



REPORT TO COUNCIL City of Sacramento

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2604
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Staff Report
April 14, 2009

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Title: Progress Report on Natomas Joint Vision

Location/Council District: Unincorporated portion of the Natomas Basin within Sacramento County adjacent to District 1

Recommendation: Direct staff to report back in May 2009 with a new or extended landowner funding package, and reimbursement agreement between the City and County, in order to continue the collaborative planning process for the Natomas Joint Vision area.

Contact: Scot Mende, New Growth Manager, 808-4756, Helen Selph, Associate Planner, 808-7852

Presenter: Scot Mende, New Growth Manager

Department: Planning

Division: New Growth

Organization No: 22001211

Description/Analysis The purpose of this item is to report to the City Council on the progress made in implementing the Natomas Joint Vision Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and in creating a vision that builds upon the MOU framework.

On July 29, 2008, Council directed staff to initiate a collaborative work plan to prepare a joint conceptual land use plan and fundamental planning principles for the Natomas Joint Vision area called the Broad Visioning Process. City and County staff, consultants, and landowner group's facilitators have worked cooperatively to complete the Broad Visioning Process. This report summarizes the results of this effort to date.

The Broad Visioning Process is the second phase of five phases that have been identified for the overall Natomas Joint Vision process.

The other phases include:

- Phase I – The City-County MOU and Open Space Program (completed).
- Phase II - The Broad Visioning Process (nearly completed)
- Phase III – This phase will include:
 - An inclusive public stakeholder process
 - amendments to the City's and County's respective General Plans,
 - a Specific Plan or Master Plan
 - an amendment to either the City's Sphere Of Influence or the County's Urban Services Boundary
 - CEQA documents
 - and the preparation of a conservation strategy and initiation of work to prepare a new or amended habitat conservation plan HCP.
- Phase IV – Annexation (or amendment to County's Urban Policy Area) including a new or amended HCP.
- Phase V – Development projects implementation

Three public workshops have been completed as part of the Broad Visioning Process, in addition to meetings with key stakeholder agencies. The Workshop #4 Series consists of workshops that include the April 14 presentation to City Council, presentations given to both the City and County Planning Commissions, and a presentation to the County Board of Supervisors on April 22, 2009. A summary of the workshops is provided as Attachment 4.

We are now approaching the conclusion of the Broad Visioning Process. The results of this effort include:

- A set of fundamental planning principles to address myriad issues and guide subsequent planning efforts (Attachment 2)
- Three "sketches" showing land use concepts (Attachment 3)
- A Background Report describing the issues related to habitat, agriculture, open space, airport restrictions, and assets and opportunities, in detail. The Natomas Joint Vision Background Report can be found on the City's website (under "Workshop #4") at:
<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/planning/projects/natomas-joint-vision/index.cfm>
- Most importantly, a Broad Vision for an extraordinary place, and momentum to move forward into Phase III.

Phase III would continue the cooperative work with landowners and stakeholders. The first six to nine months of Phase III would involve further detailed technical environmental, engineering, and planning studies, as well as in depth analysis of sketches 1, 2 and 3. The Phase III effort, based upon close cooperation and input from the landowners, and City and County staff, will result in a preferred overall project description. Working with the landowners, the City and County and other stakeholders,

a General Plan Amendment and a Master Plan or Specific Plan would be prepared. A key component of the environmental, planning and engineering analysis will be the preparation of a comprehensive conservation strategy which will form the foundation for the development of an HCP.

Staff recommends deferring the decision regarding whether development is City or County initiated (i.e. annexation to the City vs. amendment to County Urban Services Boundary) until the initial analysis of the sketches have been completed.

Staff also recommends that the Council and Board commit to move forward with an analysis of the sketches as a part of Phase III, and continue working cooperatively with landowners and stakeholders. This effort will lead to the submission (at an appropriate time) of an application for a General Plan Amendment and Specific Plan.

Issues: The Natomas Joint Vision MOU establishes principles for collaborative planning between the City and County for the Natomas Joint Vision area. Key principles (and challenges) include:

- Protecting existing and future airport operations
- Permanent preservation of open space for habitat, agriculture, or other purposes
- Fair distribution of revenue / revenue sharing principles
- Urban development according to the Smart Growth Principles

The Natomas Joint Vision area has significant constraints to development. These include wildlife habitat, flood protection, infrastructure financing, airport safety zone considerations, and other environmental and associated regulatory issues. These constraints will need to be addressed as part of the Phase III process.

