

DOCKS SPECIFIC PLAN
SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #1
THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2005
5:30 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.
Towe Auto Museum
2200 Front Street, Sacramento

On Thursday, March 17, 2005, the City of Sacramento, Economic Development Department held the first Community Workshop for the Docks Specific Plan at the Towe Auto Museum (2200 Front Street). Reporters from KCRA Channel 3 News and KXJZ Radio covered the event while approximately 50 community members participated in the workshop. There was a great diversity of attendees including Mayor Heather Fargo; representatives from Mayor Fargo's Office and Councilmembers Tretheway's and Fong's Office; Sacramento Area Council of Governments; the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Sacramento; California State Parks; area businesses; and local residents. Project team members included representatives from the City of Sacramento; Wallace, Roberts & Todd – Solomon/ETC; Economic Planning Systems; DKS Associates; Nichols Consulting Engineers, Chtd.; and The Hoyt Company.

The project team made extensive efforts to contact and invite community members and stakeholders to the workshop. Efforts included mailing approximately 1,100 newsletter invitations to neighbors and key stakeholders, making 70 reminder phone calls, sending 220 email reminders, hand delivering newsletters to key locations such as City Hall, Towe Auto Museum, City offices, contacting the media, and placing two sandwich board signs with helium balloons attached outside of the meeting facility.

The workshop included a walking tour of the site, a review of the 2003 Sacramento Riverfront Master Plan, a presentation on the process for developing the Docks Specific Plan, an interactive working session regarding what the Docks Area should look like and the opportunity to submit written comments. The walking tour provided community members the opportunity to become oriented with the site and appreciate both the views of the Sacramento River as well as the Tower Bridge and downtown skyline. The conceptual drawings of the 2003 Sacramento Riverfront Master Plan allowed attendees to view project displays and speak one-on-one with project team members while the presentation offered an overview of the Docks Specific Plan. With a more in-depth project understanding, community members were then divided into six groups during the interactive working session. Each group, assisted by a project team member, provided input into what the Docks Area could look like when redeveloped. Following the working session, a volunteer from each workgroup reported to the larger group with a summary of their ideas and suggestions.

The majority of input from the community came out of the working sessions and written comments. Key comments include the following:

- Riverfront Views and Access: community members expressed the desire for riverfront views and the need for access to the riverfront.
- Public Open Space: green space, landscaping and trails should be included in the design.

- Mixed-use: residential, retail, and commercial uses should be considered in the project.
- Pedestrian/Bicycle Access: the community would like to see the area designed to be pedestrian and bicycle friendly.
- Sound Buffer: buildings and landscaping should be designed and oriented to eliminate as much freeway noise as possible.
- Building Height: community members were in favor of mid-to-high rise buildings, but the project should be sensitive to the views of the riverfront.
- Tanks/Water Storage: community members would like to see these facilities removed so that the space could be maximized.

The following are summaries of the comments given by each group during the working sessions:

GROUP 1

- Potential issues with the Pioneer Bridge Reservoir to be addressed include:
 - Can we screen it?
 - Do the operators of the storm water facility want residential neighborhoods nearby?
 - Are there safety issues related to the Reservoir?
 - Will the families be impacted?
 - Do people want to live by it?
- There is awkward access into the Docks Area.
- Why not use the site for industrial uses? What about light industrial?
- Is residential really the best use for the site?
- Questions regarding pollution on the tank farm site south of the Pioneer Bridge include:
 - Why, what, when and how?
 - What are the complexities of relocating the tank?
 - What is the timeline?
 - Who is responsible for the clean up?
- Positive attributes of the area include views and access to the riverfront.
- The Sacramento River is very dangerous and powerful. We have to respect it.
- An open promenade is a good use.
- Portland, Oregon is a good example of riverfront development to use as a model.
- Include high-density uses, and mid and high rise buildings.
- The Towe Auto Museum can be an asset.
- Create a nightclub district/retail district.
- Include restaurants along the river walk/promenade. Why not just have good restaurants?
- Include more residents in the space.
- Will the riverfront properties price the average family out of the market?
- Do we have to have “destinations”?
- Propose a California International Trade Center on the Southeast quadrant of the I-5/US 50 Interchange (brought display boards of possible project).

GROUP 2

- There should not be access for automobiles on the riverfront promenade (roads, etc.).
- There needs to be pedestrian walkways.
- The Towe Auto Museum is a draw and should be maintained.
- Include any major high-rise density on a portion of the area near freeway.
- Keep some portion of the site for public use such as restaurants and shopping.
- Include a variety in architecture, sizes and shapes – not monolithic.
- Be unique to Sacramento, not like any other city.

