

COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO

MUNICIPAL SERVICES AGENCY PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT Inter-Departmental Correspondence

December 7, 2007

To: Dean Blank

From: Sunny Williams

Subject: Responses to SACOG's MTP 2035

35c-1 Here are my comments on the MTP 2035 as they relate to the American River Parkway. The Board of Supervisors initiated environmental review of the American River Parkway Plan (ARPP) 2006 on January 30, 2007. The DEIR is expected early 2008.

The American River Parkway Plan is adopted by the State legislature pursuant to P.R.C §5840 *Urban American River Parkway Preservation Act*. The 2006 ARPP was endorsed by the City Councils of Rancho Cordova and Sacramento and the County Board of Supervisors, for its submittal to environmental review.

I. Truxel Bridge Crossing

A. MTP Reference

1. Pg 13, Table 2-1

American River

- New multi-modal Truxel bridge between downtown Sacramento and Natomas
- Hazel & Howe Bridges expanded to 6 lanes

2. Page 20 and 32

Improved river access across the American and Sacramento rivers into downtown Sacramento – New bridges (auto and transit) at Truxel across the American River and at Broadway across the Sacramento River to provide access into downtown Sacramento where there will be a large increase in jobs and residents by 2035.

Comment: The Truxel Crossing over the American River is including vehicular traffic which is not consistent with the American River Parkway Plan 2006.

B. Truxel Bridge Crossing

35c-3 Page 153 Area Plan map for Discovery Park (see Attached) reflects Regional Transit's (RT) Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the Downtown Natomas Light Rail (DNA-RT) crossing of the Parkway. This is a light rail crossing with specific requirements to include

bicycle/pedestrian access, as negotiated with RT staff. The priority within the ARPP Update process was to support alternative modes of transportation and not the automobile. The light rail bridge crossing became more acceptable to the ARPP Update process once it included a benefit to Parkway user's, such as an enhancement to bicycle/pedestrian circulation.

The associated policies are:

- 10.4.4 Bike/pedestrian access shall be incorporated into future bridge construction or renovation projects affecting Interstate 5, Highway 160, and Regional Transit's Downtown Natomas Airport (DNA-RT) line.
- 10.4.5 If the DNA-RT light rail is constructed, the associated bike/pedestrian bridge shall span the American River and Parkway, providing good access into the Parkway by connecting to its trail system at either levee side while minimizing impacts to Parkway resources.
- 10.4.6 The DNA-RT station shall not be located within the Parkway.

This crossing is specific in it's acceptance of light rail, bicycles and pedestrian. No other such multi-modal types, such as automobiles, are included.

II. Bridge crossings (general)

Bridges over the American River Parkway are immensely controversial and not well supported, historically. The following policies provide general guidance while limiting the location of bridges within only two Parkway land use categories. Priority is given to expanding existing crossing versus creating new river crossings. (8.20 has been bolded for emphasis.)

- 8.18 If new bridge crossings are constructed, they shall be designed and located in such a manner as to minimize negative impact to the Parkway environment, aesthetic values, and natural resources. Any additional bridge crossings should be located within Developed Recreation or Limited Recreation areas.
 - 8.18.1 The Downtown-Natomas-Airport (DNA-RT) light rail project alignment, as approved by the Regional Transit Board of Directors in December 2003, is recognized by this Plan.
- 8.19 Bridge crossings should incorporate river themes and the Parkway context into its design and use muted, earth toned colors.
- 8.20 If new automobile bridges are considered, expanding existing bridge capacity is preferred to constructing new bridges. If after careful study of all other alternatives, another crossing is required, a map amendment to the locally-adopted area plan(s) shall be required.**
- 8.21 If new automobile bridges are to be constructed over the American River or existing automobile bridges enlarged, these facilities should provide a path for bicycles and pedestrians that is separated from vehicle lanes and include viewing platforms where appropriate.
- 8.22 New bridges for bikes, pedestrians, and equestrians may be considered when there is a need to improve Parkway connectivity, circulation and access, and shall require a map amendment to the locally-adopted area plan(s).

III. Usage Types Discussion

Page 4-20 "First, transit provides an opportunity for substantially reducing VMT, through shifts from low-occupancy modes like driving alone to a very high occupancy mode of travel. [...]"

35c-5
cont.

Travel by non-motorized travel modes is also of interest, because the prevalence of travel by the major non-motorized travel modes (bicycling and walking) is a strong indicator of good land use and transportation planning.”

The focus upon mass transit and bicycle/pedestrian transportation modes is consistent with the 2006 ARPP. The ARPP clearly limits the Truxel crossing to these uses only. The inconsistency with the 2006 ARPP, the immense political and public process that created the updated Plan and negotiations with RT should be recognized in the MTP2035.

IV. Text Questions/Comments

35c-6

A. Is 35 mph correct for freeway speed reference?

Pg 4-11

“Delay data have been collected by Caltrans, primarily on freeway facilities, since 1998.

Caltrans defines 35 mph as a travel speed standard for freeways, with delay calculated as the difference between actual travel time and travel time at 35 mph for the vehicles on the roadway segment in question.”

35c-7

B. Are not SOV’s and people driving alone the same?

Page 10-6

A sixth key issue in commute patterns is the current reliance upon private automobile travel for commute trips. During peak commute hours, when congestion is highest and the transportation system is used at greatest capacity, **92 percent of person trips** are made in private vehicles (either by a **single occupant vehicle** or a carpool/vanpool) and **82 percent of person trips are made by people driving alone.**

ATTACHMENT:

1. 2006 Discovery Park Area Plan