



200 Wool St • Folsom CA 95630 • P 916-985-2698 • F 916-985-2600

June 24, 2024

To: John Lane, Chair, River District Citizens Advisory Committee
Jim Lofgren, Vice Chair, River District Citizens Advisory Committee

The River District Organizing Committee appreciates the hard work and commitment of staff, consultants and the Folsom River District Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) over the past ten months in the development of recommendations to the City Council regarding a River District Master Plan. This letter is intended to highlight our organization's observations about this process and to offer suggestions to improve the ongoing process.

Under the current timeline, the CAC is scheduled to finalize the framework for a River District Master Plan recommendation to the City Council in the next two months, and the compressed timeframe to complete this task has just been confirmed (see attached). However, as we approach the end of scheduled deliberations, the Organizing Committee has significant concerns regarding the remaining timeline, given the complexity of some issues that should be more thoroughly discussed and some of the proposed content for the report that is included in a draft outline (copy attached). This outline was presented to the CAC at the Committee's June 5th meeting, and much of this information has not been thoroughly reviewed, in part due to continuing schedule problems.

It was clearly the appropriate intent of the City Council in appointing a Citizens Advisory Committee to ensure all interests were represented on the CAC in the development of recommendations for a River District Master Plan. However, due to the size of the Committee and the diversity of viewpoints among the members, much of the time spent to date by the CAC has been focused on procedural questions, challenges from members regarding suggested amenities and potential land use issues, or on disagreements about economic development opportunities through the adoption of a master plan. These conflicting viewpoints collectively have significantly limited the amount of productive time available to the CAC to focus on committee decisions and actual plan content.

In spite of the best efforts of staff and the consultants hired by the City to keep the process moving, the net result of these productivity challenges has impacted the CAC's ability to

www.ChooseFolsom.com



200 Wool St • Folsom CA 95630 • P 916-985-2698 • F 916-985-2600

review, discuss and settle key issues regarding the master planning effort. Other than some fairly general guidelines outlining the Council's expectations in creating the CAC, there has not been a clear picture of what such a plan should look like until distribution of the attached outline at our last meeting.

To help resolve outstanding issues and to address some of the enumerated concerns, the Organizing Committee offers these recommendations:

- Before the CAC can effectively produce a document to forward to the City Council, the CAC members need to agree on the items to be included in the recommended plan and how they will be presented.
- The CAC needs to review and discuss elements of the attached outline that have not been fully considered.
- Efforts to engage the general public and to seek community input have been admirable and the results of these outreach efforts must be documented in a way that effectively communicates community priorities and how the input applies to plan recommendations.
- The plan needs to include a broad list of potential district amenities as identified by the public and the CAC for future discussion.
- Recommendations should include plans for improved access to the waterfront, including improvements to access at Willow Creek.
- The plan should include the outline of a proposed plan for next steps in the master plan process after Council approval, including continuation of the planning process that is flexible and responsive to community input.
- The CAC should ensure that plan recommendations include continued collaboration with State Parks and the Bureau of Reclamation as well as Native American groups.

Finally, and importantly, we believe the involvement and role of State Parks in this process is not well-understood. A sizeable contingent of the CAC has resisted any discussion of including the use of State property in master plan recommendations, and there has been little discourse on potential uses of State Parks owned/managed property other than what is included in the Department's General Plan for this area. Failure to talk about this issue serves to stifle possibilities for expanded access and use of this property as there may be opportunities for collaboration and cooperation between the City and the State to develop amenities along the Lake Natoma waterfront that is under the State's jurisdiction that would

www.ChooseFolsom.com



200 Wool St • Folsom CA 95630 • P 916-985-2698 • F 916-985-2600

be consistent with State planning documents. These possibilities should at least be recognized and acknowledged before submitting a plan to the Council for consideration.

We understand the impact these comments may have on adhering to the proposed schedule of meeting dates, and thoughtful resolution of remaining issues is further affected by the fact that the City's source of funding (American Recovery Plan Act) is scheduled to expire by the end of the year. In addition, the legal term of office for the existing Committee expires on July 9th, 2024, and it will be necessary for the Council to determine how the planning process should continue. Even if the current Committee is reappointed, there is little time to undertake a thorough review of important aspects of the proposed plan.

Rushing to completion of a proposed master plan recommendation without resolution or clarification of any remaining policy questions and the approval of additional information for inclusion in the plan is not a viable solution. Moving forward without addressing these issues raises the question of whether a consensus can be achieved in the development of a plan recommendation to the City Council without more time for deliberation, and it may be necessary to modify the proposed schedule to add one or more additional CAC meetings.

Regardless of the process difficulties and other issues enumerated above, we remain supportive of the City's efforts and look forward to working with staff, the consultant and the rest of the CAC to complete this important effort and produce a recommended River District Master Plan of which we can all be proud.

