



REPORT TO COUNCIL City of Sacramento

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www.CityofSacramento.org

STAFF
February 24, 2009

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Title: Letter of Intent: Use of the Northern Portion of the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District Bufferlands for a Regional Park

Location/Council District: Between the North Beach Lake Levee and the proposed extension of Cosumnes River Boulevard, Interstate 5 and Franklin Boulevard (Delta Shores Project Area)
Council District 7

Recommendation: Adopt a **Resolution** authorizing the City Manager to sign a Letter of Intent between the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District and the City regarding use of the northern portion of the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Bufferlands for a regional park.

Contact: Mary de Beauvieres, Principal Planner, 808-8722
J.P. Tindell, Park Planning and Development Manager, 808-1955

Presenters: Mary de Beauvieres, Principal Planner, 808-8722

Department: Parks and Recreation

Division: Park Planning & Development Services

Organization No: 19001121

Description/Analysis

Issue: The City of Sacramento and the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD) have prepared a Letter of Intent outlining the key principles under which both agencies will negotiate a future agreement to allow use of the northern portion of the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP) Bufferlands for a new regional park in the southwestern corner of the City. Execution of the Letter of Intent by SRCSD's District Engineer and the City Manager memorializes the principles and establishes a framework that will govern future negotiations between the two agencies, leading to the eventual development of a regional park. On January 14, 2009, the SRCSD Board of

Directors voted unanimously to authorize the district engineer's signature of the Letter of Intent.

A summary of the project background is included as Attachment 1 (page 4) and a location map as Attachment 2 (page 6).

Policy Considerations: Providing parks and recreation facilities is consistent with the City's strategic plan to enhance livability in Sacramento's neighborhoods by expanding park, recreation, and trail facilities throughout the City. This Letter of Intent is also consistent with the City's *Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2005-2010* which establishes a service level goal to provide eight acres of regional parkland for every 1,000 residents. Execution of this Letter of Intent will bring the City closer to meeting this service level goal.

Environmental Considerations:

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): This activity is not subject to the CEQA because it simply establishes principals intended to provide a framework for the future negotiation and agreement upon binding terms and conditions, and, as such, does not present any potential for causing a significant effect on the environment (CEQA Guidelines § 15061(b)(3)). As noted in the Letter of Intent, the approval of any future agreements or other actions shall be subject to compliance with CEQA and other applicable environmental laws.

Sustainability Considerations: The Letter of Intent outlines key principles that will be employed in future agreements to govern the development of a proposed regional park. Establishment of a regional park through a cooperative effort with SRCSD is consistent with the goals and targets of the City's Sustainability Master Plan.

Committee/Commission Action: On February 5, 2009, the Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed the Letter of Intent and recommended it be forwarded to City Council for action.

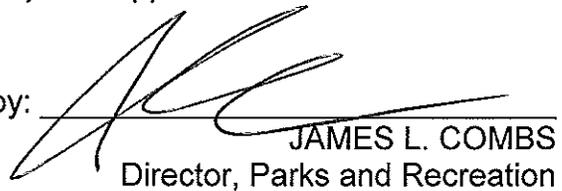
Rationale for Recommendation: The City has a unique opportunity to partner with SRCSD to develop a regional park in the southwestern corner of the City. The concept for the regional park focuses on environmental education, passive recreation, wildlife enhancement, and interpretation, giving both agencies an opportunity to promote land stewardship values and teach environmental education in an outdoor setting. This shared effort is also consistent with the City's *Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2005-2010*, which establishes a service level goal of 8 acres of regionally serving parks, open space and parkways for every 1,000 people. The City currently has a 475 acre deficiency in meeting its regionally serving parkland need. This cooperative effort with SRCSD to develop

a regional park in the southwestern corner of the City (up to 140 acres in size) will reduce the regionally-serving parkland deficiency.

