

**THE AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY:
RECREATION, EDUCATION, AND SANCTUARY
A VISION & POLICY PRIMER**

**ENHANCING THE RECREATIONAL & EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND
DEEPENING THE SANCTUARY EXPERIENCE OF OUR PARKWAY**

**A Public Report from the
American River Parkway Preservation Society:
*World Rivers Day: Sunday, September 28, 2008***

Our Vision

**We want our Parkway, seven generations from now, to be a
vibrant, accessible, and serene sanctuary, nourishing and
refreshing the spirit of all who enter it.**

Our Mission

**Preserve, Protect, and Strengthen the American River Parkway,
Our Community's Natural Heart**

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A Parkway Vision

We share a vision of the Parkway that can be safely enjoyed by the millions of people estimated to someday live close enough to it to embrace and recreate in its sanctuary.

The Parkway with the river running through it is about 50 years old now and beyond being a priceless community asset, it is an economic engine that “generates an estimated \$364,218,973 in annual economic activity in the local economy”; with “assumed visitation in 2025 of 12.5 million”; (Dangermond 2006, p. 10) and rated number two of the Best Road Biking Destinations in North America in 2008 by Trails.com.

Many feel the catalyzing event that led to the completion of the new nation of America, happened on the American River in January of 1848, when carpenter James Marshall found gold, beginning a magnificent migration that eventually drew the world here.

The river pouring out of what John Muir called the ‘Range of Light’ shone with a precious hue which drew millions here and helped lead America to her power, centralizing California as a legendary destination, becoming an incubator of science and myth-shaping of America to this day, noted by this history teacher from Ohio who sent a letter to the Sacramento Bee about the history of California.

Why downplay state's history?

“I was a recent visitor to the Sacramento area during the holidays. I am an advanced placement U.S. history teacher at West Carrollton (Ohio) High School. It was my desire to see as many historic sites as possible in the area, and my visits included the Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Site in Coloma, Sutter's Fort in Sacramento, Donner Pass and others.

“As a history teacher, I was excited to see these sites, as their historical significance is great, not only in California, but in the nation at large. Manifest Destiny played out in California following the discovery of gold in 1848.

“My concern is that we as a nation are allowing the sites of our history to deteriorate. At the Marshall site I was struck by the lack of facilities to explain the discovery and its impact on the life of the residents of Coloma.

“I read all the markers, but I doubt most visitors do so. The site could have been so much more with a modest investment. The employees were knowledgeable, but the visuals were sorely lacking.

“The history of California is the history of America. The pride of Californians in their past should be visible to all visitors to your state.”

Steve Flickinger, Miamisburg. Ohio

*(Retrieved January 3, 2008 from
<http://www.sacbee.com/110/story/605391-p2.html>)*

Executive Summary

1) Many Meanings

The American River Parkway means so many things to the many different people who explore it.

For families and their children it is a deep laboratory of educative experience and recreational communion; for bird watchers it is a continually discovering treasury of winged creatures from far and near; to the fisherman a rich harvest of seasonal joy; to the biker, horseback rider, and hiker, a pleasant traverse through beauty close to urban and suburban home.

2) New Parkway Plan

One of the major items we worked on during the initial planning period for the formation of ARPPS in 2002 was to encourage organized advocacy to finally conduct the planning update process that was mandated to be done every five years in the original Parkway Plan of 1985, but had not been done since.

Soon after, the update process began and now is reaching completion—for which we are very happy—and the community should feel some sense of pride in the work that has been done.

The crucial piece of the completion is to ensure that in the future, the update process sticks to the original five year sequence of review and update, as new issues will evolve requiring new planning.

3) Recreation

The most important reality to preserve in the work of the American River Parkway Preservation Society is that of the people to experience the Parkway fully, safely, and enjoyably; to absorb the sanctuary of an approximately 4,600 acre garden along the banks of the American River where families can walk, ride their bikes, ride horses, raft, fish, swim, sun themselves on the beaches and in the parks, play golf, have picnics, bird watch, jog, and just plain sit in a sunny spot and watch the river and people go by.

With horse-drawn carriages, bike rentals from downtown hotels and the increased public safety presence in the downtown and North Sacramento area of the Parkway long advocated for; we can envision people visiting Sacramento, staying in those downtown hotels, venturing out on the Parkway to get to golf courses, outdoor concerts and plays in Discovery Park, Paradise Beach, Sacramento State, Rancho Cordova, Gold River, Fair Oaks Village, Effie Yeaw and other Nature Centers, the Fish Hatchery, Nimbus Lake, old town Folsom, and links that are being established from new developments to the Parkway such as the proposed Folsom South Canal Corridor Plan.

4) Education

The primary educational experience of the Parkway is centered around the Effie Yeaw Nature Center <http://www.effieyeaw.org/> with its multitude of educational events and publications directed towards the deepening of appreciation around the natural resources of the Parkway.

Unfortunately there is only one nature center in a Parkway of about 30 miles stretching from Folsom Lake to the confluence of the Sacramento River and several more are needed.

5) Sanctuary

The central aspect of the value of the Parkway is that of sanctuary, where urban and suburban residents can retreat into the natural environment for recreation, spiritual and psychological refreshment; and buildings (other than nature centers, golf course related structures, the Indian Heritage Center, and public accommodations) should not be allowed.

6) Conclusion

How do we accomplish all of this? How do we preserve, protect, and strengthen our Parkway so that the balance of educational, recreational and sanctuary experience is enhanced for all of us?

We can begin by looking to those parks where this has been done, and to those local resources able to help us get our Parkway to the future we envision: *“We want our Parkway, seven generations from now, to be a vibrant, accessible, and serene sanctuary, nourishing and refreshing the spirit of all who enter it.”*

This year our focus has been on strengthening the Parkway in those daily usage venues—biking—hiking—seeing and appreciating, with a call for a substantial increase in land acquisition and developed recreation areas to strengthen the Parkway’s footprint; and encouraging more and safer usage through a dedicated pedestrian trail freeing up the existing paved trail for bikes only, more picnic areas and park benches for passive appreciation accompanied by easier access for the frail elderly and handicapped, now virtually excluded, and more nature centers in communities like Rancho Cordova, North Sacramento, Rosemount, and Sutters Landing.

However, the single most important issue impacting recreation, education, and sanctuary, is the lack of public safety, particularly in the lower third area of the Parkway, where illegal homeless camps have been allowed for years, and where even park directors privately warn people not to venture alone.

Introduction

This is the final research report covering the five guiding principles animating the mission of our organization and it is reflective of all of the others, in that each of our guiding principles are essentially concerned with the value of the individual's Parkway experience.

It is not a value that cannot be tabulated by money, though money is certainly needed to ensure that experience is optimally enjoyable.

Brief Review

Let's review our five guiding principles and connect them to the user experience and the specific reports and policy ideas we've suggested over the past three reports:

1) Preserving the Parkway is not an option, it's a necessity.

This principle was addressed threefold in our 2007 report *Governance, Ecoregionalism & Heritage*, where we presented the idea that to create a sustainable Parkway we need to protect it through National Heritage Area status; fund it through the development of a large-scale philanthropic effort; and manage it with a nonprofit organization contracting with a Joint Powers Authority of local government.

These three strategies would develop the national stature the Parkway deserves, the supplemental funding it needs, and the management to merge those two major efforts towards the dedicated Parkway focus elevating this local treasure to sustainable permanency.

The necessity of parks in general was well expressed by Will Rogers (2003), the President of the Trust for Public Lands, who said:

The emergence of America as an urban nation was anticipated by Fredrick Law Olmstead and other 19th century park visionaries, who gave us New York's Central Park, San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, and similar grand parks in cities

across the nation. They were gardeners and designers—but also preachers for the power of parks, fired from within by the understanding that they were shaping the quality of American Lives for generations to come.

