

January 14, 2005

City of San Diego
San Diego River Park Draft Master Plan

The following outlines comments received by Civitas regarding draft publications of the City of San Diego Draft Master Plan of the San Diego River Park. Each section begins with notation of the source of the comments, and each comment is followed by the action taken in response to the comment and the location of the action in the current draft document, dated January 2005.

Several sets of comments received were documented in printed copies of the Draft Master Plan. These comments have been edited into the current draft, but the comments themselves are not included in the following list.

In addition to the comments by others, Civitas has edited the document for grammar and clarity, updated drawings, maps, and other imagery.

A. Written Comments Received

The document is full of wonderful information reflecting the amount of work and community involvement in the process.

It would be helpful to encourage the reader to work through this “text heavy” document by the increase use of graphics and photographs which inspire and capture the vision of the River Park. Photos should be from San Diego, unless there is a specific reason not to which is identified. The photos/graphics can lead the reader with the text being secondary. As we know, people often flip through a document and use the visual cues to stop and read further.

The title pages for each section which are currently mostly blank, could be used to capture this vision.

Graphics have been added throughout the document, both on title pages and within the text sections. The team used all available images of people using the corridor, but more would be desirable if available from other sources.

Specific comments

Ex. Summary

Suggest adding a regional map of the river and watershed to provide context

Balance people, water and wildlife. The term accommodate should be changed to “ the San Diego River Park must be designed for and welcome all of them.”

Map added on p. 7 and terminology revised on p.9.

P. 13 Last paragraph, please change to “With the support of the San Diego River Park Alliance, Coastal Conservancy and San Diego Foundation, the ...”

Revised language incorporated on p. 15.

P. 18 MSCP. 1st sentence. “as a linkage between them and the Pacific Ocean.”
Revised language incorporated on p. 23.

P. 30 Please consider adding at the end. “Wherever possible and appropriate, management activities can also provide opportunities for additional research, monitoring, public education and enjoyment.”
Revised language incorporated on p. 34.

P. 33 3rd sentence, try to turn into an opportunity statement. Presidio (note: always use Presidio Park as opposed to Presidio since Park has multiple layers of historical significance) Park, Old Town State Park, and Mission San Diego de Alcalá are sites with particularly strong histories which can be further interpreted.
Additional language incorporated on p. 38.

P. 34 same comment about “accommodate.”
Revised language incorporated on p. 38.

P. 37 Third sentence, five should be “Five”
Last paragraph. “Concept” should be “Conceptual”
Revised language incorporated on p. 43.

In this section you may want to add a comment about the importance of considering multiple functions when implementing, especially in confined areas.
Additional language incorporated on p. 43.

P. 39 Please mention that off-channel ponds may provide wonderful recreational and community opportunities for fishing, boating, birding and other activities. Ponds often have water quality problems which can be improved through aeration and other practices.
Additional language incorporated on p. 45.

Under recommendations, change to “ Adopt programs to reduce/ remove non-point source loads of pollutants and to eliminate pollutants from entering river from their source.”
Additional language incorporated on p. 45 and p. 47.

P. 43 2nd paragraph, suggest generalizing statement about Costco. Such as “Encourage the use of below-grade pedestrian passages, such as the one under Friar’s Road at Fenton Marketplace.”
Additional language incorporated on p. 50.

P. 47 Suggest changing 1 or 2 of these photos to reflect smaller scale projects. Also please insert a statement which says that art should interpret the River. I would suggest changing the Recommendation to “Integrate art which interprets the River into the San Diego River Park experience”
Additional language and imagery incorporated on p. 56.

I would also change the 3rd recommendations to “Include artists in the design process and provide for a artist in residence program.” Add corresponding text into the details.
Additional language and imagery incorporated on p. 56.

P. 51 1st paragraph change “Presidio” to “ Presidio Park”
Revised language incorporated on p. 59.

P. 53 Move E1S to long term. This recommendation has created considerable concern and should not be listed as the first recommendation the reader reads.
Revision incorporated on p. 65.

