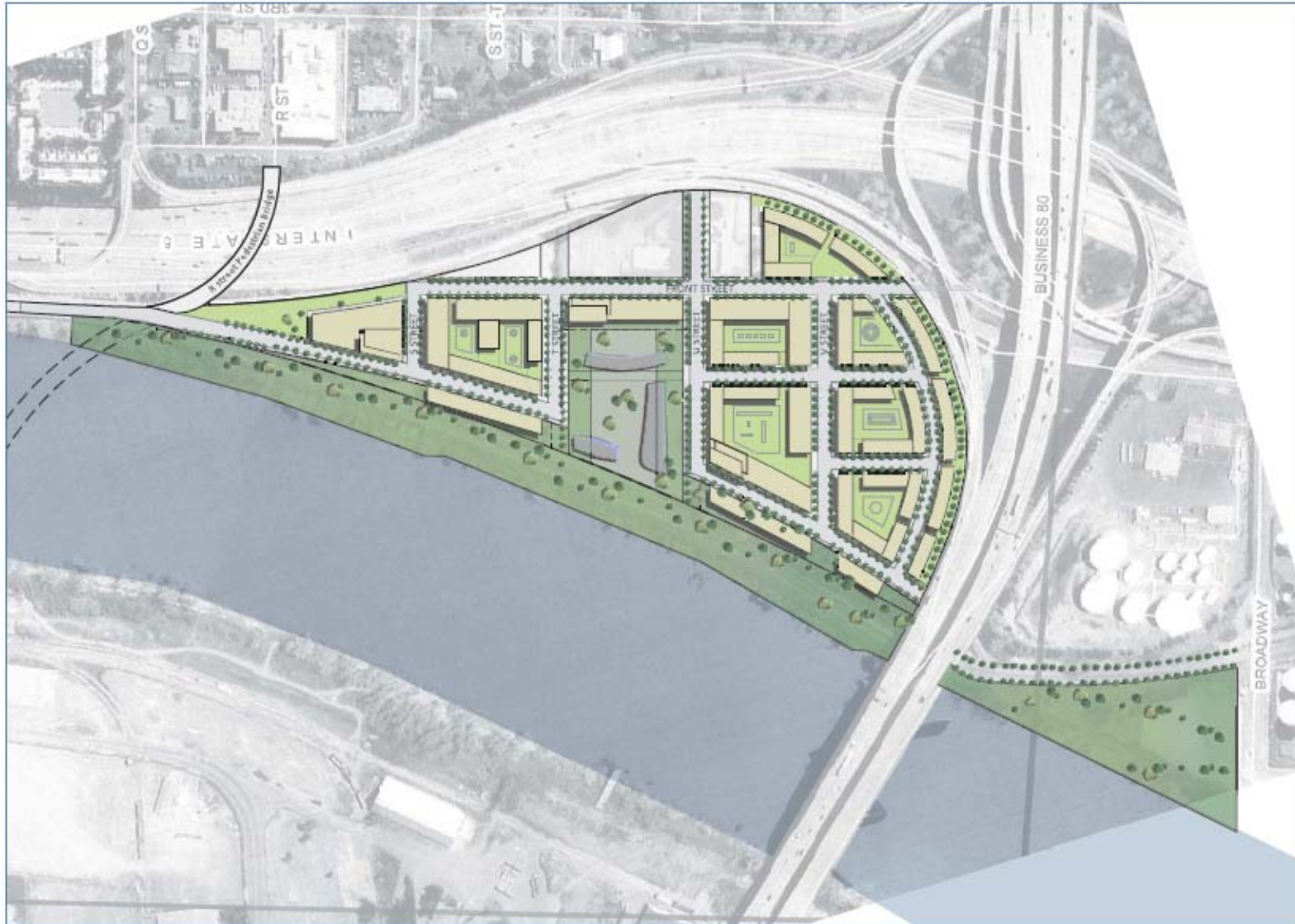
Attachment 1 - Aerial Map of the Docks Area



Attachment 2 - Land Use Plan Alternative A-1



Attachment 3 - Land Use Plan Alternative A-2



Attachment 4 - Land Use Plan Alternative B



Attachment 5 - Land Use Plan Alternative C