Policy Considerations: LU 1.1.9 of the 2030 General Plan affirms the City's policy regarding balancing infill and new growth. The City's policy is to maintain a balanced growth management approach by encouraging infill development within the existing Policy Area where City services are in place, and by phasing City expansion into Special Study Areas where appropriate.

The Natomas Joint Vision area is identified in the 2030 General Plan as a "study area". Activities related to planning for potential future new growth in the Natomas Joint Vision study area should ensure that regional growth is adequately accommodated and is consistent with City & County land use policies.

Policy ER 4.2.2 of the City's 2030 General Plan requires the preservation and protection of a 1-mile community separator along the Sacramento-Sutter County boundary and a 1-mile buffer along the Sacramento River. The Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (NBHCP) requires a 1-mile Swainson's Hawk Zone (SHZ) along the east bank of the Sacramento River. Sketch 1 provides a ½ mile buffer in the Boot, and Sketch 2 provides ¼ mile. It is possible that the buffer width in a preferred alternative may need to be modified as an HCP requirement.

Environmental Considerations: Potential environmental issues related to the Natomas Joint Vision will be evaluated as part of future deliverables, such as a General Plan Amendment and Specific / Master Plan. Future development in the Natomas Joint Vision area is not covered under the City's Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (NBHCP). Prior to the approval of any new development in the Joint Vision area, a new or amended HCP and ITP would need to be approved by regulatory wildlife agencies. A comprehensive effects analysis to determine the impacts of such activities on the existing NBHCP would be required as a part of this overall process.

Sustainability Considerations: The sustainability of any new development in the Natomas Joint Vision area ultimately depends on the plan as a whole and how it is implemented. The unique assets and opportunities of the area provide an opportunity to comprehensively plan for sustainable development and sustainable open space preserves.

At this stage, the focus for the Natomas Joint Vision should be to develop a shared vision with the County regarding goals for sustainable development, and the development of a land use plan and policies which supports these goals.

Rationale for Recommendation: The Natomas Joint Vision area has important location advantages and offers significant potential to provide high quality development, open space, habitat and amenities of regional importance. Consequently, it is worthy of the time, effort, and commitment required to move forward with the Natomas Joint Vision effort.

Financial Considerations: The Broad Visioning Process was supported by landowner/developer funding for City and County staff and consultants. City staff will bring forward at a future Council date a new or extended funding agreement package / reimbursement agreement for consideration.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): Not applicable.

Respectfully Submitted by: Scot Mende
Scot Mende
New Growth Manager

Approved by: Carol Shearly
Carol Shearly
Director of Planning

Recommendation Approved:

Ray Kerridge
Ray Kerridge
City Manager

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NATOMAS JOINT VISION PROJECT HISTORY

Adoption of the 2002 Natomas Joint Vision MOU

On December 10, 2002, the City Council and Board of Supervisors adopted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding principles of land use and open space planning, and revenue sharing between the City and County of Sacramento for the Natomas area, setting the stage for what has come to be known as the “Natomas Joint Vision” (Resolution 2002-830 on file with City Clerk). Since that time, City and County staff have been working to implement the MOU.

Key Council/Board Actions in Support of MOU Implementation

The following describes the recent history and the current project status.

On *April 25, 2006*, the *City Council* directed staff to initiate the open space program contract for the Natomas Joint Vision area. The project scope of work addressed issues that are needed to implement the Natomas Joint Vision City-County MOU and how to implement open space goals.

On *January 23, 2007*, the *City Council* authorized a Memorandum of Understanding with the County regarding open space program and General Plan Amendment EIR cost sharing with the County. The County authorized this MOU on January 24, 2007.

On *October 9, 2007*, the *City Council* received a progress report on the Natomas Joint Vision process, progress on the Open Space Program and reviewed the principles of the 2002 Natomas Joint Vision MOU. The staff report included a process map (Attachment A to the report) representing a combination of the information gathered from the public workshops. The map preliminarily identified areas determined to be most suitable for open space using the Open Space Program Consultant’s Open Space Suitability Model. The map showed development occurring mainly to the north of the City and no development within the ‘Boot’. Please note that was is a process map and did not reflect any recommendations regarding land use.