In the view of these park visionaries, parks were not “amenities.” They were necessities, providing recreation, inspiration, and essential respite from the city’s blare and bustle. And the visionaries were particularly concerned that parks be available to all of a city’s residents—especially those who did not have the resources to escape to the countryside. (p. 5)

2) What’s good for the salmon is good for the river.

This principle was addressed in our 2006 report *The American River Parkway: Protecting its Integrity and Providing Water for the River Running Through It*: with our focus on building the Auburn Dam to provide the proper water temperature and flow to give the salmon optimal conditions in the American River.

3) Regarding illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway: Social and environmental justice calls upon us to help the poor and distressed person but not at the expense of the adjacent community to visit the Parkway safely.

This principle was addressed in our 2005 report: *The American River Parkway Lower Reach Area: A Corroded Crown Jewel; Restoring the Luster*, where we suggested using the *Housing First* approach to provide housing to the chronic homeless who make up the bulk of illegal campers in the Parkway—since adopted by the city and county—and maintaining regular police sweeps in company with local homeless service providers modeled after the Matrix program that worked well in San Francisco.

4) If it can be seen from the Parkway, it shouldn’t be built along the Parkway.

This principle was also addressed by our 2007 report along with principle #1, and noted that with the increased status of a National Heritage Area, and with active and dedicated oversight by the nonprofit organization managing the Parkway, the ability to protect the

Parkway viewshed would be increased dramatically. Also, the increased philanthropic effort could designate endowed funding to buy Parkway adjacent properties for inclusion into the Parkway as they become available.

5) Regarding new Parkway usages: Inclusion should be the operating principle rather than exclusion.

This will be covered in this report, but as we can see, it all comes back to the value of the Parkway experience to the multitude of people attracted to its sanctuary, recreational and educational treasures and that value is largely determined by the inclusiveness to what different organized groups of people want to see happen in the Parkway.

Many Meanings

The American River Parkway means so many things to the many different people who explore it.

For families and their children it is a deep laboratory of educative experience and recreational communion; for bird watchers it is a continual discovery of a treasury of winged creatures from far and near; to the fisherman a rich harvest of seasonal joy; to the biker, horseback rider, and hiker, a pleasant traverse through beauty close to urban and suburban home.

To all of us, undergirding our individual experience of the Parkway, is that it is a sanctuary of harmony, peace, and discovery; such a vital aspect in our often turbulent world.

And it is that very turbulence, chaos, and threats looming in the future, that unaddressed, could destroy so much of what the Parkway means and can mean in the future, for all of us.

First of course is public safety; the ability of anyone, of any age, gender, ethnicity, or disability, to be able to safely be in the Parkway at anytime, particularly from dawn to dusk.

Second is the development of educational and recreational capability to preserve the Parkway experience for the millions beginning to use it, while protecting the sanctuary from those who would abuse it.

Third is the organizational structure able to effectively manage this wonderful resource while helping raise the supplemental funds to enhance it.

With all of the difficulty surrounding the ability of Sacramento County to provide for basic funding for the Parkway, let alone the increased funding it needs to accommodate area growth, it is an excellent time to remember the nonprofit management and fund raising alternative we've suggested as it has the potential to provide the management and the funding to realize this vision for the Parkway.

This guest editorial explains the alternative we've suggested for management and funding.

Guest Editorial

The American River Parkway:

The Case for Management by a Nonprofit Organization

David H. Lukenbill, Senior Policy Director
American River Parkway Preservation Society www.arpps.org

The American River Parkway is one of the premier recreational and natural resources in the capital region; over 4,000 acres of walking, equestrian, and bike trails, fishing and rafting spots, picnic areas, parks, golf courses, islands and a beautiful river drifting through one of the major urban/suburban and richly historic areas of the nation.

It is also being sadly mismanaged by Sacramento County to the point that even basic maintenance is falling drastically behind every year, and the overall annual budget shortfall—when factoring all that should be being accomplished—has been declared by one Parkway organizations to be \$8,595,427.

Our first guiding principle is: *Preserving the Parkway is not an option, it's a necessity* and from this perspective the way to preserve, protect, and strengthen the Parkway as a vitally necessary ingredient to our quality of life, is through two initiatives.

The first is to provide daily management for the Parkway through a nonprofit organization, and the second is to work for the Parkway to become part of a National Heritage Area (a program of the National Park Service) encompassing the historic Gold Rush landscape in the American River Watershed.

With an independent nonprofit organization providing management, the ability to accomplish long range goals for the Parkway, such as the federal designation or endowment fund development, will be greatly increased.

Regarding the funding shortage, some feel a Benefit Assessment District is the best way to raise funds for the Parkway, but we don't agree with that approach for three reasons:

- 1) Benefit Assessment Districts tax the property of those who benefit from the entity but how that would be determined fairly in this case is uncertain, as many people who live close to the Parkway don't use it while many living far away do.
- 2) It delivers the funds to the same local government entity—Sacramento County—that has already failed in managing the Parkway for several years—with a threatened closure in 2004— with no clear promise or perceived capability that anything has changed.
- 3) There is a better way.

Part of a better way is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA).

A JPA makes sense, is fair to the newer cities such as Rancho Cordova and Arden Arcade—if it incorporates—could create a stable base funding stream and provide balanced governance oversight of a contract with the managing nonprofit.

Bringing in the cities as partners in a JPA addresses the current political and economic climate facing the County—the difficulty of raising taxes and the continuing incorporation of new cities—causing the County's financial situation to continue to deteriorate leaving even less future funding for the Parkway.

The best example of this management strategy locally is the Sacramento Zoo, established in 1927 and managed—since 1997—by the non-profit Sacramento Zoological Society under contract with the city.

The Zoo property, buildings and animal collection remain assets of the city of Sacramento.

In addition to providing the necessary maintenance for the Zoo, the Society has continually moved to strengthen the operation, adding an on-site veterinary hospital and is involved in long-range plans to begin acquiring 100 acres of land along the American River to house a new zoo which would rival national landmark zoos like the San Diego Zoo housed in Balboa Park.

This type of visionary thinking comes from an organization dedicating itself solely to the Zoo and the service it provides to the public, and the same dynamic could happen with a nonprofit organization managing the Parkway.

The national model for what a nonprofit can do for a park is the Central Park Conservancy, which took over management of Central Park in New York several years ago when the city was struggling financially. The Conservancy has restored Central Park's luster as one of the world's great parks, building an endowment well in excess of \$100 million in the process.

The elements exist in the American River Parkway—central to the greatest migration of people in the western hemisphere during the Gold Rush and with its sister rivers framing the capital of one of the world's great economies and governing centers—to create a truly world-class park.

It will take leadership realizing the great value of the natural resources in our region and enlisting the public and other government leaders in the effort to grow and fund this great natural heart of our community.

In conclusion, our suggestion would be to form a JPA with the County, Sacramento, Rancho Cordova, and Folsom, establishing a base financial commitment for a specific period of time; and contract with a nonprofit organization to seek National Heritage Area status and provide daily management and dedicated philanthropic fund development for the Parkway.

Finally, the capability of a nonprofit organization to advocate for one of the most important public policies affecting the Parkway, the construction of the Auburn Dam—after fully researching and validating its importance—to protect the integrity of the Parkway as well as providing the 500 year level of flood protection to the urban area surrounding it, would be considerable.

(Published in the Sacramento Union, November 24, 2006)

New Parkway Plan

One of the major items we worked on during the initial planning period for the formation of ARPPS in 2002 was to encourage organized advocacy to finally conduct the planning update process that was mandated to be reviewed every five years in the original Parkway Plan of 1985, but had not been done since.