E2S. Maintain Dog Beach as an off-leash recreational destination and community asset. Enhance the existing Dog Beach signage to include information about the River Park.
Revision incorporated on p. 61.

E6S Remove reference to Bay To Bay bridge. Sites for consideration , change YMCA to Mission Valley Preserve.
Revision incorporated on p. 61 (E7S).

E9S Remove specific reference to tennis courts and trailer park. Relocate dike should not be a short term goal. This area can be considered as a long term study need.
Revision incorporated on p. 61.

E10S Create “recreational” connection
Revision incorporated on p. 61.

E11S Add, “create connection to Friars Road from Friars Road.” (Pacific Highway)
Revision incorporated on p. 63.

E17S Add “ and possible interpretive opportunities.”
Revision incorporated on p. 63.

Add E 19S “Support efforts to create a Presidio Park Master Plan”
Revision incorporated on p. 63 (E21S).

Add E20S “Create a Presidio Park Entry Monument on Taylor Street which Incorporates its historic connection with the River.” Text would identify location as portion of Presidio Park on the north side of Taylor Street.
Revision incorporated on p. 63 (E22S).

P. 57

E7L Typo in “interpretive”
Revision incorporated on p. 65.

E8L remove “by connecting the San Diego River with Mission Bay”

Revised language incorporated on p. 65.

P. 58

remove “primarily Arrundo donax”

Change final recommendation to “Explore opportunities to acquire portions of Riverwalk Golf Course if it redevelops.”

Revised language incorporated on p. 66.

P. 59

2nd sentence change to “New park development should seek to provide at least 10 -12 acres....”

“fee-based recreation facility as will the Sefton Park little league field.”

Revised language incorporated on p. 67.

P. 63

L1S Study potential improvement to stream flow

Revised language incorporated on p. 75.

L4S “If stadium redevelops...”

Revised language incorporated on p. 75.

L6S “ Create interpretive opportunities at bridge crossings.” Pedestrian crossings create opportunities to see and interpret the river.

Language incorporated in general recommendations on p. 66.

P. 65

L 18S “Landscape disturbed areas along roadways” “Introduce native vegetation to create sense of River Park along roadways.”

Language incorporated on p. 77 (in multiple recommendations).

L 19S “Vacant parcel creates opportunity to create River Park amenities” “ Work with property owner to explore potential to create new river focuses community amenity.”

Language incorporated on p. 77 (L17S).

L22S Please remove specific reference to this parcel. State generally that a site for a heritage farm should be explored.

Revision incorporated on p. 77 (L16S).

L23S “Management of Water Primrose” “ Water Primrose is a native aquatic plant which requires management. A coordinated approach should be developed.

Language incorporated in general habitat recommendations on p. 49.

L24S “Enhance the trail experience with public amenities” “Increased directional and interpretive signage as well as other amenities such as drinking fountains should be provided to increase the public enjoyment of the trails.”

Language incorporated in general recreation recommendations on p. 53.

P. 67

L1L “Engage landowners to encourage any future redevelopment of Riverwalk GC addresses the River.”

L6L “Investigate opportunities to improve water quality in FSDRIP” “Initiate feasibility study to investigate removal of flow restrictions, aeration devices, etc. to improve water quality.

Revised language incorporated on p. 79.

P. 68 Photo caption. Water primrose is native. “River is choked by invasive vegetation”
Language revised on p. 80.

P. 73

C5S “ Integrate Caltrans property as part of riparian open space and pursue dedication of new river open space preserve”

Revised language incorporated on p. 85.

U3S Remove “Water Primrose” (it is a native plant)

Language incorporated in general recreation recommendations on p. 53.

P. 79

P4S. Santee Lakes is Padre Dam Municipal Water District. Change accordingly.

Revised language incorporated on p. 91.

P. 82

suggest adding “new open space preserve” per C5S

suggest adding “Mission Valley Preserve” and “Old Town State Park”

Additional language incorporated on p. 94.