On *January 30, 2008*, the *Board of Supervisors* met to hear a status report on the Natomas Joint Vision. The Dangermond Group presented an overview of the Open Space Program, and County staff presented an overview of the Broad Visioning approach. County staff made three recommendations to the Board: 1) Reaffirm support of the principles identified in the 2002 Natomas Joint Vision MOU, 2) Endorse the Broad Visioning approach and direct staff to collaborate with the City, major landowners and other stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan for the Joint Vision Area and obtain a financial contribution from major landowners to expand the scope of County staff efforts and involvement, and 3) Receive and file the draft Open Space Program Report. The Board did not take action on the recommendation to reaffirm the principles of the MOU. It approved the second action to proceed with the Broad Visioning approach, and

determined that it would receive and file the draft Final Open Space Program. Report at a later meeting after some revisions are made to reflect public comments received.

On *February 12, 2008*, City Council received a progress report and presentation on the Open Space Program. Council also received a verbal report on the Broad Visioning approach which had been embraced by the Board of Supervisors on January 30, 2008. In addition, the staff report included a list of issues that would need to be addressed during the Broad Visioning process.

On *April 10, 2008*, City Council received a summary of the comments received on the Final Draft Open Space Program Report during and after Open Space Workshop #4 held on February 19, 2008. Council also received a status report on the Broad Visioning. The Open Space Program Report was received and filed to inform subsequent planning efforts.

On July 29, 2008, City Council directed staff to initiate a collaborative work plan for the Natomas Joint Vision Broad Visioning Process to prepare a joint conceptual land use plan and fundamental principles for the Natomas Joint Vision area.

On October 28, 2008, City Council adopted a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute an agreement with Sacramento County for City reimbursement of consultant and City staff costs incurred for preparation of the Natomas Joint Vision Visioning Plan.

Open Space Program

The Open Space Program (OSP) was designed to identify open space preservation and funding mechanisms to help guide the implementation of open space goals and policies adopted by the City and County in the December 2002 Natomas Joint Vision MOU. The open space program evaluated the habitat, open space, and agricultural values of the Natomas Joint Vision area from the open space perspective. It is anticipated that the City's Municipal Services Review will evaluate the potential urban values of the Natomas Joint Vision area.

Four public workshops for the Open Space Program (OSP) were completed between June 2006 and February 2008. Workshop #1 was actually a workshop series tailored for three different participant groups that focused on data, process, and initial input.

Workshop #2 consisted of a presentation on the Natomas Levee Improvement Project (NLIP) by SAFCA. This presentation focused on relationship of NLIP to the Natomas Joint Vision, the Open Space Program, and habitat preservation. SAFCA outlined specific practices to minimize habitat damage and avoid negatively impacting the NBHCP, thereby reducing the amount of land required for mitigation.

Workshop #3 was held on July 12, 2007. The purpose of the workshop was to emphasize the planning constraints and allow for the mingling of differing opinions in regards to open space and development within Natomas. The Open Space Program

consultant, The Dangermond Group, provided a review of the amount of acreage within the Basin determined to be “uncommitted” and potentially available for either development or open space preservation. Prior commitments include permitted development in Sutter County, airport owned lands, existing habitat preserves, and an allowance for future preserves to correspond with development permitted but not yet constructed.

The *Final Draft Open Space Program Report* was presented to the Board of Supervisors on January 30, 2008 and the City Council on February 12, 2008. The Final Open Space Workshop was held on February 19, 2008. The Report includes information about open space funding mechanisms, acquisition strategies and a preliminary map of areas best suited for open space preservation. The *Final Draft Open Space Program Report* is available on the Planning Department webpage at:

<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/planning/projects/natomas-joint-vision/>.

The Natomas Joint Vision Open Space Program was not formally adopted, but instead will be used as “background information” to consider in the Broad Visioning and future decision making processes.

Broad Visioning Approach

The *Broad Visioning* approach emerged as an outcome of the November 26, 2007 City and County staff meeting with Natomas landowners. The proposed Broad Visioning approach would supplement the technical process and make it more collaborative and could help define the land use & open space alternatives.

The Broad Visioning process collaboratively engaged landowners in the creation of a draft vision land use concept that was vetted with the public. The “Staff & Facilitator Team” - which includes key City and County staff and facilitators retained by the major landowners - prepared the process, work program, funding agreement, and retained consultants, and held the workshops for an inclusive process. The visioning effort incorporated the principles of the 2002 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the Open Space Program report.

Municipal Services Review

The draft Municipal Services Review *project framework report* was originally scheduled for public release along with the Open Space Program Report, but was delayed pending the development of a more precise project description.