Soon after, the update process began and now is reaching completion—for which we are very happy—and the community should feel some sense of pride in the work that has been done.

The crucial piece of the completion is to ensure that in the future, the update process sticks to the original five year sequence of review and update, as new issues will evolve requiring new planning.

The current status is that it was approved by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and the Rancho Cordova City Council in September 2008; and will be addressed by the Sacramento City Council in October 2008, with final approval by the state assumed to be addressed in January of 2009.

Recreation

Introduction

The most important reality to preserve in the work of the American River Parkway Preservation Society is that of the public—all of the public—to experience the Parkway fully, safely, and enjoyably; to absorb the sanctuary of an approximately 4,600 acre garden along the banks of the American River where families can walk, ride their bikes, ride horses, raft, fish, swim, sun themselves on the beaches and in the parks, play golf, have picnics, bird watch, jog, and just plain sit in a sunny spot and watch the river and people go by.

Recreation for all people is the animating core of the founding vision of the Parkway, as noted by County of Sacramento Department of Regional Parks:

[William B. Pond was] “the first director of the County of Sacramento Department of Parks and Recreation. Mr. Pond intended the American River Parkway to be a place where all people could recreate and enjoy nature's bounty...” (Retrieved September 20, 2008 from <http://www.sacparks.net/our-parks/american-river-parkway/index.html>)

Trails

An issue that has long festered on the current trail arrangement in the Parkway is the lack of safe and enjoyable trail space for walkers and equestrians comparable to the paved trail used predominantly by bike riders, who naturally feel it is their trail.

One good trail layout is that suggested by the *Rails to Trails* organization and it is a good place to start discussions for the Parkway.

From their website at http://www.cvrtf.org/html/conceptual_plan.html here is what they have come up with.

It is a trail space approximately 40 feet wide, with 12 feet for bikes, 3 feet of plantings, 10 feet for walkers, 3 feet of plantings, and 12 feet for horses.

Another promising concept is that of creating trails linking their community to the Parkway and one recent example of this is the new trail from Folsom to Lake Natoma, as reported on by the Sacramento Bee: <http://www.sacbee.com/101/story/1040796.html>

***Grant to fund Folsom nature trail
Published 12:00 am PDT Thursday, June 26, 2008***

FOLSOM – The city has won a \$750,000 grant to build a nature trail from near Old Town Folsom to Lake Natoma, the state announced Wednesday.

The 2,500-foot trail will include a lighted pedestrian promenade along the shore of Lake Natoma and will comply with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, according to a press release from state Secretary for Resources Mike Chrisman.

The trail also will "improve access to the water for those carrying kayaks and canoes," said Mayor Eric King.

A construction timeline was not given.

Proposition 50, passed in 2002, authorized the Legislature to appropriate funds to benefit river parkway projects, the release said.

For additional information on the grant process, visit the Resources Agency's Proposition 50 Web site:
www.resources.ca.gov/bonds_prop50riverparkway.html.

– Bee Metro staff

The great park along the mythic river can become so much more to all of us who long to recreate and contemplate along its trails, beaches, and paths; and here are some of the uses we could someday see in the Parkway:

- Separated wide trails for people walking, riding bikes and horses, able to enjoy the river at the particular traversing gait they prefer.
- Horse-drawn carriages that can trot people down the river trail, gondolas that can pole and oar people on the river, and trains that can haul sightseers along the Parkway.
- Bike rentals from downtown hotels for venturing out into the finally-cleaned-up and safely patrolled Parkway areas near downtown.

- Where all venturing into the Parkway can find rest and relaxation on a multitude of benches and tables, nestled in prime viewing spots.
- Where access at all the points, in all of the neighborhoods, is accessible to the frail elderly and the disabled.
- Where all Parkway access and parking is free.
- Where more nature centers are dotted around the neighborhoods, bringing that special educative joy to all of the areas children and families, with rangers staffing each to enhance the public's safety.
- Rangers on horseback, in swift quiet motorized rafts, on bikes, walking, and all over the Parkway.
- More organic gardens and farms.
- Concerts and plays in outdoor riverside amphitheaters.

All of these are being used, either already on the Parkway at some level, or at some of the many parks bordering waterways around the country which we have researched; as it has always been important to us that the ideas we present to the community have proven successful in other parks, and though they may not have a specific applicability here, they are food for thought.

With horse-drawn carriages, bike rentals from downtown hotels and the increased public safety presence in the downtown and North Sacramento area of the Parkway long advocated for; we can envision people visiting Sacramento, staying in those downtown hotels, venturing out onto the Parkway to get to golf courses, outdoor concerts and plays in Discovery Park, Paradise Beach, Campus Commons, Sacramento State, Rancho Cordova, Ancil Hoffman Park, Gold River, Fair Oaks Village, Effie Yeaw and other Nature Centers, the Fish Hatchery, Nimbus Lake, Old Town Folsom, and links that are being established from new developments to the Parkway such as the proposed Folsom South Canal Corridor Plan.

There was a recent story about the folks who conduct the current carriage ride in Old Sacramento and around the region, and they are just the ones who could also provide rides along the Parkway if that ever becomes feasible.

An excerpt.

“The Bee spoke with Rick Newborn, whose Top Hand Ranch <http://www.tophandranch.com/> offers everything from \$10 loops around Old Sacramento to \$1,000-plus horse-drawn hearse service.

“How's business lately?

“We've been surviving – just not as well as we did in the past. It's the economy, and there's also a lot of little things digging at us. The price of hay has tripled in the last five years. There used to be a lot more tour buses that parked in Old Sac. In the 1980s, there were six carriage companies (in Old Town) – now there are only two.

“What's your busiest time?

“Our best season is probably in the springtime, around spring break. Late fall is also good – Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas. It's slowest after New Year's. Summer is in-between. We shut down when it gets above 100 degrees, so we lose a lot of hours on hot days.

“What are your days like?

I start getting the horses ready at about 8 a.m. (in Rescue, east of El Dorado Hills). We get into Sacramento by 10 a.m., and at 11 a.m. we're on the street. Right now, I'm spending most of the day reshoeing horses (while employees run the carriages). On a weekday, we'll pull out of town around 7:30 p.m. Old Sac is about half our business. The rest is contract work – weddings, funerals, parades. We try to take Mondays off.

“How have you stayed in business so long?

I've learned to do a lot of things to save money. The price of (mature) horses has been going down for a long time, so I buy them instead of breeding and raising my own. I do my own shoeing and maintain the carriages myself.

“How'd you get started?

My dad grew up working with draft horses in Arkansas. He and I started giving pony and carriage rides in Sacramento part-time in 1970, when I was 9 years old.

We made it a full-time business in 1982. I love it – I hope we can keep going another 25 years.”

Retrieved September 15, 2008 from <http://www.sacbee.com/101/story/1232667.html>

With substantially increased access for the disabled and the frail elderly, our Parkway can become a treasured sanctuary for more than just the physically fit; which is as it should be. A great model to follow here is the Edwin Watts Southwind Park in Springfield, Illinois, access at: <http://www.springfieldparksfoundation.org/index.php> , discussed in an article from the Harvard Innovations in Government series at <http://www.innovations.harvard.edu/news/75021.html> , and here is an excerpt:

Springfield Park Board President Leslie Sgro thinks the district's newest park will be raising eyebrows well beyond Springfield and when it opens in late 2008 or 2009.

The 80-acre Edwin Watts Southwind Park will be fully handicapped accessible from the ground up, and one of the main buildings, Erin's Pavilion, will be as environmentally friendly as possible. Plans for the building include geothermal heating and cooling, solar panels, wind turbines and the use of recycled construction materials wherever possible.

"(The new park) is going to be huge not only for the park district, but also for the entire Springfield community and the region," Sgro said. "This is going to be something truly unique and special."