P. 87

suggest adding reference to water fountains and also somewhere should be a mention that maintenance should be factored into all new facilities (this was an important issue to the community in many presentations)

Additional language incorporated on p. 103.

P. 89

Sustainable design, please mention solar power

Additional language incorporated on pp. 101 and 103.

| P. 93

| 3rd paragraph, rephrase to “Phase One identifies steps that may”

| Revised language incorporated.

| under trail development, rephrase to

“ Key connection between Mission Bay and Mission Valley residences and businesses, including hotels

“Initiate specific study of possible alignment....”

“...following trolley alignment through Riverwalk Golf Club and MTDB property.”

Revised language incorporated.

Under Design and construct trail....

“...for development of bicycle trail between golf course and the river on existing berm.”

Revised language incorporated.

P. 94

“As Qualcomm Stadium” change to “If Qualcomm Stadium”

FSDRP should be “FSDRIP” (2 locations)

“As Qualcomm redevelopment plans” change to “If Qualcomm Stadium”

Revised language incorporated.

Under Park Development

“As the stadium” change to “If the stadium”

Revised language incorporated.

Under Habitat/Natural Area Enhancement

Formatting issue “park issue these Plans.”

Revised language incorporated.

“and removal of exotic vegetation and further research “

Revised language incorporated.

add at bottom

“Establish River Open Space Preserve in river corridor on public lands between I-805 and I-15

Revised language incorporated.

P. 95

“As Qualcomm” change to “If Qualcomm “

Revised language incorporated.

Change “Coordinate with Mission Bay and Landfill study to prepare study to connect the San Diego River with Mission Bay” to “Coordinate with Mission Bay and Landfill study to investigate the relationship between Mission Bay and the River and opportunities to enhance water quality and hydrology for both.

Sub text needs to change to reflect this. Also note, the historic dike was on the south side of the river to prevent flows toward San Diego Bay. The north rip rap channel was built more recently.

Revised language incorporated.

Under Superior Mine

Change to “mining operations may continue for as long as”

Revised language incorporated.

Add after “coordinated with the goals of the San Diego River Park Master Plan.”

“Opportunities for acquisition of land in this areas should be explored as part of this process.”

Revised language incorporated.

Remove “The site’s challenge is to formulate an approach that accommodates development desires on the part of the land owners, while also protecting the river and adjacent habitat and providing trail access.... “ re-write entire paragraph to:

“Coordination with landowners and any future developers should begin in the short term, with the goal of finding a long-term solution to the challenge of protecting the river and adjacent habitat, improving water quality, and providing recreational opportunities and trail access.”

Revised language incorporated.

P. 96

change to “ The Scripps Institute of Oceanography with the assistance of the Regional Workbench Consortium and the support of the San Diego River Park Foundation, ...”

Revised language incorporated.

change “the San Diego area in the rejuvenation of the river corridor” to

“the San Diego area in the rejuvenation of the river corridor and to explore the relationship of the river to the Pacific Ocean.”

Revised language incorporated.

History of the San Diego River.

Should include a reference to the dam at Lake Cuyamaca which was built in the 1880s. Also, there should be a discussion about the how water from the river has supplied our community throughout its history. Include comments about Native Americans, the role the river played in the location of the Presidio and mission. How wells were located in the river and buckets of water were sold downtown. How water was pumped out of the river at Palm Canyon in present day Presidio Park up to one of the first reservoirs in the community in present day Mission Hills and then down to San Diego. Next was the dam at Lake Cuyamaca with the flume to the diverting structure which then had a flume to bring water down to the community. This is important and relevant to explain the role and importance of the river to San Diego and in part what makes this River Park unique.

Revised language incorporated.

P. 101

please remove editors comment re ludwigia peploides (water primrose)

add to last Key River Processes section

When necessary, artificial riffle structures or other aeration devices should be considered for improving water quality.”

Corrections incorporated.

Add to last paragraph

“However, further study of groundwater quality and quantity and its effect on habitat and wildlife as well as opportunities for groundwater recharge are warranted.”

Revised language incorporated.

Note: photo (small) is of castor bean, a non-native. Don't know why this is here?)
Image is replaced.