The City intends to prepare a Municipal Services Review (MSR) of the City’s ability to provide municipal services to the Natomas Joint Vision area. The MSR report is a required element for a complete application to LAFCo for a Sphere of Influence Amendment.

Sphere of Influence Amendment

A Sphere of Influence is defined as a plan for the probable physical boundary and service area of a local agency, as determined by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). In determining the Sphere of Influence, LAFCo considers the following:

1. The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands;
2. The present and probable need for public facilities in the area;
3. The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services which the agency provides or is authorized to provide; and,
4. The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.

Sphere of Influence Amendment Environmental Impact Report

Prior to the filing of any annexation application, a Sphere of Influence Amendment and an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared for use by the City, County, and LAFCo in their evaluation of the effects of the City's Sphere of Influence Amendment. The EIR will be prepared by LAFCo, with the City and the County as responsible agencies.

Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan

The Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (NBHCP) was approved in 1997 and revised in 2003. It is a multi-jurisdictional habitat plan involving the City of Sacramento, Sutter County, and the Natomas Basin Conservancy as permittees. The primary goal of the NBHCP is to create a system of reserves that would support populations of the giant garter snake, Swainson's hawk, and 18 other covered species at least through the life of the 50-year Incidental Take Permits (ITPs) which are required in order for further development in Natomas.

According to both the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Natomas Basin represents the "core" of Swainson's hawk breeding and nesting habitat. It is necessary for foraging habitat to be close to nesting sites to prevent nest abandonment and predation. Nesting sites are concentrated on both sides of the Sacramento River. This reasoning resulted in the NBHCP designation of a one mile buffer area along the Sacramento River as part of the conservation strategy. Future projects within the Basin such as the airport expansion, levee reconstruction, and pump station for the West Roseville specific plan leave only three remaining areas (on the Sacramento side of the River) with unconstrained habitat available for the Swainson's hawk, one of which is the area known as the "Boot". The DFG asserts that any development occurring outside of the 17,500 acres of urban development designated by the NBHCP would affect the baseline used in the approval of the City and Sutter County's ITP and any action on the part of the City or County would require the City or County to conduct a full effects analysis as well as mitigation.

NATOMAS JOINT VISION Key Broad Vision Planning Principles

Urban Form:

Provide a compact development pattern with a mix of land uses and diversity of housing types to meet the needs of citizens from a wide range of economic levels and age groups.

Create an ample supply of specialized open space in the form of parks, squares and greenways.

Design the community with a center focus that combines commercial, civic, cultural and recreational uses.

Ecology and Landform

Connect wildlife corridors, integrate natural buffers within urbanized areas and protect the natural features, to the maximum extent practicable.

Transportation

Emphasize pedestrian- bike and transit friendly design to discourage auto dependence.

Energy

Utilize design and technology to reduce energy consumption and dependence of fossil fuels.

Water and Wastewater

Reduce water consumption, wastewater generation, and site imperviousness through water sensitive urban design techniques.

Economics

The community should be a financial success for both the public and private sectors.