Financial Considerations: Approval of the Letter of Intent does not obligate the City to expend funds at this time. It does outline possible future obligations that the City may decide to assume at a future time, pertaining to expenditures relating to preparation of a master plan for a regional park, environmental review of the master plan, and measures to prevent trespass onto other SRCSD lands from the regional park in exchange for SRCSD's provision of the regional parkland site. Prior to any future City commitment related to the expenditure of City funds or other commitments, additional action by City Council shall be required in accordance with existing City policy.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): Not applicable.

Respectfully Submitted by:


JAMES L. COMBS
Director, Parks and Recreation

Recommendation Approved:

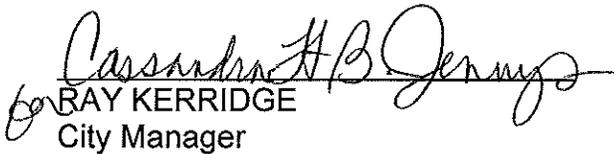

RAY KERRIDGE
City Manager

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Exhibit A - Letter of Intent between the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District ("District" or "SRCSD") and the City of Sacramento ("City") Regarding Use of the Northern Portion of the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP) Bufferlands for a Regional Park	

Attachment 1**Background Information**

The Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP) Bufferlands, managed by the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD), provides wastewater treatment for the greater Sacramento metropolitan region, including the cities of Folsom, Rancho Cordova, Elk Grove, Citrus Heights, Sacramento, and West Sacramento. The Wastewater Treatment Plant is centrally located between Interstate 5, Franklin Boulevard, Laguna Boulevard (in Elk Grove), and the proposed extension of Cosumnes River Boulevard through the recently approved Delta Shores project. The perimeter of the SRWTP is surrounded by the Bufferlands, a protected expanse of open space managed by SRCSD to minimize the potential for odor or other nuisances from the wastewater treatment plant to impact the neighborhoods surrounding the facility. The Bufferlands are a regionally important natural area that provides high quality wildlife habitat, farmland, and open space around the perimeter of the SRWTP. Use of the northern portion of the Bufferlands to provide environmental education in the regional park is consistent with both the City of Sacramento's regional park goals and SRCSD's Bufferlands Master Plan.

The City of Sacramento recognized the desirability of providing a regional park in the southern area of the City as early as 2004. Map 3 in the City's *Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2005-2010* identifies existing and proposed regional facilities such as parks, open space and parkways. This map shows a proposed regional park in the southwestern corner of the City, otherwise known as the Delta Shores area.

Use of a portion of the Bufferlands for a regional park is also consistent with SRCSD's Bufferlands Master Plan, which includes the following principal objectives:

- To maintain the function of the Bufferlands, allowing continued Plant operation and expansion while maintaining Plant security, and ensuring the safety of SRCSD personnel and the surrounding public.
- To provide and maintain extensive areas of open space, high quality wildlife habitat, and other valuable natural resources on the Bufferlands.
- To provide areas to mitigate environmental impacts associated with SRCSD projects.
- To minimize conflicts and develop beneficial relationships with the local community.
- To promote public enjoyment and appreciation of the Bufferlands through education outreach.
- To generate lease revenues for the SRCSD in accordance with other Bufferlands objectives.

Discussions with SRCSD staff to develop a regional park in this area began in earnest when the City was processing an application for the Delta Shores development project,

a 782-acre master planned community along the City's southern boundary in the southwestern corner of the City. The Delta Shores application was submitted in late 2006. The project was approved by City Council on January 13, 2009 (see Attachment 4, page 8). The Delta Shores developer will contribute \$4 million to the eventual development of a regional park in the vicinity of the project. The contribution will be made upon build out of two-thirds of the residential units in the master planned community. In addition, 61.2 acres of neighborhood and community parkland will be dedicated to the City as the project is constructed, including a 26.6 acre community park that will adjoin the proposed regional park. The community park will contain higher intensity recreational uses like sport fields and parking areas, allowing the adjoining regional park to be developed with more passive recreational and educational uses that are consistent with the Bufferlands Master Plan objectives.

