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## CITY OF SACRAMENTO

CALIFORNIA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT

300 Richards Blvd.  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95811

DATE: September 27, 2011

TO: Interested Persons

FROM: Tom Buford, Senior Planner  
Community Development Department

RE: **NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND  
SCOPING MEETING FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORTS COMPLEX**

### **COMMENT PERIOD**

**September 28, 2011 to October 31, 2011**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The City of Sacramento ("City") is the Lead Agency for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the proposed Entertainment and Sports Complex (ESC) project. The EIR to be prepared by the City will evaluate potential significant environmental effects of the Sacramento Sports and Entertainment Complex development at the Sacramento Valley Station site. The EIR will provide a project-specific evaluation of the proposed project.

The proposed project is the construction and operation of a 675,000 square foot entertainment and sports complex in the Railyards Specific Plan area on a site containing approximately 13 acres located next to the existing historic Depot building. The ESC is proposed to be contained in one building which is also referred to as an arena. The ESC is intended to replace the existing arena in North Natomas as a regional center for sports and entertainment events. The exact building design and precise location within the 13-acre site and the financing structure for the ESC is being planned and evaluated concurrently with the environmental review process.

The Railyards Specific Plan area comprises approximately 240 acres located in the Central City/Downtown area of the City of Sacramento. (See Figure 1, Regional Location; Figure 2, Project Location Map). Locating an arena within the Railyards was considered during

preparation of the Railyards Specific Plan, but the proposed site has changed.

The EIR for the ESC is an environmental review document being prepared for the project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Under CEQA, upon deciding to prepare an EIR, the lead agency must issue a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to inform all responsible agencies of that decision. The purpose of the NOP is to provide information describing the project and its potential environmental effects to enable comments regarding the scope and content of the information to be included in the EIR. Agencies should comment on such information as it relates to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the project.

### **RAILYARDS SPECIFIC PLAN**

On December 11, 2007, the City of Sacramento City Council certified an environmental impact report (SCH No. 2006032058) for the Railyards Specific Plan and entitlements, and adopted the mitigation monitoring plan (MMP). The EIR was prepared as a program level EIR for the Railyards Specific Plan, and included an analysis of the planned Sacramento Intermodal Facility. The Railyards Specific Plan allows for development of 12,000 housing units, 1.4 million sq. ft. of retail, 2.4 million sq. ft. of office, and 3 hotels. In addition the seven existing historic Central Shops buildings would be rehabilitated and two of those buildings would serve as the site of the State's Rail Technology Museum. The MMP included a number of requirements regarding construction practices at the site to reduce or mitigate the potential environmental impacts of the development permitted under the Railyards Specific Plan.

The Railyards Specific Plan EIR also provided project level review for development of portions of the Railyards area, primarily with regard to infrastructure improvements. Portions of the Railyards site are currently under construction to build roads and bridges and utility improvements. In addition, as the first phase of the Intermodal project development, the existing Union Pacific railroad tracks are being relocated.

In March 2009 the City Council approved the 2030 General Plan and certified the Master EIR. The Railyards Specific Plan EIR, MMP and CEQA Findings are located at <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/dsd/planning/environmental-review/eirs/>; the general plan documents are located at [www.sacgp.org](http://www.sacgp.org).

Information relating to the Railyards Specific Plan development is available at <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/dsd/projects/railyards/index.cfm>.

The ESC project description, location, and environmental issue areas that may be affected by development of the proposed project are set forth below. The EIR will evaluate the potentially significant environmental impacts of the proposed project, on both direct and cumulative basis, and may identify additional mitigation measures that may be feasible to lessen or avoid such impacts. The EIR will provide an evaluation of potential environmental impacts associated with ESC, including any associated changes to the planned Intermodal Facility and changes to the setting for the historic depot and REA buildings at the project site.