Health, Safety and Security

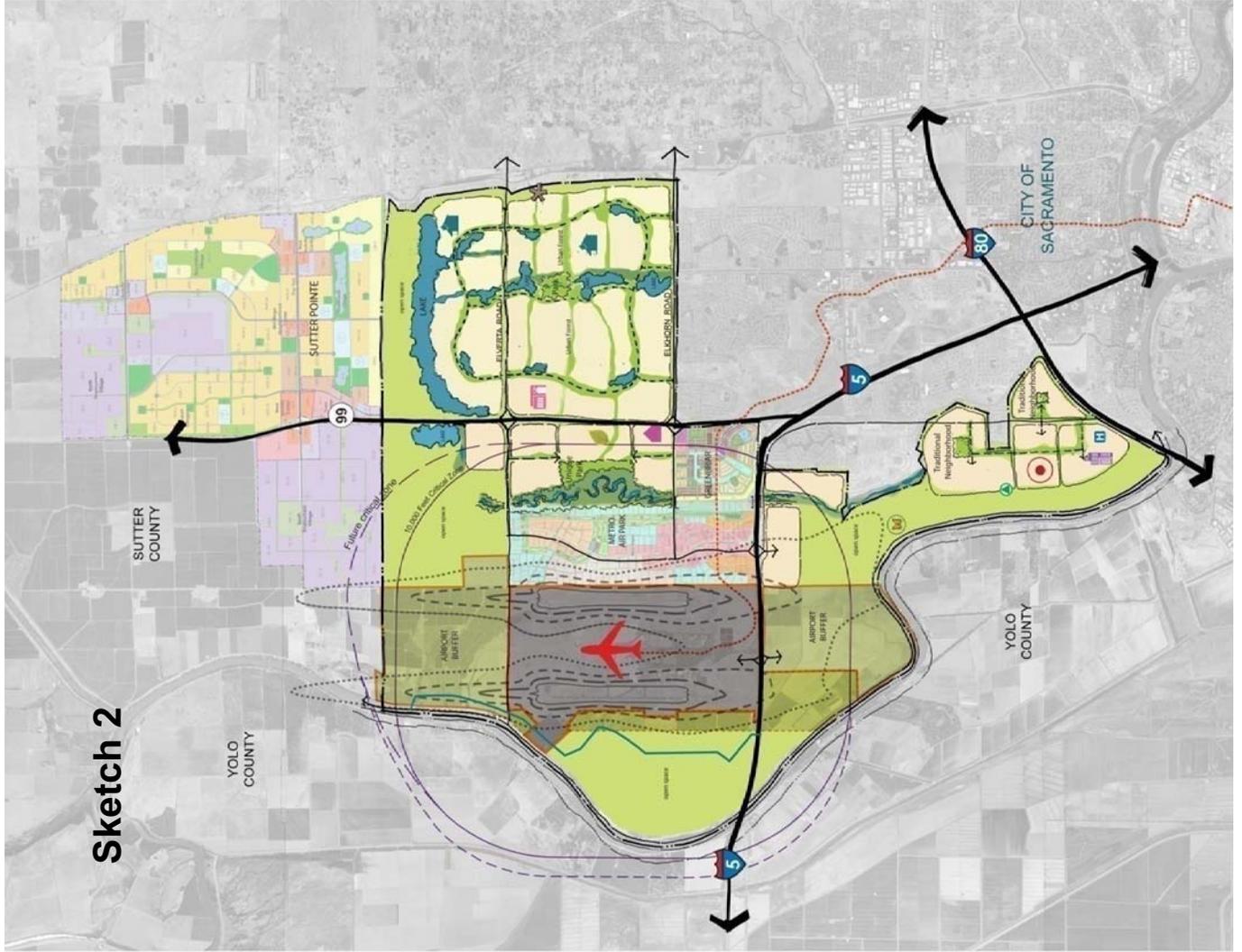
Emphasize a quality public realm that promotes social-interaction, a physically active lifestyle and an enhanced sense of security.

Education

Foster a wide range of education programs and facilities with emphasis on public awareness of sustainable life choices among residents and visitors.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Design and build the community to reduce green house gas emissions.