City and SRCSD staff have discussed the following design concepts for the regional park:

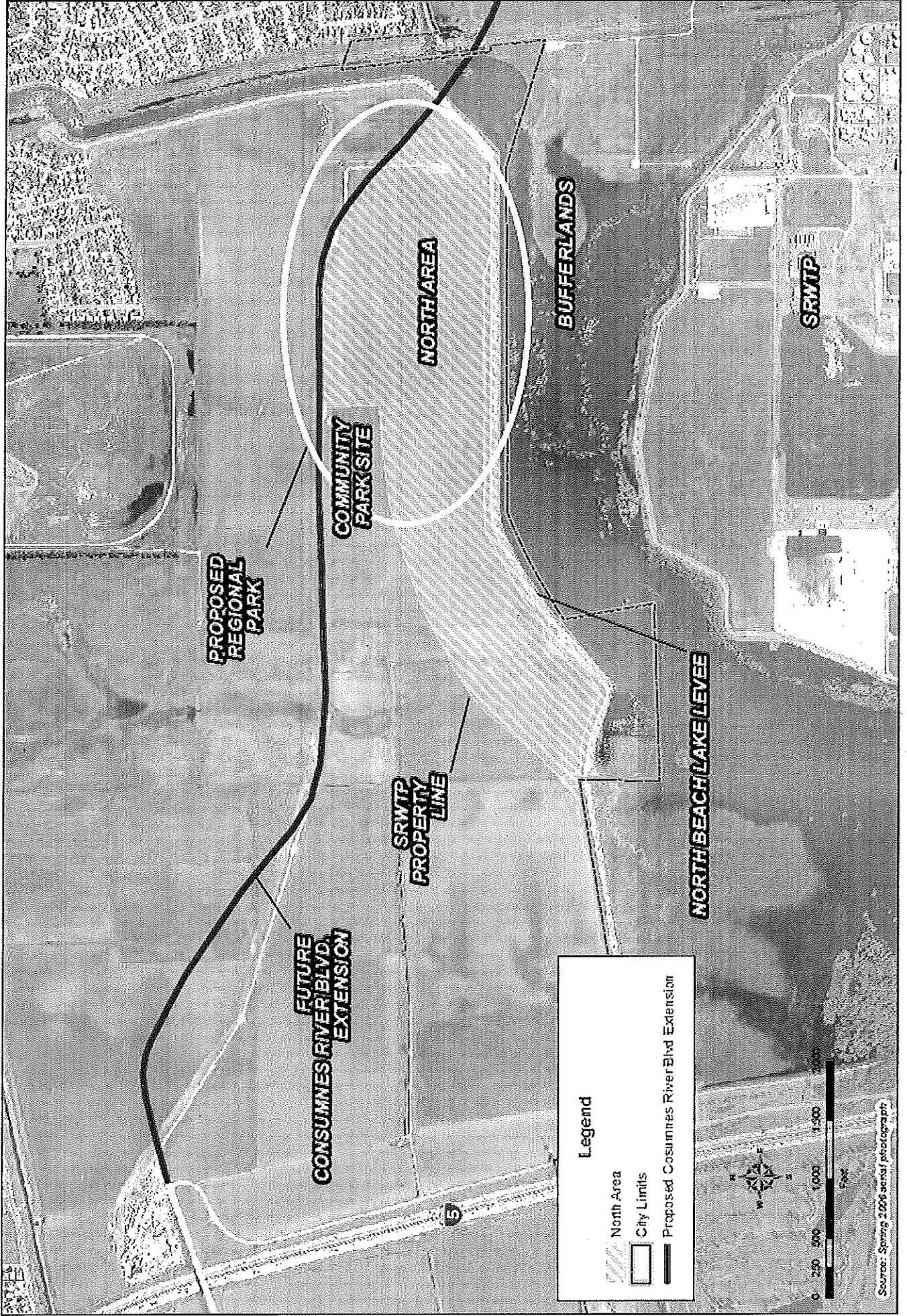
- hands-on learning opportunities about our ecosystem;
- interpretive trails and opportunities for observing wildlife and their habitat;
- community or classroom gardens, including demonstration gardens using native or naturalized landscaping;
- pedestrian and off-street bicycle trails;
- land stewardship and habitat restoration projects; and
- congregation opportunities for school groups or local environmental organizations.

