



# REPORT TO COUNCIL

## City of Sacramento

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2671  
www.CityofSacramento.org

# 31

STAFF REPORT  
**March 7, 2006**

Honorable Mayor and  
Members of the City Council

**Subject:** Approve an Addition to the Sutter's Landing Regional Park Master Plan, CIP LS12

**Location/Council District:**  
28<sup>th</sup> Street at the American River, Council District 3

**Recommendation:** Adopt a Resolution approving the Sutter's Landing Park Master Plan, CIP LS12, to add regional destination attractions.

**Contact:** Janet Baker, Park Development Manager, 808-8234

**Presenter:** J.P. Tindell, Advance Planning Manager, 808-1955

**Department:** Parks and Recreation

**Division:** Park Planning, Design and Development

**Organization No:** 4727

### **Summary:**

Sutter's Landing Park is a 172-acre regional park to be developed on the closed 28<sup>th</sup> Street landfill adjacent to the American River in downtown Sacramento, California. In February 2005, the City completed a "Feasibility Report for Sutter's Landing Park" that concluded that any park improvement is feasible on this site at this time as long as added, more costly design features can be constructed. Staff recommends that the park's master plan be revised to include large scale regional destination attractions. Regional destination attractions might include such amenities as a zoo, a river aquatics complex, an extreme sports facility, an airborne hobby center, a museum/interpretive center, an equestrian center or an arboretum/conservatory/botanical gardens.



**Committee/Commission Action:**

On November 3, 2005, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommended supporting the expanded vision for Sutter's Landing Regional Park with the addition of "Retain, or replace with equal size, an onsite covered skatepark as a regional destination" (Exhibit A, page 34).

**Background Information:**

Sutter's Landing Regional Park is a 172-acre regional park located on the closed 28<sup>th</sup> Street landfill; the site is bounded by the American River on the north, Business 80 on the east, and the Union Pacific Railroad on the south. The current Sutter's Landing Park Master Plan was adopted by City Council in December 2003, updating the 1995 version of the Sutter's Landing Park Master Plan. The current master plan primarily provides for community recreation needs, including elements typically included in neighborhood and/or community parks. In recent years, a first phase of park construction was completed.

In February 2005, the City completed a "Feasibility Report for Sutter's Landing Regional Park" that concluded that any park improvement is feasible on this site at this time as long as added, more costly design features can be constructed.

This proposed vision for the future planning of Sutter's Landing Regional Park was presented to the Downtown Neighborhood Association Group in August 2005. Department staff subsequently met with the Sacramento Zoo Long Range Planning Committee on October 5, 2005. Their interest is in continuing to work with City staff to formalize a site for the Zoo in the vicinity of Sutter's Landing Regional Park, which may require acquisition of additional land for this facility. Staff is prepared to do so as the Zoo's representatives may further develop plans for this relocation.

Staff recommends that the City formally update the existing master plan to include large scale regional destination attractions. The updated master plan would:

- address traffic and circulation to and from the park;
- focus on the natural and historical aspects of the park as they relate to the American River;
- implement the existing park master plan to meet community-level recreational needs;
- augment the regional park aspects of the site by adding regional-draw destination attractions;
- expand beyond the current site boundaries to better accommodate regional destination attractions;

- provide regional attractions that will complement the planned community park elements, lend character to and further define the City, and promote the area's economic development; and
- allow for appropriate support facilities and complementary adjacent uses to the park's regional attractions.

Regional destination attractions might include such amenities as a zoo, a river aquatics complex, an extreme sports facility, an airborne hobby center, a museum/interpretive center, an equestrian center or an arboretum/conservatory/botanical gardens. The Sacramento Zoo indicated that Sutter's Landing Regional Park is the first choice for their longer term relocation/expansion plans (15-25 year timeframe). A copy of the Sacramento Zoo's "Long Range Planning Committee Case Study" is provided (Attachment 2, pages 30-32).

**Financial Considerations:**

Not applicable.

**Environmental Considerations:**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) environmental review requirements for the landfill's closure plan have been completed through prior Environmental Impact Reports and Negative Declarations. A categorical exemption was issued for the first phase of development of Sutter's Landing Regional Park, which was completed in 2002. Subsequent phases of park development will be subject to environmental review under CEQA.

**Policy Considerations:**

Providing Parks and Recreation facilities is consistent with the City's strategic plan to enhance liveability in Sacramento's neighborhoods by expanding park and recreation facilities throughout the City.

**Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD):**

No goods or services are being purchased in association with this report.

Respectfully Submitted by:   
ROBERT G. OVERSTREET II  
Director of Parks and Recreation

Recommendation Approved:

  
RAY KERRIDGE  
Interim City Manager

Table of Contents:

Pgs	1-4	Report
Pgs	5-29	Attachment 1 – PowerPoint Presentation to Council
Pgs	30-32	Attachment 2 – Long Range Planning Committee Case Study, Adopted July 12, 2005 by the Board of Directors of the Sacramento Zoological Society
Pg	33	Resolution
Pg	34	Exhibit A – Expanded Vision for Sutter's Landing Regional Park Master Plan