Edwin Watts Southwind Park is under construction off Second Street, just south of the Trevi Gardens subdivision. Funding is being provided by the Springfield Park District, as well as individual and business donors. Plans call for several unique features in the park such as a lake with a dancing water fountain.

Erin's Pavilion, which will overlook the lake, will be used for programs for people with special needs, and its design will go well beyond the minimal requirements of the Americans with Disability Act.

In addition to wide hallways and handicapped accessible entrances, for instance, the pavilion will have special lighting designed for people who have autism.

Butch Elzea has been leading the fundraising effort for the new park, and the pavilion project is close to his heart. It is named after his daughter, Erin, who had an enzyme deficiency that caused her to be confined in a wheelchair. She died in April 2000 at the age of 17.

This past summer, Elzea said experts had told him that the environmentally friendly design could be accomplished within the construction budget, and the building would have lower utility costs than a traditional building.

Construction of the pavilion should be completed by some time in 2009.

Several other projects at the new park already have been completed or nearly finished.

During 2008, people will see a lot of activity near the lake as Erin's Pavilion takes shape and other projects begin.

"The fishing piers will be built, and the deck around the pavilion will be installed. Some of the bathrooms will also be installed," Elzea said.

Like Erin's Pavilion, the park is being designed as a fully accessible facility.

The park's 21/2 miles of pathways will be paved, and there will be wheelchair-accessible golf carts available.

Also, five free-standing respite spots will have a room to cool off, and along with the standard male and female restrooms, there will a third kind where a caregiver can take someone of the opposite sex.

As work at the park proceeds next year, two other groups, the Springfield Children's Museum and the Springfield YMCA, will be in fundraising modes. Both plan to build new facilities at Southwind, but neither expects to start construction next year...

Mike Stratton, executive director of the park district, has said it's difficult to put a price tag on the park because so much is being donated.

The final few words are key—"so much is donated"—and the generosity of a community to build something wonderful is substantial when the mission and organizational structure are in synch, which they certainly appear to be in Springfield, Illinois.

Under current funding from Sacramento County—and some in usage fees—the Parkway does not have the resources to move towards these types of enhancements as they cost a lot, as well as needing additional staff to manage and coordinate the increased recreational activities for an ever-increasing urban/suburban population desperate to use the Parkway.

The public/private partnership represented by nonprofit management, with its corresponding ability to develop large sums philanthropically, does have the capacity to venture into these more expansive recreational activities.

Other Parks

White River State Park in Indianapolis 20 years ago began replacing an urban industrial area, and now is home to the Indianapolis Zoo, a baseball stadium, IMAX theater, the Indiana State Museum, the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, the Congressional Medal of Honor Memorial, Military Park, the NCAA Hall of Champions and The Lawn, an outdoor performance venue overlooking the White River with seating for 5,000. Boston's Emerald Necklace is legendary. Portland, with its award winning Eastbank Esplanade and the River Renaissance project, continues to have success creating its river-front as a vibrant front porch for the city. San Antonio's Riverwalk and its famed gondolas are striking in its Texas setting.

Let's look at each of these parks see what they have done, and envision what can be done here.

White River State Park in Indianapolis has been called by the New York Times and sees itself as:

“White River State Park is Indianapolis version of the Mall in Washington”

In most cities, going to a museum, zoo and baseball game would require multiple outings.

In Indianapolis, it requires only one trip to White River State Park. Located in the heart of downtown, Indiana's only urban state park offers an awesome array of attractions and entertainment. Whether you're exploring on your own or visiting with friends and family, White River State Park has your memories-in-the-making.

Retrieved June 7, 2008 from <http://www.in.gov/whiteriver/> .



Military Park

Toss a Frisbee, walk your dog or simply settle into the grass in this 14-acre greenspace bordering Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. Although it was a Civil War encampment and home to the first state fair, the park drew its name from its shape - like a military badge. Military Park is home to many Indiana festivals and events.

Retrieved June 7, 2008 from <http://www.in.gov/whiteriver/about/green.html>

While this isn't really a completely appropriate comparison—the Washington Mall to the Parkway—if much of the amenities that one can envision becoming part of the Parkway experience, it certainly could be.

The Emerald Necklace in Boston is one of the oldest parks in the country and one famed for its design by the father of American landscape architecture, Fredrick Law Olmsted, to which our Parkway has a distinct connection.



Arnold Arboretum

It took civic visionary Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. (1822-1903) almost twenty years (1878-1896) to create the six parks now known as the Emerald Necklace. The Back Bay Fens, Riverway, Olmsted Park, Jamaica Park, Arnold Arboretum and Franklin Park stretch five miles from the Charles River to Dorchester and make up over 1,000 acres of parkland.

The Necklace comprises half of the City of Boston's park acreage, parkland in the Town of Brookline, and parkways and park edges under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. More than 300,000 people live within its watershed area.

The Emerald Necklace is the only remaining intact linear park designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., America's first landscape architect. As such, it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Green and open spaces, rivers and ponds, and a wealth and diversity of trees, shrubs, flowers, wildlife habitat, riparian life, bridges and other structures make up this urban jewel.

Retrieved June 7, 2008 from
<http://www.emeraldnecklace.org/index.cgi?page=necklace>

The Olmstead connection begins with the early Parkway planning efforts, which began, as noted by the *American River Parkway Financial Needs Study* (2000);

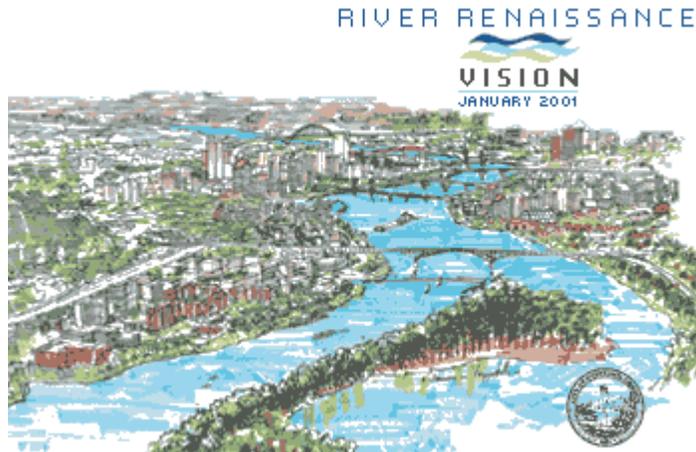
The American River Parkway was first envisioned by [Sacramento] city planners in 1915 [who hired John Nolen—a former student of Olmsted at Harvard—(1869-1937) in 1913, Nolen was the first American to call himself a city planner] who proposed an extensive parkway along the river. Later, in 1929 after the passage of the first state park bond act, Fredrick Law Olmstead, Jr. visited Sacramento and urged cooperative efforts towards this end among the many agencies with jurisdiction over the river area. In 1947 he updated his concept for the parkway by emphasizing the development of recreational facilities including picnic sites, and docks for pleasure craft along the river course. (p. 1)

Portland's River Renaissance is an award winning project and effort to reclaim the heritage of the Willamette River as the front yard of Portland, Oregon;

The Willamette River—Portland's Centerpiece

River Renaissance is a citywide initiative to reclaim the Willamette River as Portland's centerpiece. The initiative promotes and celebrates the Willamette River as our chief environmental, economic and urban asset.

Retrieved June 7, 2008 from <http://www.portlandonline.com/river/>



River Renaissance was launched in the fall of 2000, with a series of interactive workshops that resulted in a community vision for a revitalized Willamette River.

The Portland City Council enthusiastically endorsed the *River Renaissance Vision* in March 2001.