These design concepts will be explored in greater detail as future agreements with SRCSD are reached and City staff has the opportunity to explore development options.

Next Steps: Following Council's consideration of this issue, future agreements will be needed before any park master planning or development may occur. Issues that will need to be resolved include the specific location and size of the regional park and a financing plan for its development.

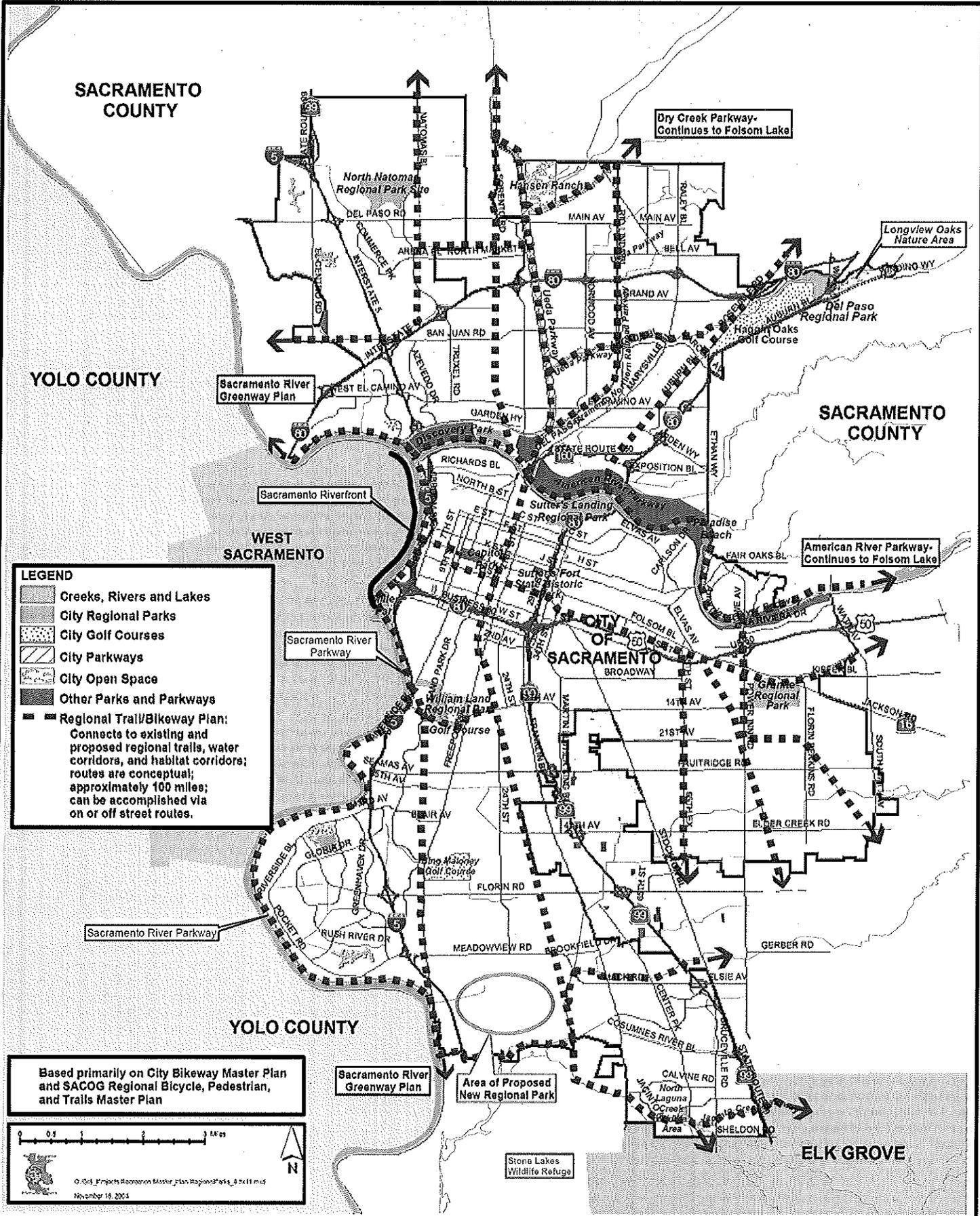


City of Sacramento
 Department of Parks and Recreation
 Proposed Regional Park Location in Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP) Bufferlands