Attachment 1 – PowerPoint Presentation to Council

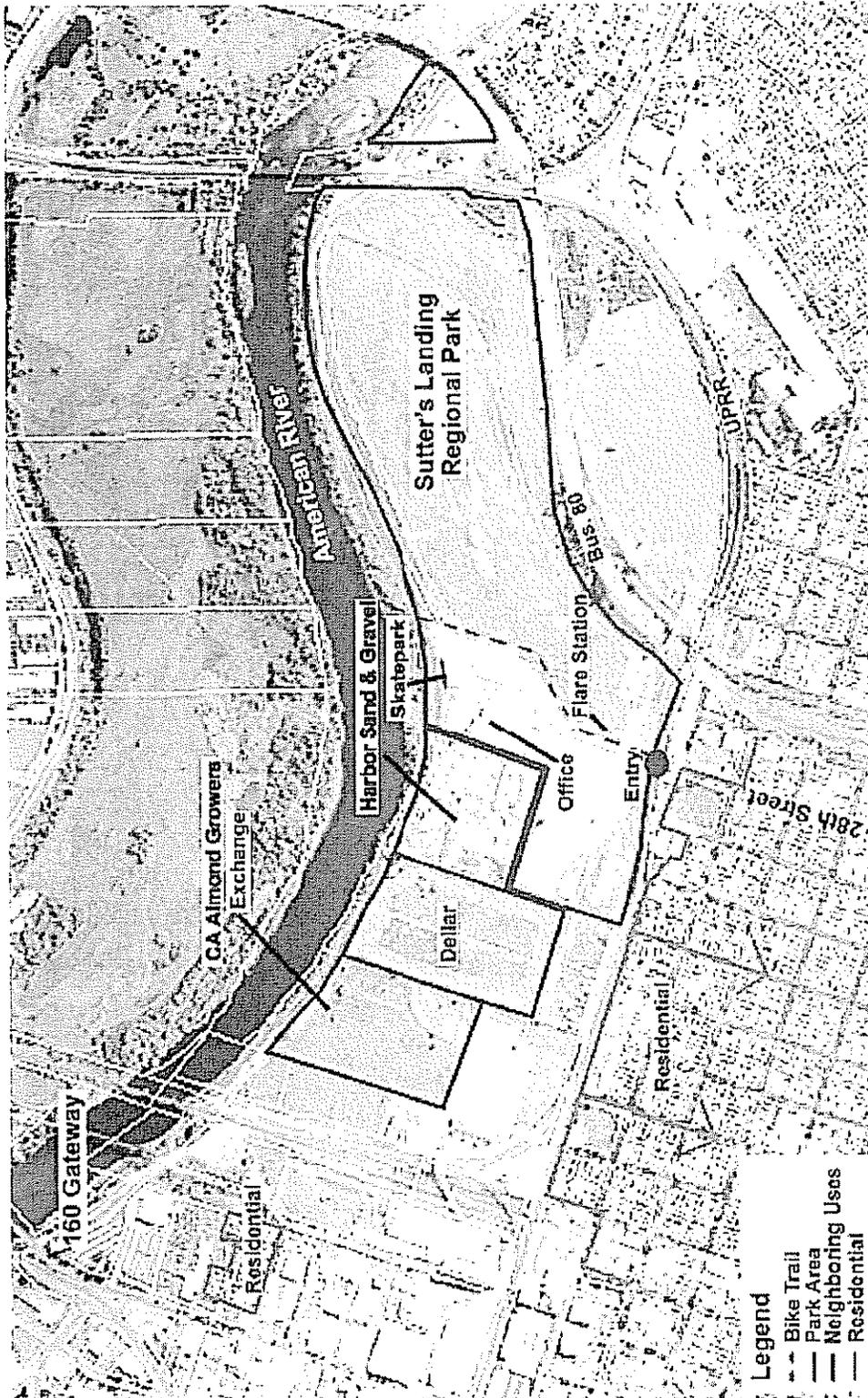


**Sutter's Landing  
Regional Park:**

**Planning Vision**

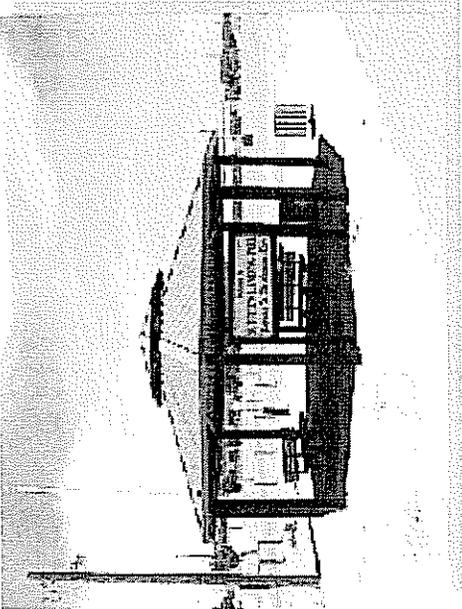
**Approve an  
expanded vision for  
the Park Master  
Plan to include  
regional destination  
attractions in the  
future.**

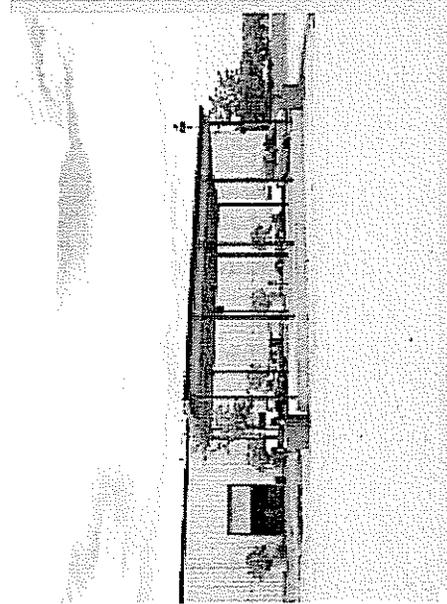
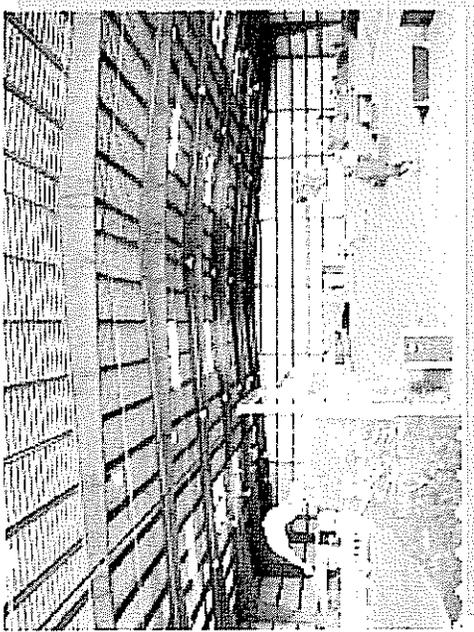