The River Renaissance Vision is a sketch of the Willamette River as Portlanders would like to see it in the future. Over the past century the health of the Willamette watershed has been severely compromised by urban growth and development. Diminished populations of steelhead trout and Chinook salmon, a Superfund listing of the harbor, and combined sewer overflows reflect a history of turning our back on the Willamette River.

In response to these challenges and a desire to reconnect with the river, over one thousand Portlanders came together in the fall of 2000 to imagine a city centered on the Willamette River. These bold ideas helped to shape the **River Renaissance Vision**. The Vision includes five integral themes:

- Clean and Healthy River
- Prosperous Working Harbor
- Portland's Front Yard
- Vibrant Waterfront District
- Partnerships, Leadership, and Education

Retrieved June 7, 2008 from
<http://www.portlandonline.com/river/index.cfm?c=37788>

The San Antonio Riverwalk is also legendary and its history—from the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce website— almost rivals that of Boston’s in its reach back into our nation’s history:



Water is the lifeblood of civilizations. Nowhere is this more true than in the heart of South Texas, where the San Antonio River has been both the spring and springboard to the development of San Antonio and its second most popular tourism attraction...the River Walk.

The stream, known to the Payaya Indians as Yanaguana, was variously utilized over the first three centuries by Franciscan missionaries, explorers, soldiers, and even a settlement of Canary Islanders.

Through the late 1800s and early 1900s, San Antonio's increasing population and expanding boundaries experienced an increasing degree of problems brought about by flooding. In fact, if flood control measures had not been taken in the 1920s, later commercial development along the river would have never happened....

Robert H.H. Hugman, who had fished along the river as a young boy, approached the people involved in the river battle with his ideas for the river. The architect envisioned the banks of the Paseo del Rio (River Walk) as a world apart from the city's streets -a balance between commercial and park-like atmospheres . His plan, titled "The Shops of Aragon and Romula," was presented in 1929 to Mayor Chambers, two city commissioners, property owners and civic leaders.

In "*A Dream Come True: Robert Hugman and the San Antonio River Walk*," local author Vernon Zunker describes the architect's efforts to persuade City Hall of his plans:

Gondolas were part of Hugman's presentation...and he told an amusing story about them. I called on a public official in 1929 who was a very smart businessman, but had little formal education. I told him of my dreams for

developing the river called Shops of Aragon and Romula (for lack of a better name, and it did sound romantic), and I mentioned gondolas quietly gliding on the water as part of an imaginary setting. He thought the entire idea was fine, but then he said, "Oh, we won't need to buy any gondolas; we can get a pair and raise our own."

Retrieved June 7, 2008 from

http://www.sachamber.org/visitor/riverwalk_history.php

Education

Introduction

The primary educational experience of the Parkway is centered on the Effie Yeaw Nature Center <http://www.effieyeaw.org/> with its multitude of educational events and publications directed towards the deepening of appreciation around the natural resources of the Parkway.

Unfortunately there is only one nature center in a Parkway of about 30 miles stretching from Folsom Lake to the confluence of the Sacramento River—on both sides of the American River and there are few bridges over it—and several more are needed.

Volunteer Sharing

Currently, in lieu of the organized activity of nature centers, there are volunteers to help out, individuals who love the Parkway and love sharing it with others, such as Robert and Lyvonne Sewell, whose Parkway jaunts were covered in a Sacramento Bee article <http://www.sacbee.com/101/story/603383.html> earlier this year.

Call of the wild

American River Parkway walks are pure delight for city dwellers

**By Blair Anthony Robertson - brobertson@sacbee.com
*Published 12:00 am PST Wednesday, January 2, 2008***

Early New Year's Day, when most of us were sleeping off the champagne and recovering from the revelry, about two dozen neighbors gathered not far from their very urban homes to celebrate something timeless.

The plan was to walk in the woods, look at the wildlife and be one with nature – without ever leaving the neighborhood.

As several folks gathered at 8:30 a.m. around the coffee and bagels at Sutter's Landing Regional Park, once the home of the city dump, they caught their first glimpse of the wild world just minutes from their doorsteps – a well-fed coyote shuffling through the riparian forest.

When the nature walk began minutes later, folks armed with binoculars and cameras spotted cormorants perched across the river, a far-off hawk contemplating breakfast, a pastiche of animal prints in the muddy riverbank, mallards swimming next to geese and evidence all around of beavers chomping on trees.

Much of the enthusiasm for such outings comes from Robert Sewell, a 65-year-old retired wedding photographer who practically beams at the sight of any creature more exotic than a common crow.

Sewell and some of his midtown Sacramento neighbors had talked over the years about the importance of the nearby American River as a natural resource, albeit an often-overlooked one. About three years ago, they started going on walks.

Last year, after they read the book "Last Child in the Woods" by Richard Louv, they decided to put their ideas into action.

The subtitle of Louv's book is "Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder," and that's precisely what Sewell and friends wanted to do in midtown. They applied for a First 5 grant from the cigarette tax funds and began to conduct field trips for area schools.

Among those who were part of the conversation from the beginning were Stella Levy and Richard Cohen, husband and wife lawyers, along with Laurie Litman, a graphic designer, and husband Dale Steele, a biologist with the Department of Fish and Game.

Ed Cox, the city's bike and pedestrian coordinator, heard about the event via e-mail and was among those who arrived on an unseasonably cold morning to follow along.

"I like to be out in the open and not feel like I'm closed in by the city," he said of the area, which is part of the American River Parkway. "It's a great opportunity for us to learn to appreciate what a lot of people don't realize is so close to us."

This is an extraordinary effort by a few people and we wrote a letter to the editor which was published <http://www.sacbee.com/110/story/611023.html> soon after.

**Letter to Editor
Sacramento Bee
Published January 6 2008**

Feedback letters: Parkway jewel, etc.

Published 12:00 am PST Sunday, January 6, 2008

Get thee to a river

Re "Call of the wild," Jan. 2: A wonderful story capturing the essence of the American River Parkway, its educational and sanctuary beauty, so needed by those living in the city and so accessible for the children of the urban neighborhoods along its banks.

Robert Sewell and his neighbors who understand the power of the parkway to bring deep joy into the lives of children – and themselves in the process – have embraced it in the truly significant way all of us need reminding of: the powerful and restorative impact it can have on the lives of those living in urban neighborhoods.

In the lower parkway, urban neighborhoods are clustered around the north and south banks of the American River that have long suffered from the excessive litter and illegal camping by the homeless, largely rendering the parkway inaccessible with any degree of safety for the families who could benefit from its natural beauty.

This story helps remind us of how much work has been done to improve the south bank and how important it is to ensure the entire parkway is kept clean and safe for those communities to enjoy.

David H. Lukenbill, Senior Policy Director
American River Parkway Preservation Society (ARPPS)

While this effort is laudable, it cannot possibly provide the type of sustainable effort provided by an established nature center—which also serves as a park ranger station—and we would like to see nature centers in the Discovery Park area (south of the river, between I-5 and Northgate), the Sutter's Landing Park area (south of the river, west of the Capital City Freeway), the River Bend Park area (south of the river between Bradshaw and Zinfandel), and the Sailor Bar area (north of the river just west of Hazel Avenue).

Sanctuary

Introduction

For many folks, the central aspect of the value of the Parkway is that of sanctuary, where urban and suburban residents can retreat into the natural environment for recreation, spiritual and psychological refreshment; and buildings (other than nature centers, golf course related structures, the Indian Heritage Center, and public accommodations) should not be allowed to impact the viewshed

Our fourth guiding principle (*part of our strategy on our website*) is clear.

(4) If it can be seen from the Parkway, it shouldn't be built along the Parkway.

- Work to ensure visual intrusion by new development is absolutely prohibited forever, with no mitigation.