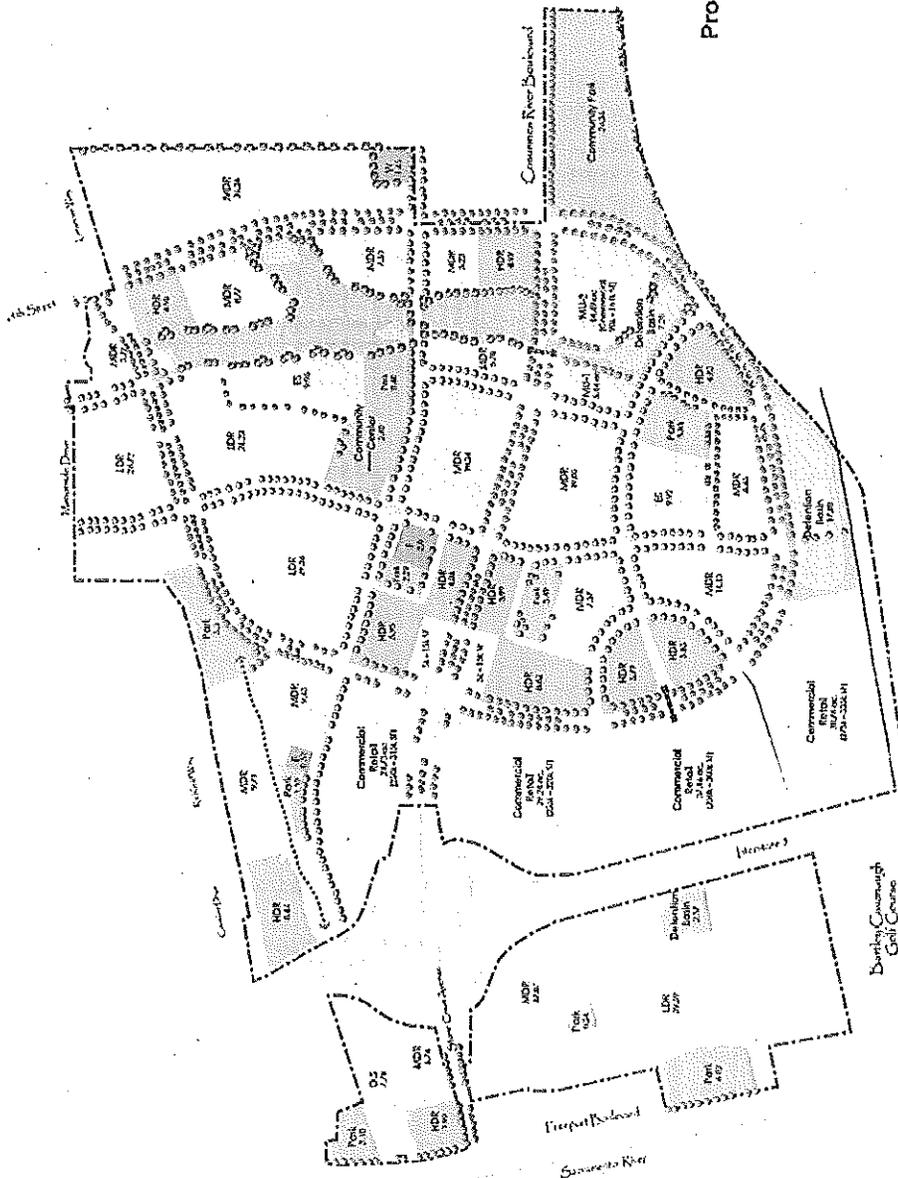
City of Sacramento REGIONAL PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND PARKWAYS