## **SUBMITTING COMMENTS**

Comments and suggestions as to the appropriate scope of analysis in the EIR are invited from all interested parties. Written comments or questions concerning the EIR for the proposed project should be directed to the environmental project manager at the following address by 5:00 p.m. on October 31, 2011. Please include the contact person's full name and address in order for staff to respond appropriately:

Tom Buford, Senior Planner,  
City of Sacramento Community Development Department,  
300 Richards Blvd., Third Floor, Sacramento, CA 95811.  
Tele (916) 808-7931  
E-mail: [tbuford@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:tbuford@cityofsacramento.org)

## **SCOPING MEETING**

**A public scoping meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 12, 2011, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the following location:**

**City of Sacramento City Hall Foyer  
915 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814**

**Responsible agencies and members of the public are invited to attend and provide input on the scope of the EIR. The scoping meeting will be conducted in an open house format. Written comments regarding relevant issues may be submitted at the meeting.**

## **PROJECT LOCATION/SETTING**

The Railyards Specific Plan area comprises approximately 240 acres located in the Central City/Downtown area of the City of Sacramento. Figure 1 (Regional Location Map) shows the location of the Railyards Specific Plan area within the Sacramento region. The project area is an approximate 13-acre site located east of Interstate 5 and north of I Street within the property referred to as the Sacramento Valley Station. The project site is comprised of Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN) 002-0010- 044,047 and 054;

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **Entertainment and Sports Complex**

The Entertainment and Sports Complex (ESC) includes a sports arena and associated commercial activities within one large building. The ESC is proposed to be located within the boundaries of an approximate 13-acre area within the downtown portion of the City of Sacramento known as the Sacramento Valley Station which is located within the larger Sacramento Railyards area. The Railyards Specific Plan encompassed the 240-acre area previously owned by the Union Pacific Railroad Company.

Responding to interest in developing an arena in the Railyards, the Railyards Specific Plan EIR identified a potential site for a Sports and Entertainment-related development on parcels located south of Railyards Boulevard at 7<sup>th</sup> Street, but the impacts of such development at that location were not analyzed. The ESC is now proposed to be located next to the existing Sacramento Valley Station along I Street between the I-5 freeway and 5<sup>th</sup> Street, on property owned by the City. The Sacramento Valley Station currently provides intercity rail, light rail and bus services and is the site of the City's planned Intermodal facility.

The City prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Section 4f report for the Intermodal project in 2009. The ESC project alteration of the schematic site plan for the Intermodal Facility included in the EA will be evaluated in the EIR. The City is currently undertaking construction at the project site to relocate the existing railroad tracks to accommodate future development of the Intermodal facility, and adjacent street and utility extensions are planned to be under construction in 2012. Although the Railyards is a brownfield site undergoing remediation under the jurisdiction of the state, the soil contamination at the proposed ESC site was completed in the early 1990's. Groundwater remediation is still on-going and special measures will be required to undertake construction of the ESC.

An arena and related facilities would be an allowable use at the proposed site, subject to an urban development permit and CEQA review. A qualitative discussion of potential impacts of an arena along 7<sup>th</sup> Street was provided at the end of each section of the Railyards Specific Plan EIR (approximately one paragraph) explaining whether the impacts would be expected to change, or if there could be new impacts. However, the Railyards Specific Plan EIR did not provide CEQA review of the impacts of developing an arena.

The City Council received a report on the proposed project at its meeting of September 13, 2011. Presentation materials and the staff report for the report to City Council on September 13, 2011 are available on the City's web site at [www.cityofsacramento.org](http://www.cityofsacramento.org) (City Council agenda for September 13, 2011, Agenda Item 6).

## **ENTITLEMENTS**

The City approvals/actions anticipated to be considered for the proposed project include, but are not limited to:

- Certification of the EIR and adoption of a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMP).
- Amendments to the Railyards Specific Plan to address the development of the ESC and its associated facilities within the Depot District.
- Amendment to the Railyards Special Planning District (SPD), Chapter 17.124 of the City Code, to allow the land use within the Heavy Industrial (M-2) zone.
- Urban Development Permit, required for development within the Railyards Special Planning District.

- Tentative map to create a parcel for the ESC.
- Special sign review to establish a specific sign program for the building(s).