Private property owners are not to be faulted for wanting to build large homes or commercial buildings along the Parkway, as it offers some of the most beautiful development sites in our area. However, none of us wants to see the Parkway become Malibuized. Confusion about the building regulations, as now exists, encourages that type of development. National Heritage Area status and the accompanying elevation in oversight will begin to offer the type of protection from visual intrusion caused by new development that current, virtually unregulated, Parkway development is now threatening.

National Heritage Area

Creating a National Heritage Area encompassing the Parkway is an important issue we dealt with at some length in a previous research report, *The American River Parkway: Governance, Regionalism & Heritage: A Vision & Policy Primer* (see <http://www.arpps.org/Report3-Governance.pdf> pages 30-35)

Few areas of the country are more congruent with the national heritage concept than the American River Watershed, for it was in this region that the answer to one of history's most intriguing questions, asked by Starr (2005):

Where did it come from—this nation-state, this world commonwealth, this California? How did an American state, one in fifty, rise to such global stature, with its \$1.5 trillion economy making it, as of 2005, the fifth-ranked economy on the planet? Never before in human history, it could be argued, had such a diverse population assembled itself so rapidly under one political system....

The very acceleration of California into an American commonwealth had been the result of a gold rush, with all that such beginnings implied for the perception of California as a place where human beings might break through the constraints of day-to-day life and come into possession of something immeasurably better. (pp. ix & xi)

And the gold rush began close to us, just up the way in the American River, in Coloma, from workers of John Sutter—whose fort still stands in Sacramento—who found the first gold, and the entire world rushed in and, this was “where America found her power”.

Embracing this within the protective shield of a National Heritage Area—the newest, *Journey Through Hallowed Ground*, was signed into law on May 8, 2008

<http://www.hallowedground.org/content/view/399/51/> —would raise the stature of the American River Watershed to the national level it deserves, and further strengthen the natural resource protection necessary, and provide some financial resources to further strengthen it, including the Parkway.

Conclusion

How do we accomplish all of this? How do we preserve, protect, and strengthen our Parkway so that the balance of educational, recreational and sanctuary experience is enhanced for all of us?

We can begin by looking to those parks where this has been done, and to those local resources able to help us get our Parkway to the future we envision: *“We want our Parkway, seven generations from now, to be a vibrant, accessible, and serene sanctuary, nourishing and refreshing the spirit of all who enter it.”*

For ideas on profit management, using broken-windows theory as a management tools (see the NY Post article at

<http://www.centralparknyc.org/site/DocServer/NYPostOpEdv2.pdf?docID=601>)...

For local ideas on developed recreation: see Rancho Cordova’s plan

<http://www.cityofranchocordova.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=686>

For various Parkway related ideas—some already discussed in relation to the Parkway and some just mentioned—like concerts at Discovery Park, geo-caching and disc golf, more picnic areas and park benches for passive appreciation accompanied by greatly enhanced access for the disabled and frail elderly, more bridges, carriage rides, train rides, more horse-rental stables, another golf course or two, more educational nature centers and outreach to schools with guided tours for kids throughout the Parkway adjacent communities like Rancho Cordova, North Sacramento, Rosemount, and Sutter Landing.

The difficult issue of public safety has to be addressed, particularly in the Parkway area adjacent to downtown, the Richards Boulevard area, and on the north bank, North Sacramento, Woodlake, and Cal Expo, where large-scale camping by the homeless has been allowed for many years, virtually denying safe use by the adjacent communities and is clearly the major issue that needs addressing on the Parkway.

A wonderful example of what can be done to change the dynamic around illegal camping in a notoriously degraded skid row—that in Los Angeles—is detailed in this article by McDonald (2007).

An excerpt.

Drive around Los Angeles's Skid Row with Commander Andrew Smith and you can barely go a block without someone's congratulating him on his recent promotion. Such enthusiasm is certainly in order. Over the last year, this tall, high-spirited policeman has achieved what for a long while seemed impossible: a radical reduction of Skid Row's anarchy. What is surprising about Smith's popularity, however, is that his fans are street-wizened drug addicts, alcoholics, and mentally ill vagrants. And in that fact lies a resounding refutation of the untruths that the American Civil Liberties Union and the rest of the homeless industry have used to keep Skid Row in chaos—until now.

For 25 years, the advocates used lawsuits and antipolice propaganda to beat back every effort to restore sanity to Skid Row. They concealed the real causes of homelessness under a false narrative about a callous, profit-mad society that abused the less fortunate. The result: a level of squalor that had no counterpart in the United States. Smith's policing initiatives—grounded in the Broken Windows theory of order maintenance—ended that experiment in engineered anarchy, saving more lives in ten months than most homeless advocates have helped over their careers. The forces of lawlessness are regrouping, however, and Smith's successes may wind up reversed in a renewed attack on the police.

Before Smith's Safer City Initiative began in September 2006, Skid Row's 50 blocks had reached a level of depravity that stunned even longtime observers. Encampments composed of tents and cardboard boxes covered practically every inch of sidewalk. Their 1,500 or so occupants, stretched out in lawn chairs or sprawled on the pavement, injected heroin and smoked crack and marijuana in plain view, day and night. Feces, urine, and drug-resistant bacteria coated the ground. Even drug addicts were amazed at the scene. Fifty-year-old Vicki Williams arrived from Las Vegas in December 2005 with a heavy habit. "I couldn't believe what I was seeing: people getting high on the streets like it was legal," she says. "Down here was like a world of its own. Anything you can imagine I've seen: women walking down the street buck naked, people stabbed in front of me."

The human chaos hid entrenched criminal networks. The biggest heroin gang in downtown Los Angeles operated from the area's west end, using illegal aliens to peddle dope supplied by the Mexican Mafia. Able-bodied dealers sold drugs from wheelchairs and from tents color-coded to signal the wares within. Young Bloods

and Crips from Watts's housing projects battled over drug turf and amused themselves by robbing the elderly.

A pitiless law of the jungle ruled social relations. "Everyone is out for himself out there," says Ken Williams (no relation to Vicki), a 50-year-old recovering drug user and ten-year veteran of the streets. "If people see a weakness, they will go for it." Officer Deon Joseph, who has dedicated himself to bringing safety to Skid Row, calls up on his computer recent photos recording the area's still-not-fully suppressed violence: facial welts on a homeless woman assaulted by a homeless man while she was drunk and sleeping on Gladys Street; red gashes across a man's back from a rake wielded by gangsters. In May 2006, a mentally ill woman who had repeatedly resisted offers of housing and services was stomped to death by a homeless parolee. That night, 82 shelter beds were available on Skid Row; a business improvement district's homeless outreach team could persuade only two people to accept them.

Nonviolent crime also metastasized on Skid Row, fed by government welfare. General relief payments—California's little-copied welfare program for able-bodied childless adults—arrive early in the month, followed a few days later by federal Supplemental Security Income for drug addicts and the mentally ill. Skid Row's population and partying spiked around check days. When the money was gone, smoked away in crack pipes or injected into veins, the hustling began. A doctors' clinic in the Hispanic MacArthur Park neighborhood sent a van out to collect volunteers for Medicaid fraud; it offered \$20 to anyone willing to take a fake health exam, and then billed the exams to the government at exorbitant rates. Two food-stamp rings, paying homeless recipients 50 cents for every dollar's worth of stamps, stole \$6 million from federal taxpayers. The spending money handed out in these scams went right back into the drug trade, keeping the homeless addicted and the drug sellers in diamond tooth caps.