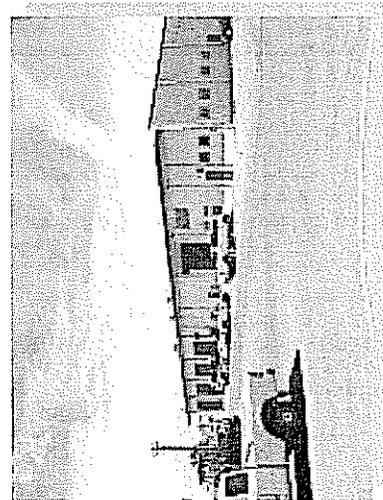
# Existing Conditions

*“West Park”:  
Entry & Bike Trail*

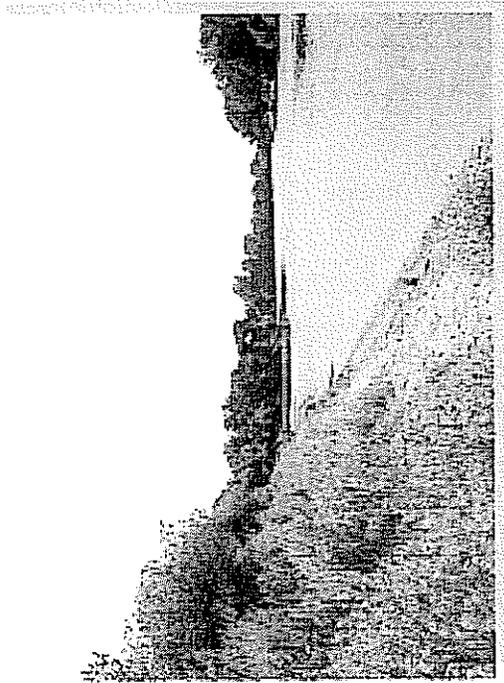




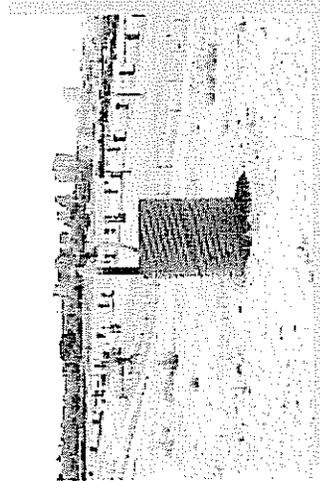
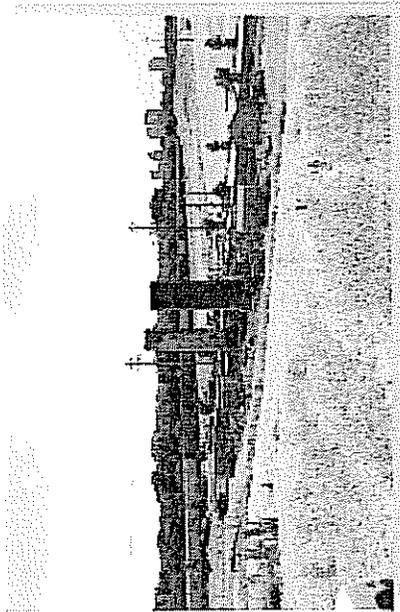
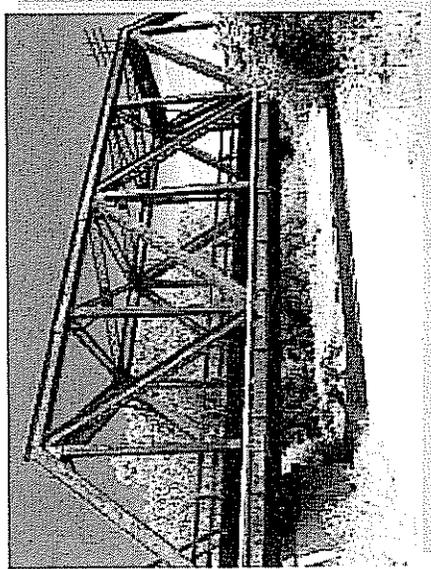
*“West Park”:  
Skate Park, Stage,  
Offices, River*



*“East Park”  
Open Space and River*



*“East Park”: Monitoring Well,  
Flare Station, UPRR*

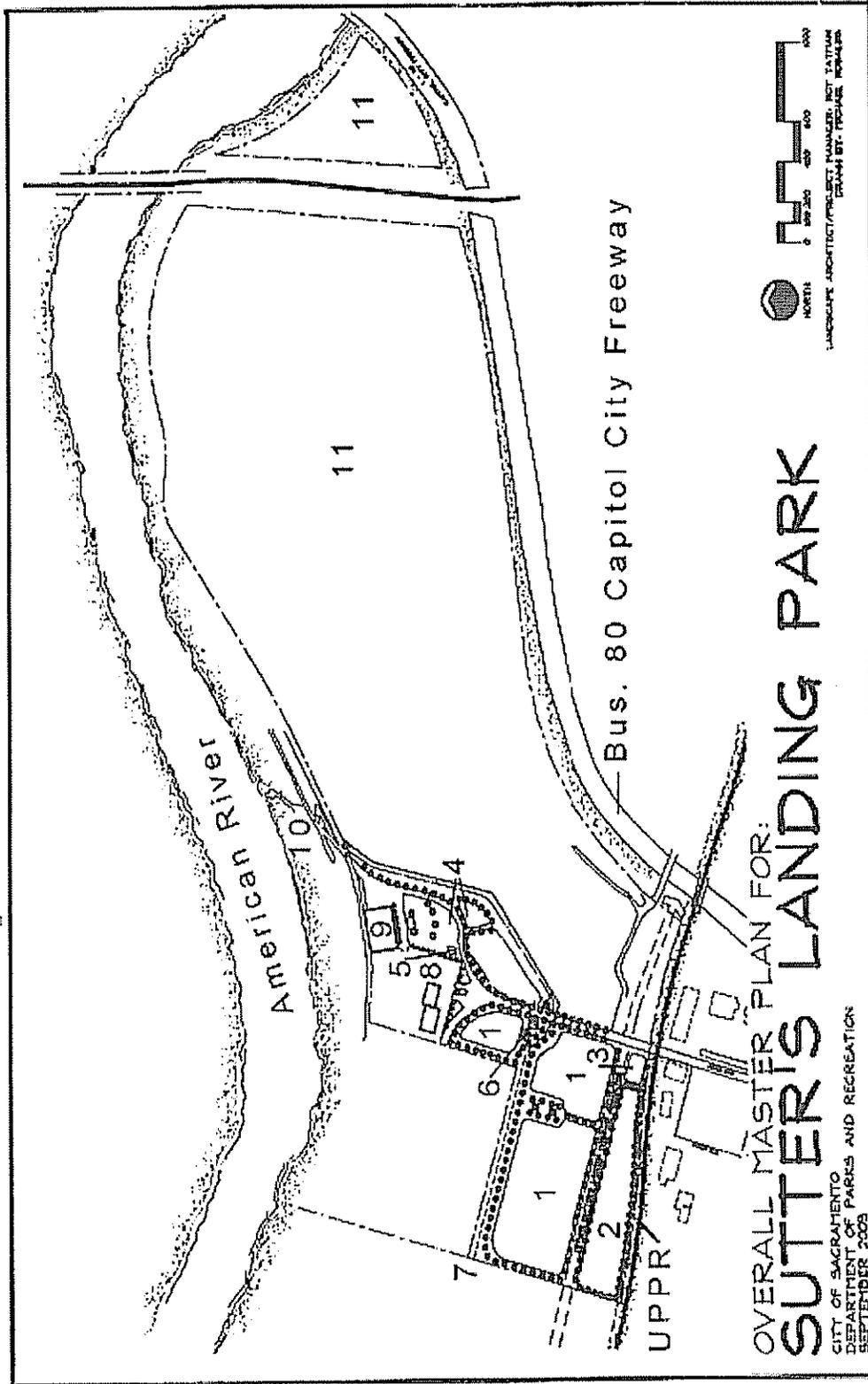


**Constraints**

- **Adjacent operations**
- **Railway & crossings**
- **Access, traffic & circulation**
- **Landfill**
- **Funding**