Sketch 2

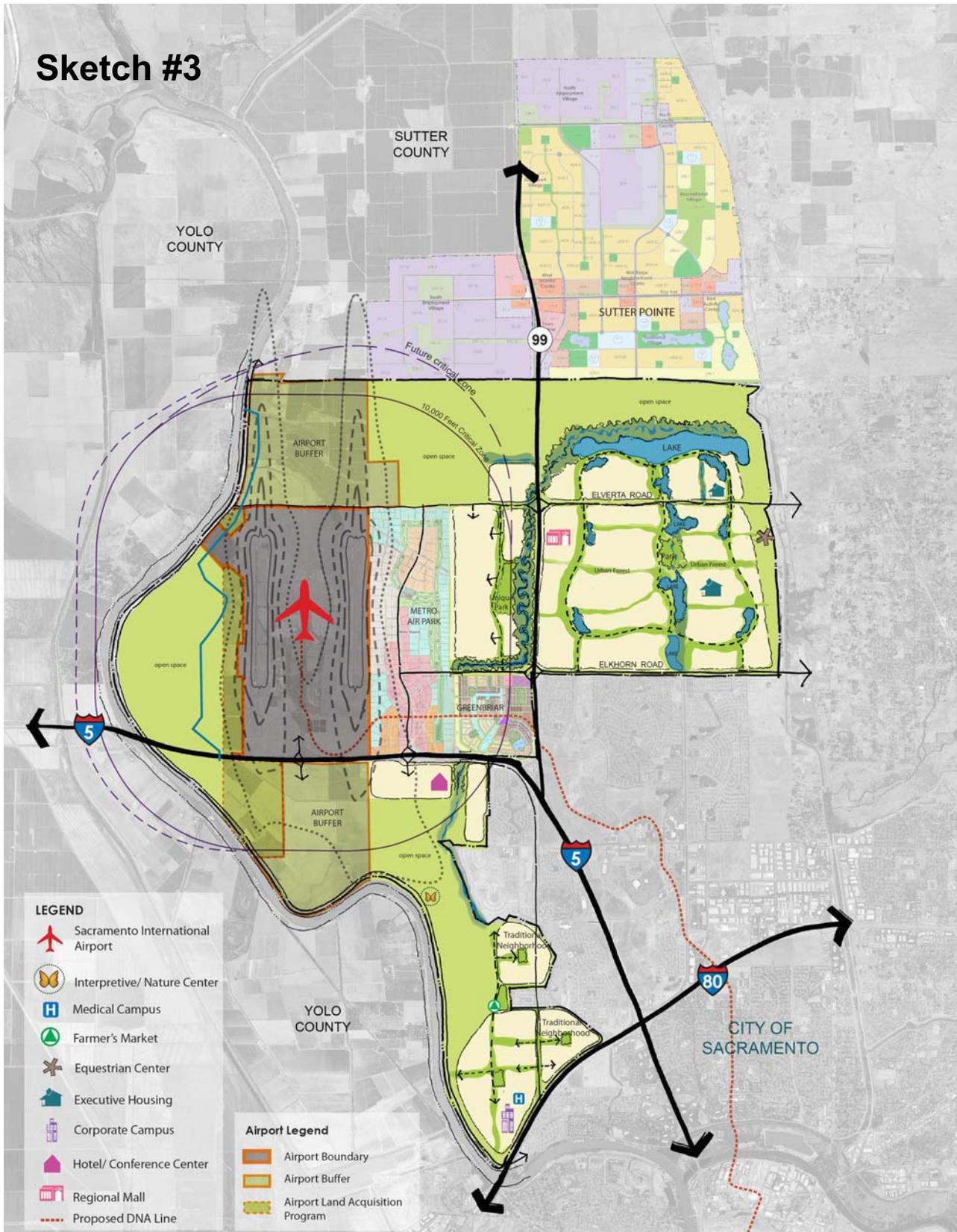
LEGEND

-  Sacramento International Airport
-  Sports Training Center
-  Intepretive/ Nature Center
-  Zoo/ Botanical Garden
-  Medical Campus
-  Farmer's Market
-  Equestrian Center
-  Executive Housing
-  Corporate Campus
-  Hotel/ Conference Center
-  Regional Mall
-  Proposed DNA Line

Airport Legend

-  Airport Boundary
-  Airport Buffer
-  Airport Land Acquisition Program

Sketch #3



NATOMAS JOINT VISION Broad Vision Public Workshops

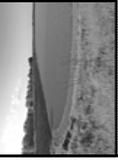
Workshop #1, November 12, 2008 – The presentation focused on providing context about assets, opportunities, and challenges to planning for the area. Lessons from other communities were presented, and planning principles were introduced. A survey was given to workshop participants, and made available online. The survey was very comprehensive, but the key results were as follows:

- The main considerations for planning in the Natomas Joint Vision area were identified as providing for flood protection and protecting habitat.
- Respondents believe that it is best to plan for the Natomas Joint Vision area today, rather than wait.
- The most popular vision for the area is for urban development with emphasis on proximity / linkage to downtown, the airport, and open space. This vision included:
 - Compact, walkable, mixed use development
 - Quality design and materials
 - “Tangible open space” that can be experienced (see, feel, touch etc.)
 - Land Park and midtown (Traditional neighborhood development) were the most popular examples of urban form.
- Workshop #2, January 28, 2009 – Survey results from Workshop #1 were summarized, and planning considerations (suitability, land use inter-relationship, incompatible land uses, habitat objectives, etc.) were presented. Several potential land use “scenarios” were presented and analyzed for conflicts. Participants were then given the opportunity to comment on the scenarios.
- Workshop #3, March 26, 2009 – Two conceptual land use “Sketches” were developed from the scenarios of Workshop #2. Planning principles from Workshop #1 were expanded. Sketches were tested against the planning principles. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and comment on the Sketches and Planning Principles.
- Workshop #4 (Series) – A series of status reports summarizing the Broad Visioning Process and the results, given to City and County Planning Commissions before going to City Council and the Board of Supervisors. Opportunities to comment at all venues.
 - April 9, City Planning Commission
 - April 13, County Planning Commission
 - April 14, City Council
 - April 22, Board of Supervisors



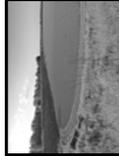
**Natomas
Joint
Vision**

City Council
April 14, 2008



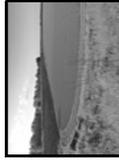
Tonight's Objectives

- Background Report
- Results from Broad Vision workshops
- Planning Principles
- Conceptual Land Use "Sketches"
(2 Alternatives)
- Looking ahead....