Map 3



Attachment 4

- LEGEND**
- LDR - Low Density Residential (4 - 7 du/acre)
 - MDR - Medium Density Residential (8 - 14 du/acre)
 - HDR - High Density Residential (15 - 27 du/acre)
 - MU - Mixed Use (25 - 29 du/acre)
 - Commercial Retail
 - Public Facilities (E - Electrical, F - Firestation, W - Water Tank)
 - Wetland
 - Detention/Water Quality
 - Parks
 - ES: School reservation sites
 - Pedestrian Bridge
 - Public Access Barrier (PAB)
 - Property Boundary



Proposed Regional Park

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

February 24, 2009

AUTHORIZING THE LETTER OF INTENT: USE OF THE NORTHERN PORTION OF THE SACRAMENTO REGIONAL COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT BUFFERLANDS FOR A REGIONAL PARK

BACKGROUND

- A. The Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant, managed by the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District is surrounded by the Bufferlands, a protected expanse of high quality wildlife habitat, farmland and open space, managed to minimize the impact of the wastewater treatment plant on the surrounding neighborhoods.
- B. The City has identified the need to provide more regional parkland to the City's residents in an effort to meet its service level goal of 8 acres of regional parkland for every 1,000 residents.
- C. City and SRCSD staff has identified the potential for using the northern portion of the Bufferlands for the development of a regional park.
- D. City and SRCSD staff have developed a Letter of Intent that establishes key principles intended to provide a framework for negotiating future agreements leading to the development of a regional park. The letter of intent was approved by SRCSD Board on January 14, 2009.

BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

- Section 1. The City Manager is authorized to sign the Letter of Intent between the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District and the City regarding use of the northern portion of the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Bufferlands for a regional park.

Table of Contents:

- Exhibit A – Letter of Intent between the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District and the City of Sacramento Regarding Use of the Northern Portion of the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Bufferlands for a Regional Park

LETTER OF INTENT**January 14, 2009****Letter of Intent between the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District ("District" or "SRCSD") and the City of Sacramento ("City") Regarding Use of the Northern Portion of the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP) Bufferlands for a Regional Park**

District and City recognize that there is potential for significant community and regional benefits from coordinated land use planning efforts in the northern portion of the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP) Bufferlands and the southern portion of the City of Sacramento (hereinafter collectively the "Designated Area," shown on the map attached hereto as **Exhibit A**). Coordinated land use planning efforts by District and City present opportunities for parks and open space, wildlife habitat enhancement, and wildlife interpretative amenities. The District and City desire to work in a collaborative fashion and implement within the Designated Area certain land uses and public improvements for the benefit of the region. With these objectives in mind, the parties wish to execute this Letter of Intent to memorialize certain principles intended to govern the negotiation and development of future agreements between the parties relative to the Designated Area, subject to applicable land use decisions by City and compliance with CEQA and other environmental laws.

The key principles are as follows:

1. The northern portion of the SRWTP Bufferlands (generally sited north of the North Beach Lake Levee) (hereinafter "North Area, shown on Exhibit A") currently serves valuable and necessary purposes including but not limited to buffering the community from SRWTP odor and chemical releases, wildlife habitat, utility corridors, preservation of agricultural land, and prevention of trespass on SRCSD property (hereinafter "Necessary Purposes"). It is recognized that certain alternative land use scenarios for the North Area can maintain some but not all of the Necessary Purposes. Uses that can substantially maintain the Necessary Purposes include, wildlife habitat, and passive public uses including but limited to nature study, informal picnicking and walking and bike trails.
2. The City desires to establish a Regional Park in the North Area. The Regional Park and adjacent Community Park are anticipated to have both active and passive activities. City and District acknowledge that only passive activities, such as those identified in this Paragraph 2, should be located in the portion of the Regional Park located on SRCSD land that is south of the future extension of Cosumnes River Boulevard. Passive activities include activities such as walking and biking trails, nature or visitor centers, informal picnicking, and wildlife

interpretative and viewing facilities. Passive activities do not include activities such as team sports and formal gatherings such as weddings and fairs. Nature interpretive or visitor centers should be located in the northern portion of the Regional Park.