**Park Feasibility Report**

# Adopted Master Plan



## **Adopted Master Plan Park Elements**

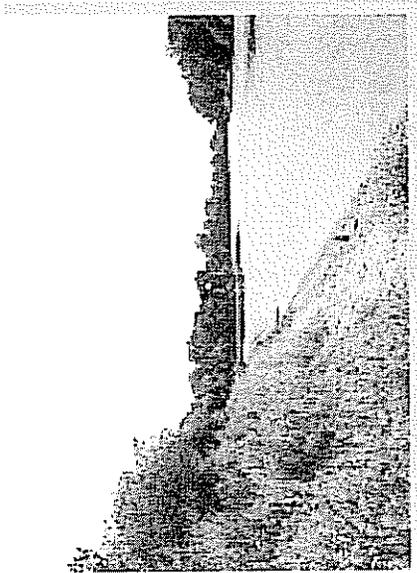
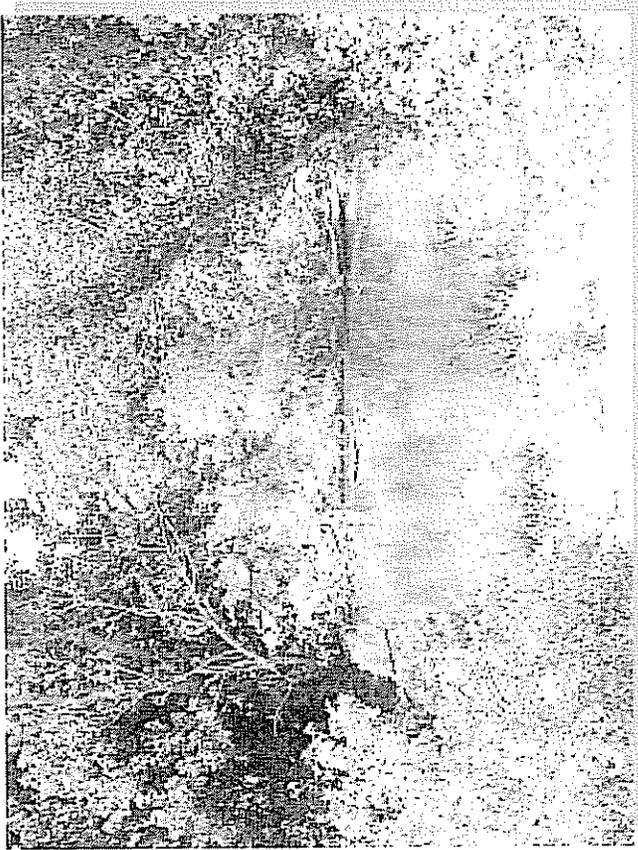
- 1. Active recreation court and field areas**
- 2. Dog Park**
- 3. Additional parking**
- 4. Passive recreation and court areas**
- 5, 6. Concession and restrooms**
- 7. Connection to Two Rivers Trail**
- 8. Park Operations and Recreation Offices**
- 9. Skatepark in existing baler building**
- 10, 11. River access and natural areas**

## *Additional Ideas From Community Meetings*

- *Equestrian Center*
- *Fish cleaning station*
- *Native plant nursery*
- *Wading pool for kids, lap pool for adults*
- *Picnic area/green space*
- *Historic building relocation area*
- *Bike ferry across River*
- *Pedestrian bridge over I-80*
- *Parking for cars and bicycles*

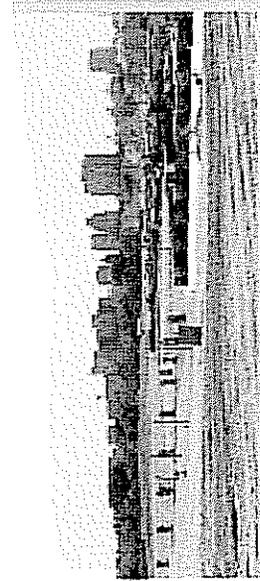
## **Additional Ideas From Community Meetings**

- **Tot lot, super adventure play area**
- **Above ground water spray feature**
- **Ice rink**
- **Tennis and badminton courts**
- **Motor boat docking & kayak rental**
- **Rock climbing**
- **BMX course and ramps**
- **Tagging wall**
- **Mountain Bike Trail**



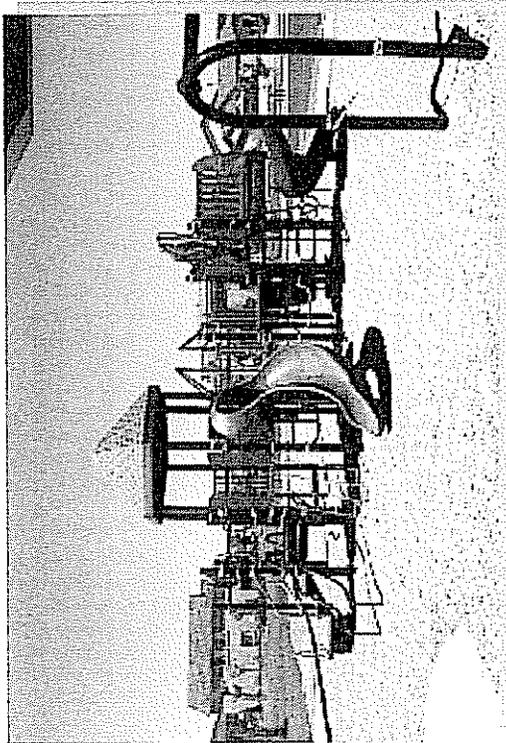
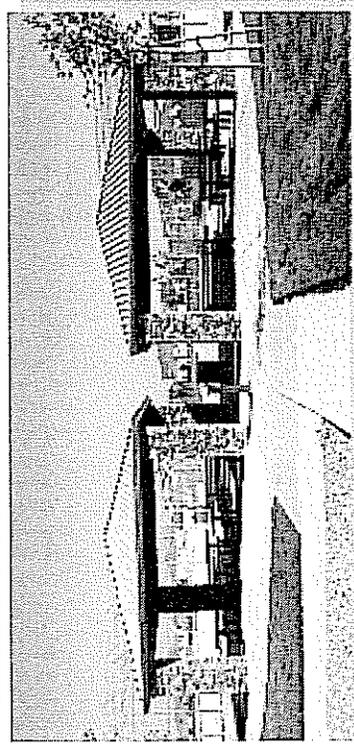
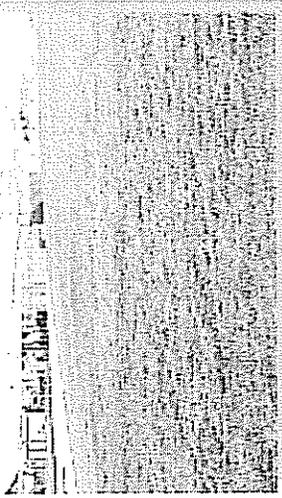
## Opportunities