Respectfully Submitted,

CLAUDIA CUMMINGS, Chair
River District Organizing Committee

Attachments

Cc: Robert Goss, Project Manager

www.ChooseFolsom.com

River District Public Meeting Milestones Upcoming

Robert Goss <rgoss@folsom.ca.us>

Sat 6/15/2024 4:49 PM

Cc:Lief McKay <lmckay@rrmdesign.com>;Desmond Parrington <dparrington@folsom.ca.us>

Hello CAC members,

At the June meeting, it was requested that the upcoming public meeting schedule be confirmed and the dates distributed. They are confirmed as follows:

- July 24th, 6:00 pm - CAC Meeting #12 (pending reappointment by the City Council on July 9)
- July 30th, 6:30 pm - Joint Commission Workshop (Planning, Historic District and Parks & Recreation Commissions)
- August 28th, 6:30 pm - Planning Commission (special meeting)
- September 3rd, 6:30 pm - Parks and Recreation Commission
- September 4th, 6:30 pm - Historic District Commission
- September 10th, time TBD - City Council Study Session
- September 18th, 6:00 pm - CAC Meeting #13 (pending reappointment by the City Council on July 9)
- October 22nd, 6:30 pm - City Council Meeting (target approval date)
- November 12th, 6:30 pm - City Council Meeting (if needed)

Let me know if you have any questions.

Robert

FYI - I will be on vacation from 6/17 - 6/24. I will follow-up after I return.

Folsom River District Master Plan Report – DRAFT OUTLINE

1. INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT OVERVIEW

- a. History and Background (brief)
- b. Purpose of Planning Process
 - i. General Plan goals
 - ii. Vision
- c. Existing Conditions of Project Area
 - i. Primary recreation areas
 - ii. Federal and State operations (include reference to other planning documents, e.g. State Parks FLSRA General Plan and Road and Trail Management Plan)
 - iii. City jurisdiction and interface points
 - iv. River District boundary, description, condition
- d. CAC work summary/acknowledgement
- e. Community Outreach Overview (brief – detail will be in appendix)

2. OPPORTUNITES AND CONSTRAINTS

- a. Overall corridor summary description
- b. Land use and ownership
 - i. Opportunities within Federal and State lands
 - ii. Opportunities within City lands
- c. Circulation System and Access (includes discussion of global opportunities for gap closures/connections/river access/wayfinding)
 - i. Road
 - ii. Trail
 - iii. Water
- d. Interpretation (brief acknowledgement of the desire for more/better interpretation throughout the district)
- e. Identification of Key Sites

3. ENVIRONMENTAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES

- a. Emphasis on protection and enhancement
- b. Interpretation interests, story/theme opportunities

4. ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

- a. Case studies for riverfront activation
- b. Economic opportunities

5. DESIGN CONCEPTS FOR KEY SITES

- a. Character and Design Intent (illustrative only)
 - i. Acknowledge cooperation required with State/Federal agencies for future projects proposed cooperatively on State/Federal lands
 - ii. Acknowledge consistency with other agency plans, goals and objectives
- b. Description of Plan Feature Areas – describe objectives for each

- i. Rodeo Park – potential phasing concepts to improve connection with City Park, sports field improvements, condensing rodeo performance area, adding future adventure play and family/youth-oriented recreation amenities to complement existing amenities on the civic center campus
 - ii. North Subarea Bridge Concept – illustration of potential to connect existing trail systems on either side of the river with a pedestrian/bike bridge over the American River
 - iii. Historic District Promenade to the River Concept – illustration of improved pedestrian and bike connection parallel to Greenback/Riley from the Historic District to the American River/Truss Bridge area including a small passive park and access concept to the river
 - iv. Trader’s Lane – illustrative concept envisioned to activate the Traders Lane alley with retail/commercial along with a parking structure and boutique hotel, and inclusive of a Historic District public plaza at the intersection of Riley/Leidesdorff with statement archway
 - v. City Corporation Yard – general land use concept illustrative of categories of potential future uses including Open Space-Active with pedestrian promenade and trail connections to State Parks; Commercial-Visitor Serving; Artisan-Maker Space; Entertainment; and To Be Determined (TBD)
- c. Economic Feasibility
- d. Programmatic Opportunities
 - i. Interpretation – historical, cultural, environmental
 - ii. Wayfinding
 - iii. Recreation – other than existing activities

6. IMPLEMENTATION

- a. Capital Project Prioritization
- b. Discussion of ROM Cost
- c. Recommendations for Next Steps
 - i. Master Plan Phase 2 – Next Steps
 - ii. List of possible future studies and more detailed plans and project proposals
 - iii. Recommendation to study/analyze potential District boundary adjustment(s)

7. APPENDICES

- a. Opportunities and Constraints Memo
- b. Economic Case Studies
- c. Community Outreach Data, Survey Responses (summary)
- d. CAC Meeting Agendas/Notes