This lawlessness hurt Skid Row's law-abiding residents the most. The area's century-old residential hotels and missions house thousands of senior citizens, non-drug-abusing mentally ill persons, and addicts trying to turn their lives around. "The people we serve are very vulnerable," says Anita Nelson, director of a government-funded nonprofit that rehabilitates and manages single-room-occupancy hotels (SROs). "The elderly and the mentally ill were victimized by the crime and the dealers. When you're afraid to go into the park, you're a prisoner in your 120-square-foot unit." Temptation confronted recovering addicts every time they stepped outside...

Measured by crime statistics alone, the Safer City Initiative's results have been remarkable. Major felonies on Skid Row plummeted 42 percent in the first half of 2007, the largest decrease in all of Los Angeles. There were 241 fewer victims of violent crime in that period. In downtown as a whole, the murder rate dropped over 75 percent. This crime drop has coincided with the decline in the street population, suggesting that the encampment dwellers weren't engaged exclusively in "life-sustaining activities," as the majority in the *Jones* decision

foolishly put it. But other markers of social progress have improved as well. Drug overdose and natural deaths were down over 50 percent through June 2007; emergency medical incidents requiring EMS response were down 17 percent. (n.p.)

The greatest antidote to a lack of public safety in the Parkway, in addition to the increase of the presence of law enforcement, is to significantly increase the legitimate usage through more developed recreation, all of the amenities that the supplemental funding raised by bringing the Parkway under the daily management of a nonprofit organization could help develop.

Homeless camps are becoming very entrenched in our area, which most experts attribute to the concentration of services providing essential domestic service—feeding, showering, hangouts, medical, schooling for children, etc—without a corresponding demand to become involved in the type of services leading to a cessation of the homeless condition—job seeking training, vocational training, substance abuse counseling, etc; which has created an image of Sacramento in the perception of many of the homeless, particularly those with no inclination to change their condition, to migrate here.

Helping the homeless—and all others less fortunate than we are—is most certainly a mandate each community should undertake, but it is also a mandate each community needs to be involved in with a vigorous effort tying the provision of domestic service to a utilization of reformatory service.

The one area where this does not hold true is in the delivery of service to the chronic homeless, where providing housing first—which we support—has been found to be the one step a community can do that really impacts the chronic homeless who have been homeless for so long and become so fundamentally degraded in initiative and responsibility that beginning with the security of housing is really the only program that seems to work for them to begin utilizing reformatory service on their own; but for the general homeless who are only recently experiencing hard times and often still retain many attributes of personal responsibility, the tying of the communities help to the homeless helping themselves has to become the mantra.

What we see in our own backyard is great opportunity for leadership to continue developing the livable communities so enjoyed by so many families, and surrounding one of our country's great urban parks—our very own Parkway— which we can do so much more to preserve, protect, and strengthen.

However, the single most important issue impacting recreation, education, and sanctuary, is the lack of public safety, particularly in the lower third area of the Parkway, where illegal homeless camps have been allowed for years, and where even park directors privately warn people not to venture alone.

Agenda for Policy Discussion

1) For Public Safety

Consider conducting regular sweeps by the police through the Parkway to eliminate illegal camping, accompanied by homeless advocate and treatment organization representatives, ensuring that warnings are given before the sweeps and any confiscated personal property of the homeless is properly stored for reclaiming. Enlarge and expand ranger patrols, with a major focus on the highest crime area, adopt a model being used in Houston for horse ranger patrols, and create a citizen hot-line and public safety website where photos of illegal camps, trash dumps, or other illegal activity can be posted anonymously.

2) For Financial Stability

Consider creating a public/private partnership with a nonprofit organization to manage the Parkway—which could also raise funds philanthropically—via a contract with a Joint Powers Authority of Parkway adjacent cities and the county. This management and fund raising model is being used successfully by Central Park Conservancy, under contract with the city of New York, and the Conservancy provides 85% of the funding for Central Park. www.centralparknyc.org

3) For a Regional Vision

Consider the value of developing an ecoregional approach for the American River Watershed through the National Heritage Areas program.

- Reference the example of Central Florida, My Region <http://www.myregion.org/> which is pulling together the entire community in ways promising the type of collaboration and visioning rarely seen and rewards richly deserved.

Consider working for Sacramento County ecoregional collaboration in the creation of a connected county-wide system of trails along the three rivers, including safe and enjoyable trail space for bicyclists, walkers, and equestrians.

- The Sacramento Valley Conservancy's 21st Century Open Space Vision <http://www.sacramentovalleyconservancy.org/visionmap.htm> is a great place to start.



Appendix

American River Parkway Preservation Society

Strategy & Plan of Work

October 1, 2006 to September 30, 2009

Approved by the Board of Directors 7/25/06

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The American River Parkway Preservation Society Strategy & Plan of Work

SECTION ONE

PRESERVING THE AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY: *FOR AS LONG AS THE RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT* June 30, 2004 – July 1, 2009

Introduction (This is the strategy posted on our website)

The leadership in our community has a responsibility to reach above all of the recent confusion about the Parkway and create a vision that preserves, protects and strengthens this treasured resource in perpetuity.

This strategy is our contribution to that effort, and relies on using and adapting existing organizational and funding structures, which can:

- Provide permanent funding
- Provide effective management

Implementing this plan will not be easy, but we believe our public leaders can rise to the task of creatively assuming the responsibility vested in them by the public and provide community leadership to preserve, protect, and strengthen this national treasure.

We, our children, and generations yet to come, are counting on them to do exactly that.

Strategic Summary

The American River Parkway is the most valuable natural resource in our community and one of the most valuable in the nation. To preserve it, building on the foundation of our five guiding principles, we propose the following:

(1) Preserving the Parkway is not an option, it's a necessity.

- Work to ensure a long-term funding goal of building a permanent financial endowment for perpetual Parkway funding support.
- Work to ensure the creation of the American River Parkway as a National Heritage Area, a program of the National Parks Service, but locally managed by a nonprofit conservancy.

National Heritage status, while allowing Parkway land ownership to remain as is, and allowing for a local conservancy to manage the Parkway, would ensure a federal funding stream long enough to develop endowment funding, and provide additional benefits that national stature endows upon a natural resource.

- Work to ensure an existing nonprofit conservancy assumes management of the Parkway, recruiting executive leadership with academic and experiential credentials in nonprofit administration and fund development, and embrace social enterprise fund raising strategies proven successful in other parks.

A local management conservancy can build a fund development strategy of committed local leadership and social entrepreneurship, through targeted capacity building of Parkway organizations and related social enterprise ventures compatible with the conservancy mission.

(2) What’s good for the salmon is good for the river.

- Work to ensure the availability of whatever amount of water is needed to ensure optimal flow and temperature for the salmon.

To provide optimal water temperature and water flow for the salmon, it is necessary to increase the water storage capacity of the American River Watershed, providing cooling waters and increasing or decreasing flow when needed. While the suggested increase of the water storage capacity of Folsom Dam will benefit the salmon, the community should be prepared to further increase water storage capacity, if needed. The increased pressure on the river, (primarily population-driven), will eventually destroy the river’s capacity to provide the salmon the optimal conditions they need.

(3) Regarding the illegal camping of the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway, social and environmental justice call upon us to help the poor and distressed person, and the poor and distressed community.

- Work to ensure all stakeholders realize public safety and compassion for the homeless, illegally camping in the Parkway in North Sacramento, should be equal responsibilities addressed by Parkway management, homeless advocacy organizations, and local government.

The public safety issue must be of equal concern to helping the homeless. Rapes, murders, beatings, assaults, and robberies occur regularly in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway, and many in the North Sacramento community are justifiably fearful about venturing into it. As a community, we can never give up on the vision that public compassion and public safety are compatible concepts.

(4) If it can be seen from the Parkway, it shouldn’t be built along the Parkway.

- Work to ensure visual intrusion by new development is absolutely prohibited forever, with no mitigation.