3. It is desirable to support environmental education, habitat enhancement, and preservation. The City and SRCSD desire to work cooperatively to establish interpretive facilities and education programs. Such programs shall bear the logos of all participants. City and District will seek partnerships and participation in development of the Regional Park from organizations whose mission is to enhance and preserve habitat. City and District shall work cooperatively to obtain grant funding to assist in financing educational facilities.
4. The City shall be responsible for preparation of a park master plan and completion of environmental review of said plan in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
5. It is desirable to provide pedestrian and bicycle trails. Off-street connections are preferable to on-street. An important link is from the City of Sacramento's North Laguna Creek Wildlife Area and the Sacramento River.
6. It is desirable to link wildlife corridors.
7. Prior to development of the Regional Park in the North Area, City and SRCSD shall negotiate conditions to provide assurances to the SRCSD that a) as between the SRCSD and the City, the City shall be responsible for liability resulting from the City's uses of the North Area property, b) the City's uses of the property shall be consistent with the principles included in this Letter of Intent on a permanent basis, and c) the City's uses shall not unreasonably impair SRCSD's ability to efficiently access existing pipelines and be able to construct future pipelines through the property. These assurances can be achieved through conditions placed upon leases, right of way agreements, conservation easements, and other mechanisms.
8. Land in the North Area can be used for environmental mitigation purposes only to the extent that the mitigation is for public projects, and approval of any environmental mitigation will be subject to approval of City and District.
9. The SRCSD Interceptor Master Plan calls for the Laguna Creek Interceptor (hereinafter "Interceptor") to be constructed in the future. The Interceptor will extend from the SRWTP to the southeastern portion of the County and then northward towards the Mather area. The Laguna Creek corridor provides an option for alignment of this pipeline, and there is substantial mutual benefit by co-locating pedestrian and open space land uses with pipelines. The City and SRCSD recognize that open trench pipeline construction can have high impacts on the public and the environment, and tunneling can be used to mitigate some

of these impacts. If the Laguna Creek corridor is used, SRCSD anticipates placing a paved access road over the Interceptor that is suitable for bicycles and pedestrians where it is feasible and beneficial to the community. In addition to the alignment within the Laguna Creek corridor, alignments along surface street right of ways will be given further consideration. The City and SRCSD will work cooperatively in selecting the final alignment.

- 10. City has certified an EIR/EIS to construct an interchange at I-5 and extension of Cosumnes River Boulevard from Franklin Boulevard to Freeport Boulevard. A portion of the Cosumnes River Boulevard extension lies within the SRWTP Bufferlands. Preliminary alignments have been previously discussed with SRCSD that appear to be workable from a transportation engineering perspective while minimizing impacts to the SRWTP and its Bufferlands. The City approved the project EIR and is planning to include with the project sidewalks and planter strips on the south side of the planned roadway next to the Bufferlands. The City and SRCSD agree to negotiate terms for the purchase and sale of the necessary City road and public utility rights-of-way across SRCSD property.
- 11. A small portion of SRCSD property may become separated from the remainder of the North Area upon the construction of the extension of Cosumnes River Boulevard. This piece of land (hereinafter "Remnant") would be located north of Cosumnes River Boulevard and west of the future alignment of a Light Rail extension. This Remnant may have development potential, and as such would have value to the SRCSD through the sale of this property as surplus.
- 12. Maintenance and operation of infrastructure for the Regional Park shall be the sole responsibility of the City.
- 13. City shall take appropriate measures (such as installing chain link fencing) necessary to prevent future trespass on to SRCSD property that is not intended for public access.
- 14. It is the parties' intent to negotiate and prepare a subsequent agreement or agreements to implement principles included in this Letter of Intent, and to establish funding plans. Such subsequent agreement (s) will be executed before any works of improvement on District property can commence.