Previously...

- Work plan for Broad Visioning presented to Council: 4-10-08
- Board authorized funding agreement: 9-24-08
- Council authorized funding agreement: 10-28-08



Project Purpose

- Unique regional assets offer potential benefits to the entire region
- Complex challenges can be met by multi-jurisdictional cooperation and commitment to high quality planning
- The Broad Visioning Process is a "high level exercise from 30,000 feet", not a site-specific analysis of detailed issues



Planning Considerations

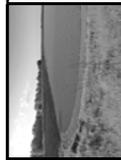
- Consistency with airport’s adopted Master Plan and Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP)
- Consistency with City/County General Plan policies
- Habitat requirements to be determined during habitat conservation plan (HCP) amendment and incidental take permits process

Introduction 5



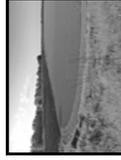
OVERVIEW OF WORK PLAN

- Phase 1: MOU & Open Space Program
- Phase 2: Broad Vision
- Phase 3: SOI/USB & General Plan Amendment, Master Plan, EIR, HCP
- Phase 4: Annexation / Tentative Maps
- Phase 5: Development projects



Phase 2 Scope (Broad Vision) Outcome

- Broad Vision for an Extraordinary Place
- Fundamental Planning Principles
- Conceptual Land Use “Sketches”



Background Report

- Prior to Workshop #1, the City & County prepared a Background Report that discussed:
 - Habitat
 - Agriculture & Open Space
 - Airport Restrictions
 - Assets & Opportunities



Summary of Broad Visioning Workshop #1

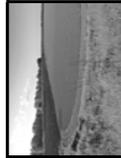
- Presentations by City & County
- Assets & Opportunities
- Challenges for Developing NJV
- Lessons from Other Communities
- Planning Principles
- Survey (also available on-line)



Workshop #1 Continued

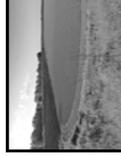
Assets & Opportunities

- SAFCA - \$600 million investment (NLIP)
- International Airport - \$1.6 billion investment
- Metro Air Park – 1,900 acres and 38,000 jobs
- Downtown-Natomas-Airport light rail extension planned
- Crossroads of I-5 and I-80



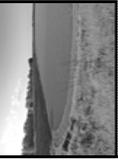
Workshop #1 Survey Results

- #1 Planning Considerations:
 - Flood Protection
 - Habitat Protection
- We should begin planning for NJV today



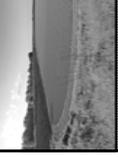
Workshop #1 - Survey

- Vision: urban development with emphasis on proximity / linkage to downtown, airport, open space
 - Compact, walkable, mixed uses
 - Quality design and materials
 - Land Park & Midtown examples
 - Tangible open space = see, feel, touch, experience



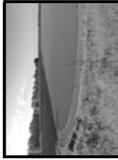
Summary of Workshop #2

- Summary of *Workshop #1* & key survey results
- Planning considerations
- Presentation of map layers
- Exercise – comments matrix



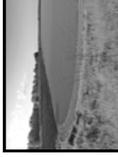
Summary of Workshop #3

- Recap Workshop #2
- Presented key planning principles
- Presented Conceptual Land Use Sketches
- Q&A; Comments