- Central location
- River views, access & use
- Visibility (to and from site)
- Potential expansion of park
- Economic development
- "Museum Mile" concept



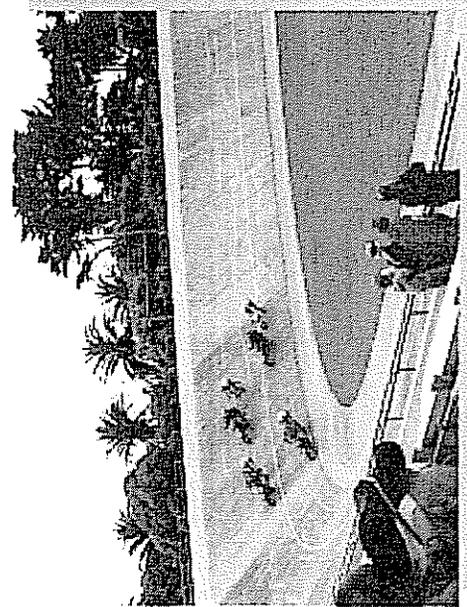
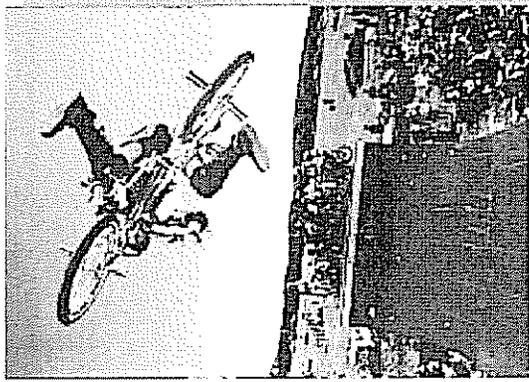
## Community Park Elements

- Sports courts
- Sports fields
- Concessions & restrooms
- Picnic areas
- Dog parks
- Playgrounds



## Community Park Elements

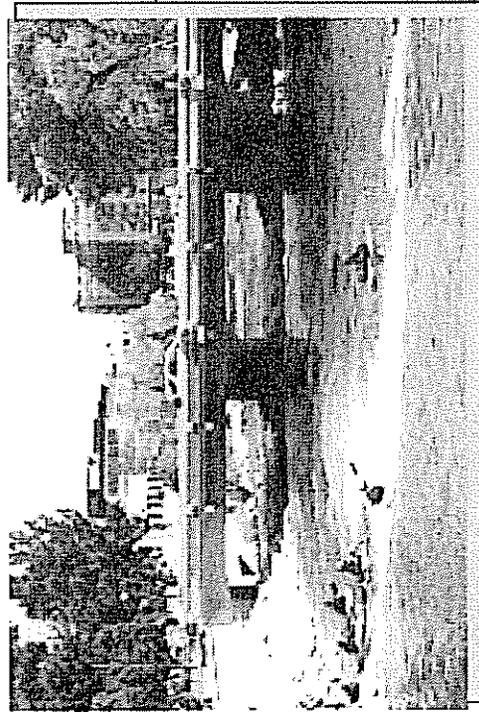
- Multi-Use Trails
- Parking
- Velodrome
- Performance stage
- Skateboard park
- BMX course