Private property owners are not to be faulted for wanting to build large homes or commercial buildings along the Parkway, as it offers some of the most beautiful

development sites in our area. However, none of us wants to see the Parkway become Malibuized. Confusion about the building regulations, as now exists, encourages that type of development. National Heritage Area status and the accompanying elevation in oversight will begin to offer the type of protection from visual intrusion caused by new development that current, virtually unregulated, Parkway development is now threatening.

(5) Regarding new Parkway usages, inclusion should be the operating principle rather than exclusion.

- Work to ensure local public ownership and local conservancy management operate under the guiding principle that the Parkway belongs to all of the people, who have an inalienable right to recreate within the commons.
- Work to ensure there are designated seats on the Parkway conservancy management board of directors for organized recreational and sports users, as well as other organized stakeholders.

As a locally managed National Heritage Area, the management position regarding use of the Parkway will become more inclusive. We will encourage a local conservancy management structure that incorporates all stakeholders and brings organized, responsible users to the decision making process by creating designated seats on the conservancy board of directors. We all want to encourage responsible usage of the Parkway, as legitimate usage is the best antidote to illegitimate usage.

Implementation Summary

Introduction

1) Build a critical mass of public support for creating the American River Parkway National Heritage Area with local management, endowed funding, and folding the five guiding principles of the Society into management's mission.

- **Society Leadership and Membership:** Through a continual campaign of informational mailings, public presentations, meetings, fund development, and ongoing community marketing, we will work to build a Society leadership team representative of the community, and a stable membership base of at least 5,000.

2) Educate the relevant communities: business, religious, educational, public, nonprofit, and government, of the value of the strategy and ask for their help in implementing it.

- **Business Community:** Working with chambers of commerce within the Parkway community, we will work to establish a Parkway task force in each chamber, whose charge is to understand the national heritage value of the river and Parkway, as well

as the contribution of a safe and accessible Parkway to the economic vitality of the region.

Too few people know that the Parkway is an economic engine that “generates an estimated \$259,034,030 in annual economic activity in the local economy.” (2000 figures) We will also work to involve local business in the development and maintenance of additional Parkway nature centers, encouraging a local community building and co-creation process that will enhance responsible usage of the Parkway.

- **Religious Community:** We will work with the interfaith pastoral leadership of the region’s religious communities to help create a pastoral letter on the value of the American River Parkway to our community and the nation, by embracing all ethnic and cultural groups whose history helped build our Parkway heritage and our spiritual and reflective life. As one model for this we would look to, *The Columbia River Watershed: Caring for Creation and the Common Good*, an International Pastoral Letter, by the Catholic Bishops in the United States and Canada.
- **Educational Community:** The educational community will be encouraged to become involved in academic research enriching the National Heritage Area status and the importance of the Parkway to our region. As a National Heritage Area, the Parkway can become a major ground of environmental, biological, natural resource, park and greenway management research that will help grow the capability of the community to preserve this national resource.
- **Public Community:** Public forums will be encouraged to clarify the problems facing the Parkway, the advantages of creating a National Heritage Area under local management with endowed funding, and the strategy of implementation. The public, as the major supporter and user of the Parkway, needs continual information about the great treasure we have in our midst, and the increasing importance of preserving its natural and created beauty for future generations.
- **Nonprofit Organizations:** Nonprofit organizations working to preserve regional history, and Parkway organizations, will be encouraged to join together to help create a National Heritage Area. We will provide capacity building resources about social enterprise concepts, strategic planning, fund development, board development, communications & marketing, the benefits of collaborative management, and how to become more closely aligned to the ongoing community needs and issues throughout the entire Parkway.
- **Government:** Working with public leadership, we need to establish the case for creating the American River Parkway National Heritage Area, managed by a local non profit conservancy. Public leaders can help develop long-term funding for the Parkway, by working with community leadership to develop and build the capacity of conservancy management. Public officials will be encouraged to bring their leadership to the planning process and support the designating of the American River Parkway as a National Heritage Area.

Review & Update

- This plan is scheduled to be reviewed and updated every five years.
-

SECTION TWO

Plan of Work:

October 1, 2006 – September 30, 2009

Introduction

The American River Parkway Preservation Society (ARPPS) is a policy development organization conceptualizing and priming public policy development.

We focus on these core policy concepts;

- Public safety and compassion working in tandem, but with public safety as the priority, to address illegal camping on the Parkway;
- Building the Auburn Dam on the American River to protect the integrity of the Parkway and the salmon run;
- Having a nonprofit organization partner with local government to provide Parkway management while developing an endowment for funding support; and
- Creating a National Heritage Area encompassing the Parkway.

Stimulating thinking about public policy is central to our approach and we will sustain continued discussion about the future of the Parkway in a thoughtful and scholarly manner while ensuring our concepts reach a broad and diverse audience.

The first three years, September 2003 to September 2006, was spent incorporating as a nonprofit corporation, building a organizational leadership framework, building membership, developing a five-year strategic plan, creating policy development capability, publishing our first two policy reports, and refining the organizational strategic focus.

Plan of Work

The next three years, October 1, 2006 to September 30, 2009 will focus on the following:

1) Focus the executive capacity of the organization by limiting the Board of Directors to a maximum of four members.

- Adopt an annual board meeting structure with the once-a-year board meeting held in January, second Monday at 12:00 PM.

2) Continue building the membership to five thousand members by educating the community from the foundation of our five guiding principles and the policies developed from them.

- Our policy and membership building tools will be the daily bulletin blog and membership recruitment letters, monthly e-letters, quarterly newsletter, regular letters to the editor, annual policy issue reports, annual organizational report, occasional open community letters and articles in local media.

3) Organizational Board Leadership & Consulting Contract

- The consulting contract with Lukenbill & Associates will continue to provide communications & marketing, policy development, and membership services.

4) Discontinue Four Organizational Components

- **Volunteer Executive Director Position:** This internship position was designed to eventually fulfill the active presence in the community traditionally associated with the executive director role at nonprofit organizations, where a much deeper networking, community connection, fundraising and public relations presence was important, but with the shift to pure policy development via writing, it is no longer a necessary position.
- **Fall for the Parkway Event:** The membership is supportive for the policy positions espoused by the organization, and has not shown an interest in attending events, so this event (whose workload wasn't proportionately rewarded in the funds raised) is no longer necessary.
- **Annual Parkway Slobe Advocate Award:** Three consecutive years of awards (2004-2006) have been presented and the possibility of annually finding the type of advocacy sought is diminishing, so the award will be moved to an occasional award, presented when individuals meeting the dedicated focus the award's namesake exhibited are identified.
- **Public Forums:** Allowing the policy ideas developed by the organization to be freely adopted by others, rather than publicly presenting them as ours, will more readily lead to the type of policy change we seek than by attempting to be permanently linked to their origin, which is primarily the aim of public forums.

5) Review and Update the Strategic Plan

- The current strategic plan is due to end June 30, 2009, and it will be reviewed and updated during the spring and summer of 2009, for implementation beginning September 30, 2009 for another five year period to October 1, 2014.

SECTION THREE

Organizational Leadership: Roles & Duties

October 1, 2006 to September 30, 2009

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: GOVERNING OFFICERS

President: Act as Chief Executive Officer & Chairs Board Meetings

Chief Financial Officer: Maintain Financial Records, Keep Meeting Agenda, Minutes & Corporate Records

Vice President: Act as Chief Executive Officer & Chair Board Meetings in President's Absence.

POLICY DEPARTMENT

Senior Policy Director: Research, Policy Development, Communications, Knowledge Management

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: EMERITUS

Chair: Chair Emeritus Board

ENDOWMENT ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Advise Board on Endowment Issues

SLOBE PARKWAY ADVOCATE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Honorees: Represent Dedicated Parkway Advocacy

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