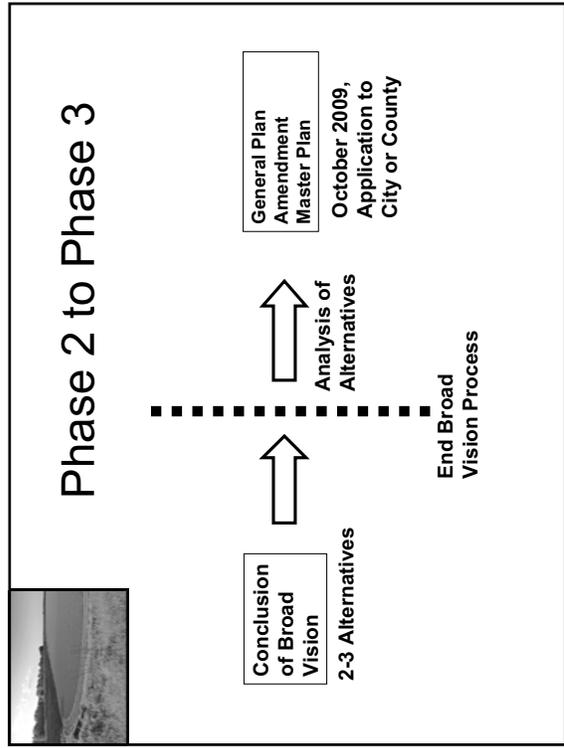
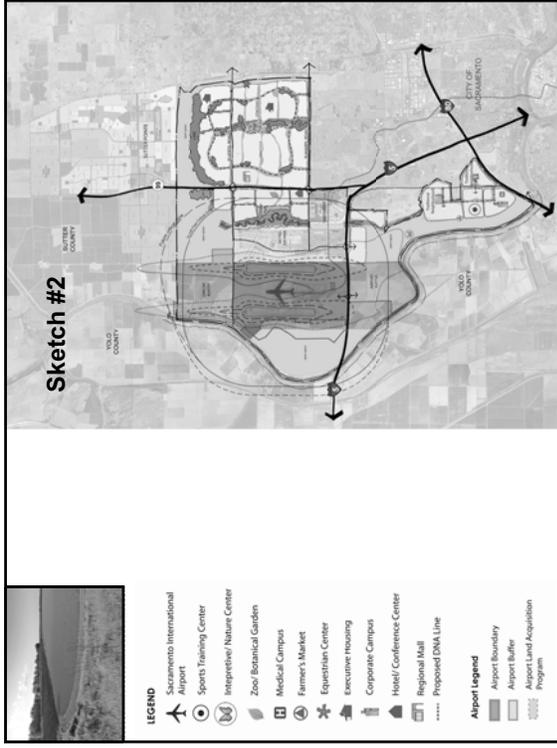
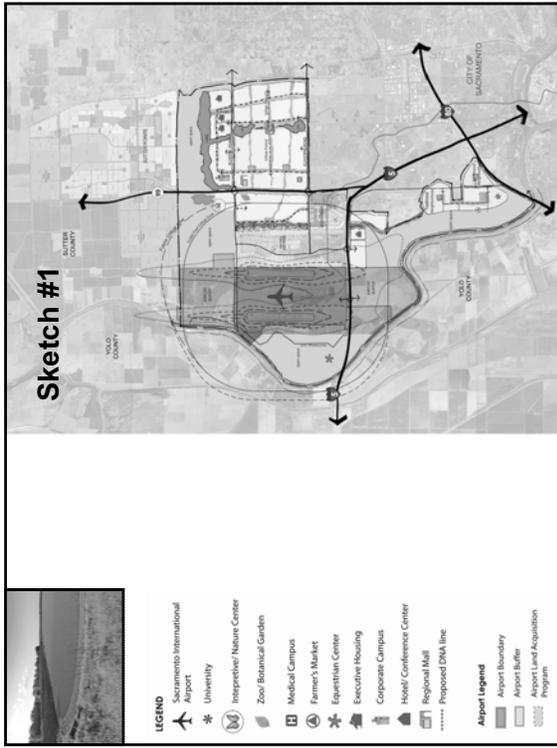
Planning Principles for the Broad Vision

- Urban Form
- Ecology/ Landscape/ Recreation
- Transportation
- Energy
- Water and wastewater
- Economics
- Health, safety and security
- Education
- Greenhouse gas emissions reduction



Planning Principles for the Broad Vision

- Urban Form
- Ecology/ Landscape/ Recreation
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- ### Objectives for Phase 3
- Continue cooperative work with stakeholders
 - Submission of GPA / Specific Plan at appropriate time
 - Prepare environmental and engineering analysis
 - Initiate preparation of conservation strategy for HCP
 - Extend the reimbursement agreements, MOU between City and County



Recommendations

- Commit to a public stakeholder process for General Plan Amendment & Specific Plan
- Defer decision re: City or County initiated
- Report-back to City Council & County Board in Summer 2009



For More Information....

City website:

<http://cityofsacramento.org/planning/project/s/natomas-joint-vision/index.cfm>

County website:

<http://www.planning.saccounty.net/longrange/city-county.html>