# Regional Park Elements

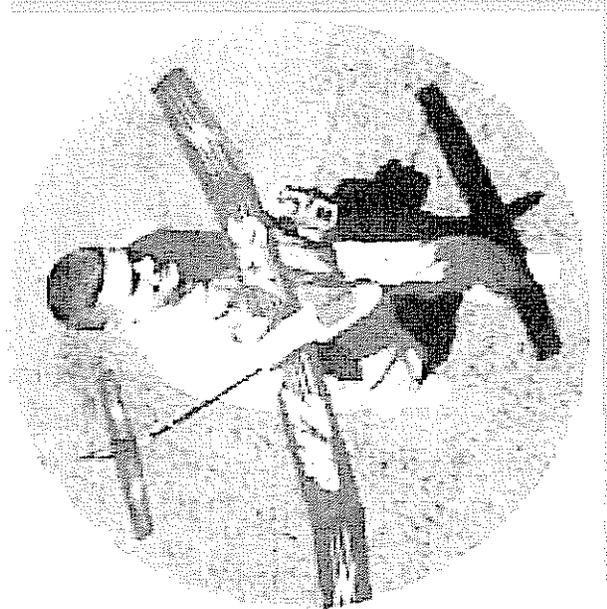
- Zoo

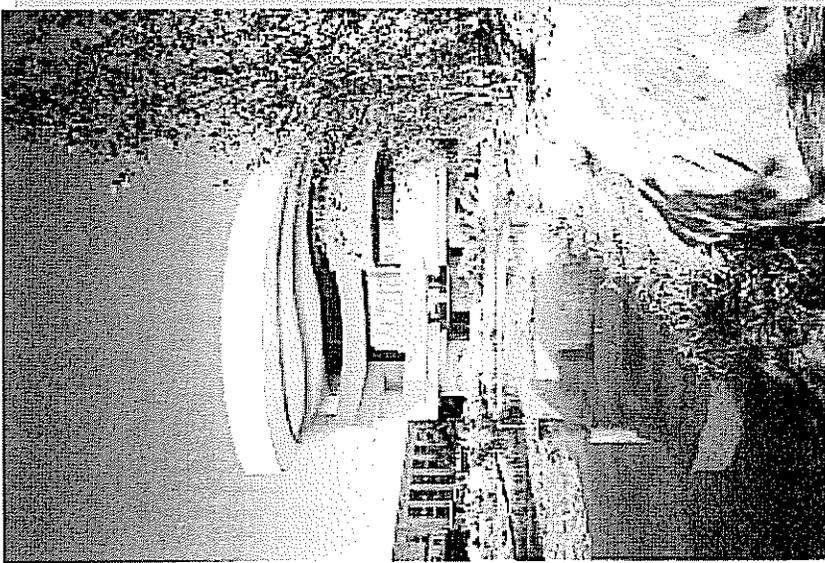
- River/Aquatics



## **Regional Park Elements**

- **Extreme Sports**
- **Airborne Hobbies**



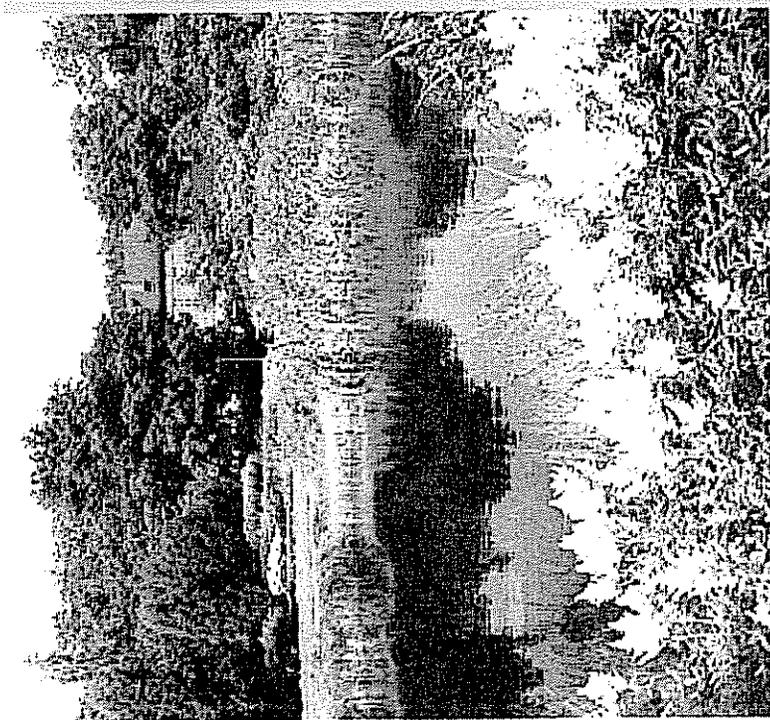
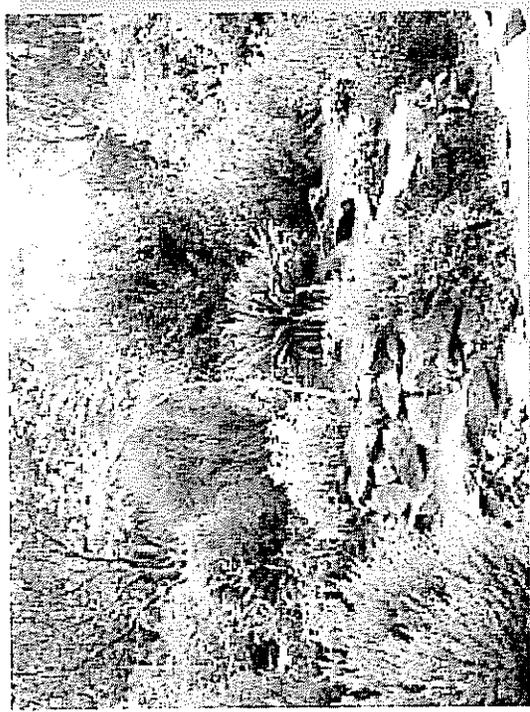


## Regional Park Elements

- Museum
- Interpretive Center
- Equestrian Center

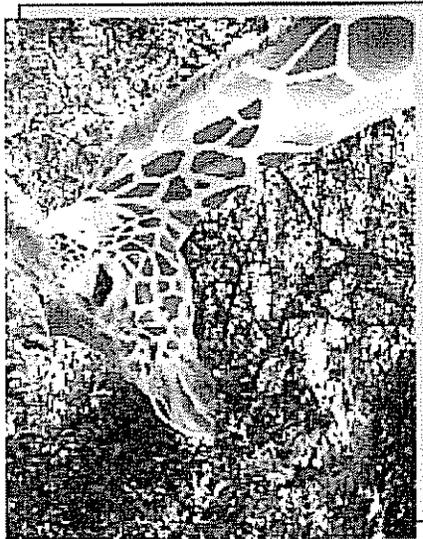
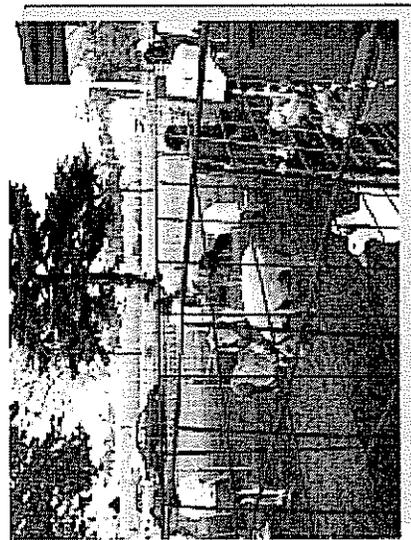
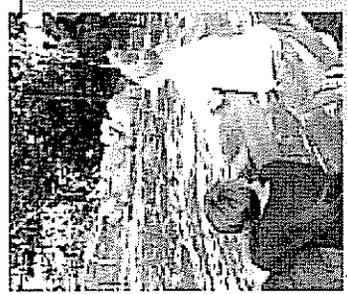
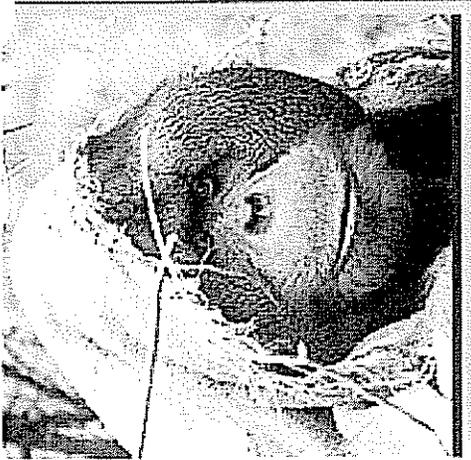


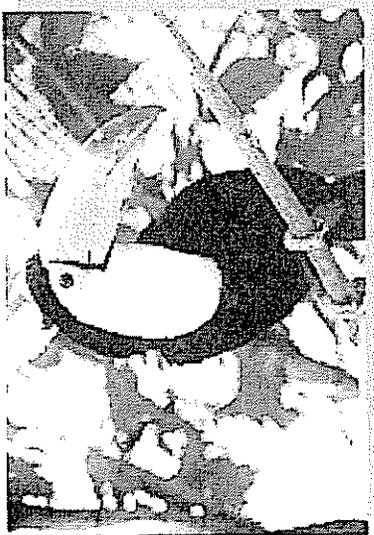
**Regional Park Elements**  
• Arboretum • Botanical Garden  
• Conservatory



