

Uptown North Sacramento

"THE ARTS & BUSINESS DISTRICT EVERYONE IN THE CAPITOL CITY IS TALKING ABOUT."



Mr. Sunny Williams, Planning Dept.
Sacramento County
827 7th Street, Room 230
Sacramento, Ca 95814

Dear Mr. Williams:

The North Sacramento Chamber of Commerce has reviewed the **Draft American River Parkway Convening Report** and has many concerns about the document, the approach to the update, and it's environmental and social justice implications to the North Sacramento Community.

North Sacramento and the Uptown Business District, are the most impacted along the parkway (due to violence, habitat destruction, lack of facilities/amenities) and we are offended that after hours of meetings with outreach staff, that the Chamber and our community are still NOT being invited to have a seat at the table in the update process. It is wrong, and this process needs and should value our participation.

As with last year's Lower American River Management Plan process, which our community was also left out of the process on, we demonstrated by our voluminous comments on that final plan that we understood this section of the parkway better than some of the County's consultants. That experience and knowledge should be appreciated and welcomed into what is a "public" process.

While our vocal advocacy has been praised by many stakeholders for raising tough questions about stewardship, maintenance and management of the Parkway, it seems that the exercise of that American right has caused government officials to decide that we should be excluded from the process. This is disheartening and disappointing in a process to care for such an important regional asset at the American River Parkway.

As a sponsoring agency of this update, we encourage you to re-examine the past environmental injustices to our challenged community directly related the Parkway's Plan, Maintenance and this update and request that you provide the Chamber a seat at the table.

As to other specific concerns we have with the Convening Report, we request a written response to the following items:

1. The LARMP and this process are not collaborative processes but rather public driven processes and open for public participation.
2. Clarify the role of the Citizen's Advisory Committee in relation to the LARMP in terms of influence in updating the plan.
3. It is proposed to have three meetings for the Woodlake/Cal Expo Reach to develop a "plan." First, we would propose to separate Woodlake and Cal Expo. They are different in geography, flora, fauna and, most importantly, ownership.
4. Why are just three public meetings allocated for this section? Since the County was going to update the Plan for this section in 1989 and never did so resulting in no plan, how do we create a plan in only three meetings?
5. How will we be assured that there will be broad outreach into North Sacramento for this development of a plan for our reach of the parkway from the 95815 area?
6. This seems unfair at best to ask our community (given mobility challenges of many residents) to simultaneously plan our unplanned section of the parkway and participate in the update of the planned parts of the parkway.
7. We would like the convening report to acknowledgement that there is currently NO plan for this section of the Parkway. This, and the gross and inequitable park service we have been provided here over the decades, should give this community MORE weight at the table, not less as proposed.
8. We would like a separate budget for planning the Woodlake Reach to pay for community meetings and outreach to the North Sacramento Community at large.

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9. We would like clarification as to what a "local jurisdiction representative" will be and how that will affect the balance of the committee make-up as indicated in the Convening Report. (I.e. will those participants be residents, business owners, social service advocates, and how will they be chosen/appointed?)
10. We wonder why RT is recognized as a local jurisdiction? What about Union Pacific Railroad, Caltrans, WAPA, SMUD, Radio Stations, PG&E and others that use and sometimes abuse this Reach of the Parkway? County Park maintenance folks regularly complain, legitimately, about them as related to access, tree cutting and more. Why are they not at the table?
11. Why is there reference to accessing services from Northgate Boulevard repeatedly in the document, when Del Paso Boulevard is closer? Why is Del Paso Boulevard/Uptown District not mentioned?
12. We would like a copy of the 1998 Sacramento County Interpretive Plan (SCIP) noted under Interpretive Education.
13. The Report refers to Illegal Camping and that this Reach (Woodlake) is "seen as unsafe." We would like recognition of the fact that it is both unsafe and dangerous, not simply perceived as such (death, attempted assaults and rapes and mugging of bicyclists all occurred in 2002).
14. Relating to Fire & Safety, this Reach has had over 150 acres burn due to illegal campfires in the last year. We want a solid plan to eliminate the destruction of this Reach by illegal fires and further, to see the plan address policy for fire prevention in Parkway (In 2002, 400 year old living California Native Black Walnuts were cut down because the firefighters did not want to take the time to coat them with a fire suppressant. The consequence was the destruction of the largest native walnut grove west of the Mississippi.)
15. Future Governance and ownership of the Parkway should be "on the table" in the process. We echo the suggestion of other Stakeholders that a non-profit umbrella organization (much like the Conservancy's successful oversight of the Consumnes River Preserve) would open up more resources for the long-term health and preservation of the American River Parkway. It would also remove the conflict of interest that many governmental agencies have in funding priorities, focus and cross missions within the Parkway.
16. Why are the City's of Rancho Cordova and Folsom and their Chamber's not included or mentioned in the process as these jurisdictions each abut Parkway?

We would very much like to have the meeting that was previously cancelled by the County that was intended to allow us an opportunity to offer our viewpoint and vision separately, something we believe the County owes us.

We look forward to your reply, and appreciate your thoughtful reconsideration of including local community participation in the Plan Update.

Yours in Service,

original /Signed

Franklin Burris
President
North Sacramento Chamber of Commerce

C: Hon. Roger Dickinson, County Supervisor
Hon. Sandy Sheedy, City Councilmember
Hon. Ray Tretheway, City Councilmember
Hon. Steve Cohn, City Councilmember
Uptown Community Development Corporation
Woodlake Neighborhood Association
Neighbors Aware, Inc.
Dixieanne Neighborhood Association
Sacramento County Alliance of Neighborhoods
Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS)
Center for Collaborative Policy