GROUP 3

- Establish the Docks Area for residents and boat owners.
- Include access for boaters, from the levee to the water and access to the levee.
- There is a noise issue from freeways and traffic. To mitigate, use trees and landscaping or high-rise buildings as a buffer.
- Include sustainable design, public spaces and a mix of green space with buildings.
- Remove the tanks north and south of Broadway.
- Integrate Miller Park with the Docks Area with a riverfront promenade.
- Include a bicycle trail.
- Small-scale open spaces are good for security.
- There is a concern about integration of the railroad tracks with pedestrians and bicyclists; the railroad situation will need to be addressed.
- Although it may be a challenge, this project should keep the edge of the levee soft with greenery, not too much concrete or sharp edge.
- As a group, we are split between the preferences of mid-rise verses high-rise. The high-rise blocks the view from the rest of downtown.
- Establish set back issues with roads, buildings and parks.
- Railroad stops are a good idea.
- Keep it urbanized.
- Have parking under the Business 80 and have a shuttle to the bus and a ferry to Old Sacramento.
- Include green roofs and green rooftop parks.
- We do not want to see cars/ roads on the waterfront promenade.

GROUP 4

- Does this project have the funding and financing?
- Concerned about toxins and environmental clean up.
- Views of the river will be key.
- Access is a huge issue to the area – get developers interested.
- There are railroad safety issues and concerns, but we also see railroad as an opportunity to bring people in.
- Noise from the freeways will be an impediment to open space; we would want windows open to the river and away from the freeway; have technology to bring in air and light while mitigating noise.
- There are flood control and levy safety issues.

- We understand that there were past suggestions of cooling towers. There was controversy between the City and State Parks.
- There needs to be security and safety in buildings.
- Low-rise backed with high-rise would help with sound and would make front street more attractive (i.e., Vancouver).
- The bicycle trail to be installed within the next couple of months is basic; it could be enhanced through future promenade.
- A layer of walking parks against water and bicycle trails creates multiple layers.
- We do not want cars along waterfront; this is unanimous!
- Tracks could be realigned which would put the rail type of activity behind the promenade so that the pedestrian trail is it and the pedestrian and rail issues would be eliminated (there might be some historic concerns here; also deal with security concerns).
- We see joint retail and housing; this would be an easy sell for condos in addition to the views.
- Promenade lead to park and parking under the park
- May want two to three levels of parking with residential fourth floor taking advantage of views.
- We hope to see the tanks gone!
- See Master Plan Bridge.
- Open space needs to open to river.
- A 15-year build out where tanks are is suitable for business and retail fronting and close to Broadway. Also, a Broadway extension would provide access.
- Would like to see smaller retail on first floor of the ten-acre area.
- Area should be a lunchtime destination for weekday workers.
- Option to use high density/high-rise.
- There are parking concerns; would like to see parking under the buildings.
- Connections to Sacramento and West Sacramento really would activate community.

GROUP 5

- Key issue is connectivity and accessibility. We would like to see connectivity/accessibility with West Sacramento and Old Sacramento as well as pedestrian access to Old Sacramento and Capitol Mall.
- The size of the area is small; make it feel bigger.
- Remediation of environmental issues.
- Disjointed project area – interconnectivity of area under US 50 – barrier noise.
- Needs a 24-hour presence.
- Utilize area--from eyesore to beautiful.
- Habitat on riverfront.
- Make it a more natural look along the riverfront banks; do not want to see a hard edge at the riverfront.
- Pedestrian bridge to West Sacramento.
- Example: South Beach, San Francisco with trees and building orientation.
- Hotels with restaurants, retail and extension to Old Sacramento.
- Would like to see mixed use with a 24 community, office employees by day and residence by night.

- Have the commercial/ office buildings 10 to 15 stories high at Front Street, and two to three stories on riverside (this creates visual flow with high-rise at freeway and low-rise at R Street).
- Include activities for children, not just a park, but maybe a museum.
- Include gardens on rooftops; make it beautiful from freeways.

GROUP 6

- High/ mid-rise detracts from the core of downtown.
- South of the Pioneer Bridge does not make sense.
- The study area should be for an aquarium, no housing. Affordable will not work; it will attract higher end buyers.
- This is a good spot for commercial development.
- Locate high-rise at the rail yard development instead.
- We do not want it to be the new Vancouver.
- The riverfront is the last open space community based resource for people. We want to see a “people” oriented place with grass and museums.
- San Francisco has no access to the waterfront.
- The project site has good visibility with freeway interchange.
- We liked the curved pedestrian bridge in one of the pictures at our table. We need a change in Sacramento.
- Fifteen years from now we would like to see it like Vancouver, with high-rises, urban destination, bullet train, more retail, etc. We want to be proud of Sacramento.
- In California and Sacramento, high-rises do not fit the current mindset. The study site should not be sacrificed for high-rises, move it to the railyards development. Railyards are too low as they are planned now. The Docks should be modern like Golden State Park.
- Public buildings should be near the riverfront.
- Connectivity is difficult for commercial development, and too far to walk from downtown core.
- We do not cement sidewalks with condos over the river, or build up from the edge of the river.
- We want the concrete pathway, a pleasing the eye destination with landscape and trees.
- Safety is a key; we want people to use it.
- We like Berkeley 4th Street/ Emeryville.
- We want pedestrian and bicycle access, but no condos, like New Orleans.