**Example: A Zoo**

- Sacramento Zoo preferred location: expanded Sutter's Landing Regional Park



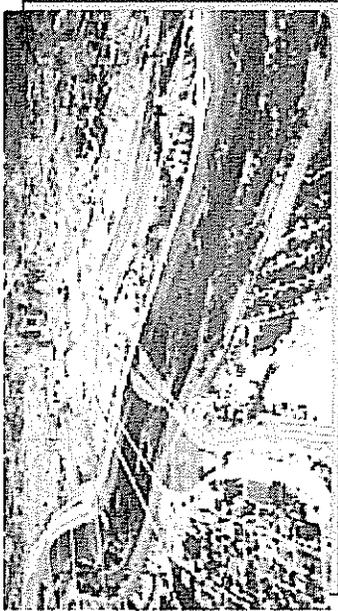
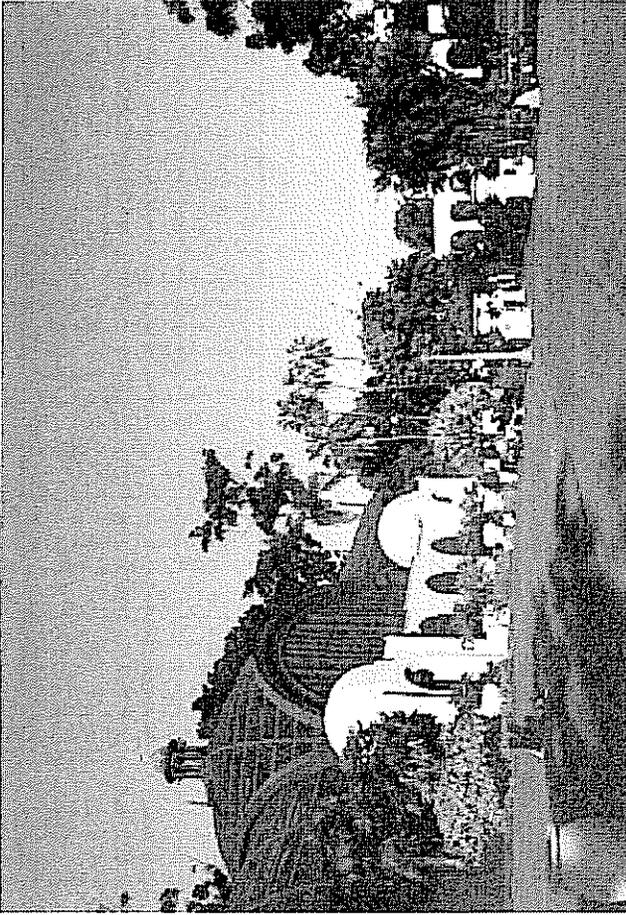


## Zoo Program (100 acres total):

- Parking
- Exhibits
- Support Facilities
- Buffer Lands

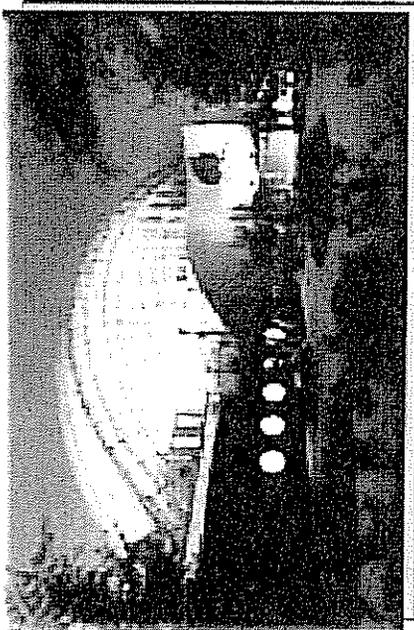
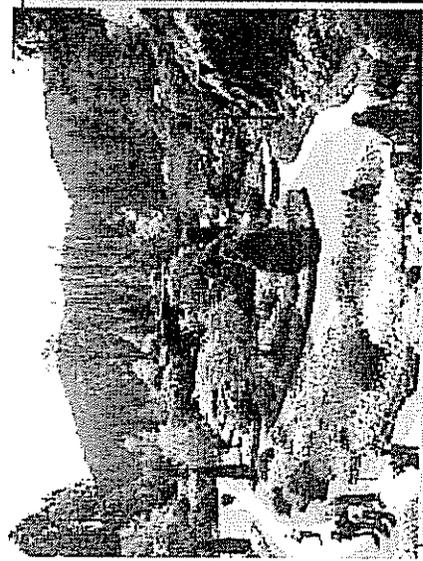
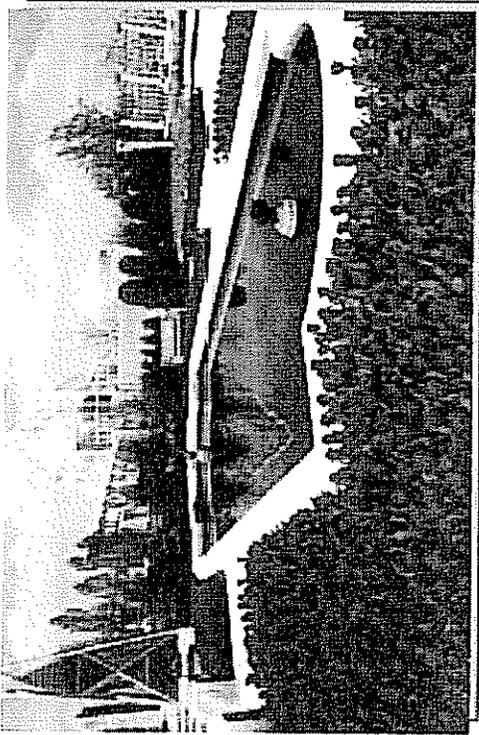
## Complementary Facilities





## ***Revised Park Master Plan***

- ***Provide access***
- ***The River***
- ***Community recreation***
- ***Regional destination attractions***



## ***Revised Park Master Plan***

- ***Park expansion***
- ***City enhancement***
- ***Economic development***
- ***Complementary uses***



**Sutter's  
Landing  
Regional  
Park:  
Larger  
Context**

## *Sutter's Landing Regional Park:*

### *Approvals and Next Steps*

- *Parks and Recreation Commission*
  - *November 3, 2005: Approved expanded vision for Park Master Plan*
- *City Council*
  - *March 7, 2006: Approve expanded vision for Park Master Plan*

Attachment 2 – Long Range Planning Committee Case Study, Adopted July 12, 2005  
by the Board of Directors of the Sacramento Zoological Society

**SACRAMENTO ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY**  
**Long Range Planning Committee**

Presenting the Case for Support

Land Banking for the Sacramento Zoo at the Sutter's Landing Park site.