Review of the proposed project by the Design, Preservation and Planning Commissions would be conducted as a part of the EIR review and entitlements process. The project entitlements would ultimately require approval by the City Council.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND SCOPE OF THE EIR**

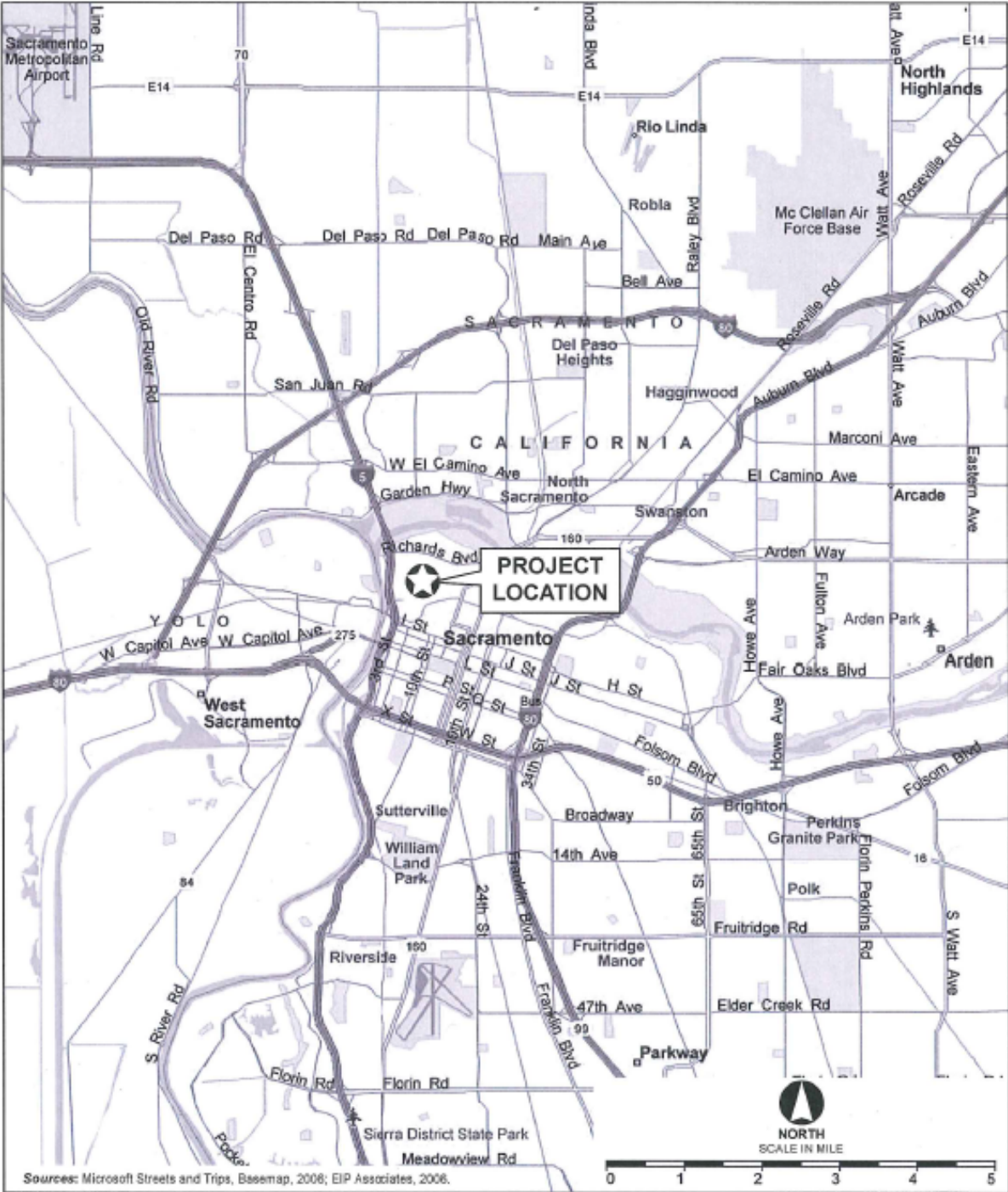
The EIR will analyze potentially significant impacts that result from development and operation of the Entertainment and Sports Complex.

Pursuant to section 15063 (a), of the CEQA Guidelines, an Initial Study has not been prepared for the proposed project. Rather, it is anticipated that the EIR will evaluate the full range of environmental issues contemplated for consideration under CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, including:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Economic/Blight Impact Study for existing Natomas arena site
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse gas emissions and climate change
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Intermodal Facility
- Land Use and Planning
- Light and Glare
- Noise
- Parking: On-street and parking structures
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic and Parking
- Utilities

The EIR will identify and evaluate alternatives to the proposed project.

Figure 1, Regional Location Map



Sources: Microsoft Streets and Trips, Basemap, 2008; EIP Associates, 2006.

Regional Location Map

10641-00

City of Sacramento

Figure 2, Project Location Map