The following are written comments submitted on comment cards during the workshop:

Comment 1:

- Water taxi/ferry service between the Docks Area developments and West Sacramento.
- Pedestrian promenade (walkers, runners, etc.)
- Bicycle trail (possibly separate from pedestrian area)
- Connections to downtown/R Street/West Sacramento/Broadway
- Can any of the Central Plant renovation new structures be integrated into this area? Underground Thermal Energy Storage or cooling tanks by the freeway?
- Respect the sightlines/view from downtown (i.e., no wall of high-rise structures to block/impede the River)

Comment 2:

- Ensure that the bicycle path along the railroad tracks is also conducive to walking and easily accessible.
- Improve access to the area. For example, access from Southside Park Neighborhood (T, U, and V Street)
 - Perhaps on underpass, similar to the one connecting Downtown Plaza to old Sacramento.
- Will the site be connected to bus and light rail transit?
- The Green Building Strategy is great!
- Primary use should be residential and business (customer service based), less use of office space and hotel

Comment 3:

- More public activity (i.e., another museum, such as Hays Truck Museum)
- Children's entertainment, such as rides, amusement, etc.

Comment 4:

- A railroad stop at the Docks (tourism, fun)?

Comment 5:

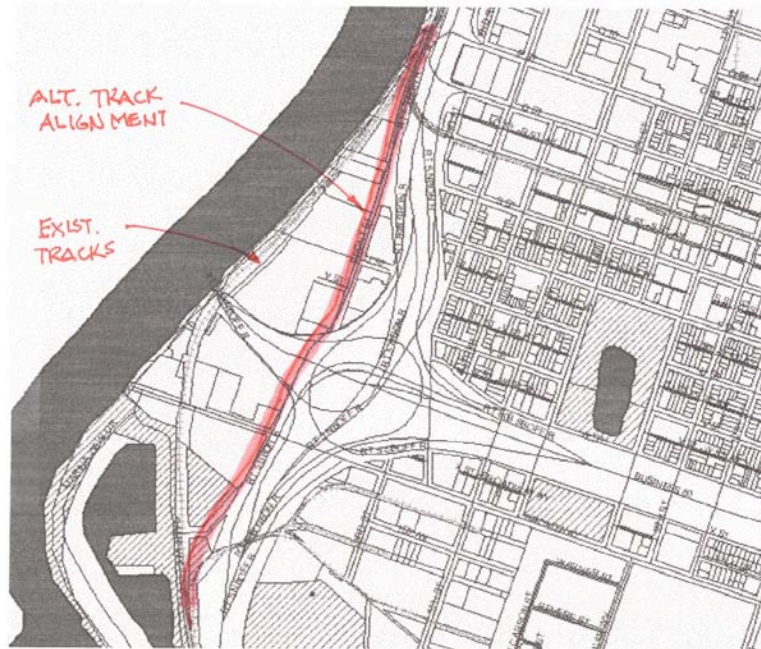
- My vision for the Docks area is to develop a Golden Gate Park for Sacramento. The people of the future will have no special interest in an area development into high or mid-rise buildings. An area of museums, aquariums, and amusement parks would be a long lasting legacy. This is our most valuable and highest potential space in the region, high-density commercial or residential projects should go to the railyards.

Comment 6:

- Why not include the marina area with residential condos. The marina/Miller Park can be a destination point.
- Guest docks for recreational boaters are a must.

Comment 7:

- I suggest you consider relocating/realigning a portion of the railroad tracks from the existing location on the levee to a new route along Front Street (see sketch). Moving the tracks would free up more river frontage for pedestrian developments and would prevent a potential conflict/safety hazard between people and trains in the future.



Docks Specific Plan Update

As you can see from the comments from the first community workshop, there are numerous options for developing the Docks Area. Public presentations and feedback on the project continue, including:

1. The Central Valley American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the Sierra Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, April 13, 2005 from 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. at the Central Valley AIA Offices, 616 Alhambra Blvd.
2. The Sacramento River Corridor Planning Forum, April 13, 2005 from 1-4 p.m. at the City of West Sacramento Civic Center, Galleria Meeting Room (1st Floor), 1110 West Capitol Avenue, West Sacramento.
3. Sacramento Metro Chamber Downtown-Riverfront Committee, April 25, 2005 from 11:30- 1 p.m. at Frank Fats, 806 L Street.

If you would like a presentation on the Docks Project to your group or association, please contact Laura Sainz at 808-2677 to schedule.