The 75 years in Land Park has served us well, but what are our needs in the next 20 years and beyond? Previous Boards of Directors have discussed this issue on several occasions, but the timing was not right. It is important that the Long Range Planning Committee study this issue and recommend a site(s) in the metropolitan Sacramento region that will best meet these future needs of our zoo. They have completed this study and recommend 100 (=/-) acres of land at the Sutter's Landing Park site.

The Need

Imagine a world without animals. It is happening. Since the year 1600, more than 50 mammal and 100 bird species have disappeared from our Earth. We are currently losing species at 1,000 times the natural rate. Unless people are inspired to appreciate, understand and respect all living things, we will see a world without beauty, biodiversity and the resources that sustain our own human existence. The circle of life will be broken.

The Sacramento Zoo is committed to keeping the circle intact. The zoo is part of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association, a network of 212 accredited zoos and aquariums that have met the rigorous standards of the Association. Together we reach over 134 million visitors annually who hear our message of species and habitat conservation. The animals in our care are managed collectively through Species Survival Plans to ensure genetic viability.

The animals are our ambassadors for all our messages. We offer a product not available at the mall, on the internet, in theaters or anywhere else in the community. We offer live, exotic animals from around the world. Our current site limits not only the variety of species we may have but the actual space each animal can have for its habitat. Large species with significant space requirements, such as elephants, will never be an option at the current site.

### Current Parameters

The Sacramento Zoo has served the community well on the existing site for 75 years. However, it is time to look to the next 75 years. Realistically, this site will not be able to meet the future needs of the rapidly growing Sacramento community. The 14-acre site allows for only 8 acres devoted to animal exhibits. More critically, the Land Park location means that creating additional parking space for visitors is not an option. Ultimately, this is the most restrictive element of this site. Second to the parking issue is the blessing and curse of beautiful, heritage trees. The trees create a lush environment for our animals and visitors, but legal protection and public sentiment greatly restrict construction on the site.

### The Opportunity

The Sacramento Zoo is the primary environmental education resource for the community. As a safe, affordable family oriented facility, we offer the regional community the opportunity to experience the beauty and diversity of our world's wildlife. Each year, one half million visitors make a personal connection with endangered and threatened species from around the world.

If we are to continue to enhance quality of life experiences in our community like the zoo provides, the time is now to designate 100 (+/-) acres at Sutter Landing Park for a future zoo. The Society Board of Directors assumed responsibility for the management of the zoo in 1997. The Board spent the first 5 years dedicated to understanding that responsibility and recruiting visionary board members to take the zoo to the next level. A new Vision Master Plan was recently developed for the Land Park site, but significant investments in this site will be postponed until the probability of a new site is clearly understood.

Why now? The population in Sacramento is growing rapidly, and the opportunities to set land aside are rapidly diminishing. The objective is to find a parcel of land with enough space to allow buffer zones surrounding the developed area. The goal is to obtain 100 acres with the plan of developing 25-30 acres for the first phase of the zoo. In the future, we may still have opportunities to secure land in rural areas far from populations, but a zoo is a community resource as well as a tourist attraction and needs to be accessible to school groups and residents.

### The Product

The Sacramento Zoo's sustainable competitive advantage is its collection of live animals in a safe, beautiful, natural setting and the personal experiences it provides to visitors. These personal experiences are based on an intimate setting and frequent contact with staff and docents.

The Sacramento Zoo has a proven track record with providing quality programming and events. As an educational facility, the Sacramento Zoo provides visitors with various engaging opportunities in a living classroom. Through experiences such as public

animal talks, informational signs, organized school field trips, tours and animal stations, the zoo strives to motivate visitors to choose actions that conserve the Earth's biodiversity. As a recreational facility, the zoo hosts picnics, business mixers, concerts, evening catered parties and a number of special events.

The limited capacity of the existing site is not the only restriction to our ability to offer more in the way of programming and events. Again, parking is severely limiting, but additionally, because we are part of a neighborhood, we have sound and light issues that greatly compromise special events.

### The Vision

A community's values can be measured by the importance it places on the arts, sports, recreation and the environment. A first-class, well-managed zoological park is one of the cornerstones of a sound community.

The Sacramento Zoological Society has made inspiration and appreciation of wildlife and wild places our highest priority. To that end, we support local, national and international conservation efforts and always strive to motivate our visitors to take actions that will preserve the circle of life.

By becoming a partner in our mission, you will help maintain the quality of life for future generations in the Sacramento region. Your support in designating land at the Sutter's Landing Park site for a future new and enlarged zoo will ensure that the regional community always has the opportunity to experience the wonders of the natural world and the ability to conserve it.

*Approved by the Sacramento Zoological Society Board of Directors*

*Date: July 12, 2005*

**RESOLUTION NO. 2006-XXXX**

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

March 7, 2006

**APPROVING THE SUTTER'S LANDING REGIONAL PARK, CIP LS12, TO INCLUDE  
REGIONAL DESTINATION ATTRACTIONS.**

**BACKGROUND:**

- A. In December 2003, the City Council approved the revision of the 1995 Sutter's Landing Park Master Plan.
- B. In February 2005, the City completed a "Feasibility Report for Sutter's Landing Park" that concluded that any park improvement is feasible on this site at this time as long as added, more-costly design features can be constructed.
- C. On November 3, 2005, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommended supporting the expanded vision for Sutter's Landing Regional Park with the addition of "Retain, or replace with equal size, an onsite covered skatepark as a regional destination."

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

Section 1. Approves the Sutter's Landing Regional Park Master Plan, CIP LS12, to add regional destination attractions.

**Table of Contents:**

Exhibit A – Expanded Vision for Sutter's Landing Regional Park Master Plan

## ***Expanded Vision for Sutter's Landing Regional Park Master Plan***

- A. Address pedestrian and vehicular circulation (Sutter's Landing Parkway, RR interface, etc.) to maximize park accessibility and minimize impacts on surrounding neighborhood.
- B. Focus on natural and historical aspects of park as they relate to the American River.
- C. Uphold existing park master plan to meet community level recreational needs, including retention or replacement with equal size of an onsite covered skatepark as a regional destination.
- D. Augment regional park aspects of site by adding regional-draw destination attractions to park master plan.
- E. Consider expanding park westward beyond current boundaries to better accommodate addition of regional destination attractions.
- F. Provide regional destination attractions that will:
  - a. complement the "community park" elements of the master plan,
  - b. lend character to & further define the City, and
  - c. promote the area's economic development.
- G. Provide appropriate support facilities and complementary adjacent uses to park's proposed regional attractions (for food, lodging, entertainment, conferences, retail, etc.) that will establish park as destination.