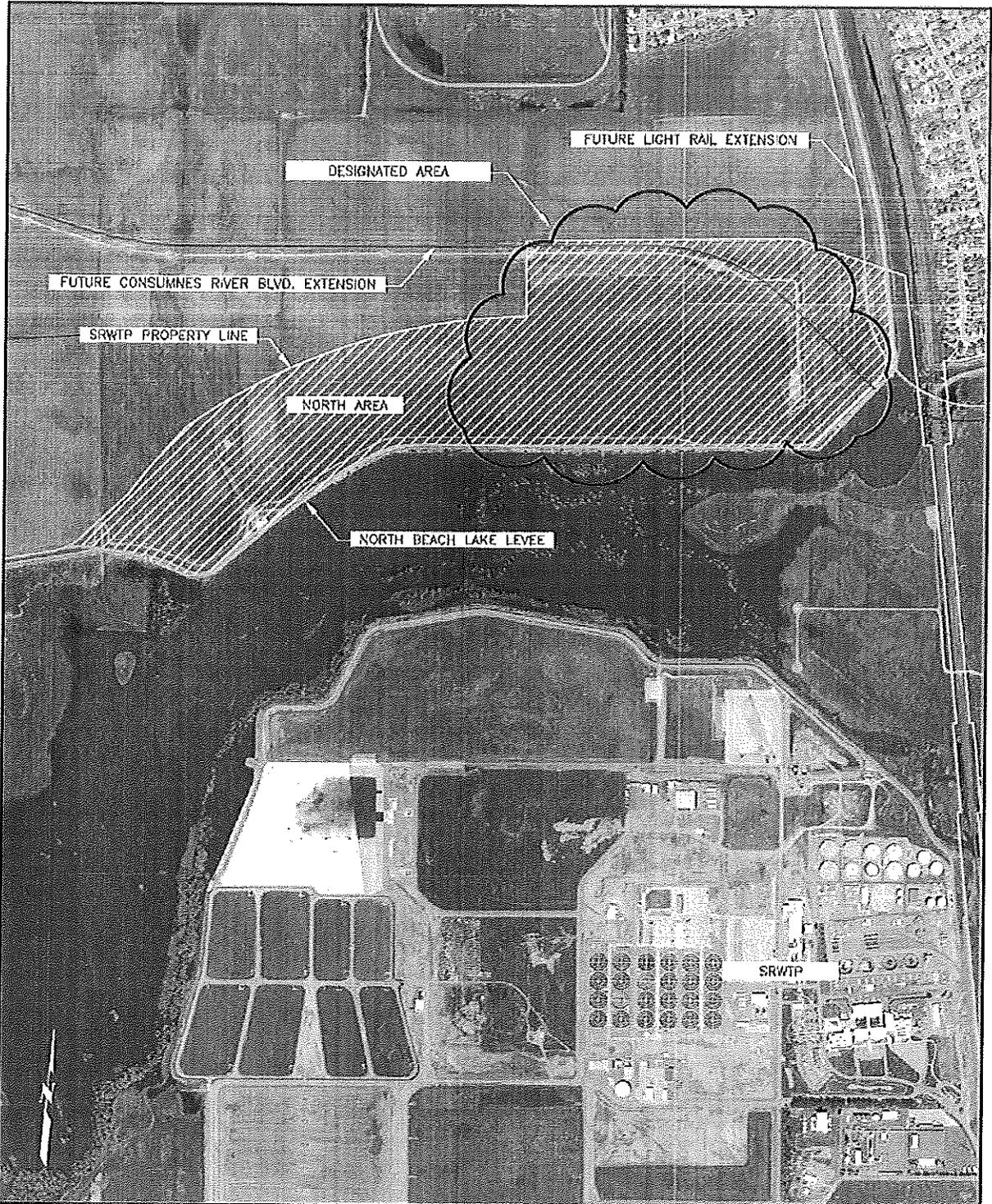
Mary K. Snyder, District Engineer

Date: _____, 2009

Ray Kerridge, City Manager

Date: _____, 2009

Exhibit A



S R C S D
Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District

SCALE
NO SCALE
1 INCH IS 2 INCHES
AT FULL SIZE
(IF NOT AT FULL SIZE ACCORDINGLY)
DRAWN: EXHIBIT A
DATE: 11/26/2008

GENERAL
EXHIBIT A
SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF AREA ADDRESSED
IN THE LETTER OF INTENT REGARDING USE OF THE BUFFERLANDS