← - - - - **Formatted:** Justified, Tabs: Not at
144 pt + 153 pt

P. 102

in graphic. Water Primrose is a native plant. While it needs to be managed, it is not exotic.

Caption is revised.

P. 103

Exotic Invasive Vegetation

Water Primrose is a native.

Correction incorporated.

P. 105

The 2nd paragraph in Habitat Conservation section doesn't seem to follow.

Riparian corridor west of MTRP links to the Pacific Ocean.

Revised language incorporated.

P. 109

Attractions with recreational qualities. Serra Museum is good, but should Presidio Park should also be listed.

Old Town, you may want to list as Old Town State Park

At end of page, Junipero Serra is listed. I don't know what this refers to. However,

Presidio Park should definitely be included in this list.

Mission Trails should be Mission Trails Regional Park

Old Town should be Old Town State Park

Revised language incorporated.

P. 110

map should include Mt. Cuyamaca at 6521 feet

Caption added.

P. 111

I think this section should be much stronger. Considering the significance of the human history, this section seems like an after thought. Also, is it “Cosoy” or “Kosoi” both spellings are used.

Language is reinforced, spelling correction incorporated.

P. 112

This formatting is awkward and incomplete. This list of terms may not have meaning to the average reader and therefore should be put into context. Possible graphics could be used or a timeline graphic to show the development of the river valley.

Formatting is refined and additional image added.

P. 119 and on

This is terrific, but please make sure any changes previously made are reflected in this matrix.

Changes have been incorporated in both matrices.

B. Written Comments Received

Design guidelines from pages 85-89. The design guidelines that are included in this section will assist planners in implementing public and private projects that may be submitted for permits. The section should also include design guidelines for how buildings should be set back from the 100 foot buffer, their relationship to the buffer and river, including access, parking configurations, building façade treatments, materials, etc. At a minimum, the design guidelines that were developed for the city's Chollas Creek Enhancement Program should be included for this document. More specific or unique design guidelines could also be developed that would provide guidance for building placement and relation to the river.

Guidelines are revised and expanded.

(Page 85) The graphic for the water quality buffer should denote where the 100 foot buffer begins in relation to the floodway. In the current confluence section it is not clear where this buffer should be counted.

Language is added to graphic.

(Page 85) The confluence section denoted for Near Bend and Mission River Drive should be titled as a general guideline so that it can serve as direction for other parts of the River.

Language is added to graphic.

(Page 89) Maintenance ideas for private property should also include permit requirements for private ownership to maintain property if a maintenance assessment district is not yet established. This can ensure that private property is maintained at minimum levels.

Additional language is incorporated on p. 103.

Implementation

(Page 73) C1S Implementation, check typos.

Correction incorporated.

(Page73) C6S Add Navajo Community Plan to list for implementation. Study area is also within Navajo.

Correction incorporated.

(Page 93) Phasing, second paragraph, (Phase One is intended identifies steps ...) needs some grammar correction.
Corrections incorporated.

(Page 107) Analysis of Recreation within Community Plan Areas, Fifth paragraph, Tierrasanta is one word.
Correction incorporated.

C. Written Comments Received ___

1. On page 9 in the Executive Summary, there appears a list of Principles that are revisited throughout the document. Suggest that a Subtitle be placed in the Executive Summary with the word "principles" to allow the reader who is scanning or rereading the document to quickly find the list of principles.

Clarification incorporated.

1. The programming for flashing up titles on the maps is cute, but annoying and time consuming. If a web version is published, have the titles appear on the screen immediately.

Issue pertinent only to progress document on web.

3. Page 27. The term "Common" is used to describe an aspect of the project. While this may be a term of art for urban planning, it is not a term commonly used by the public. In looking at Webster's, the definition that most fits your intended usage is buried about six definitions deep. While you have done an excellent job of describing what a common is in the text following the introduction of the word, it may be helpful to add an adjective to express "common what".

Acknowledged, additional language added.

4. Page 39. Concerning the recommendation to augment flows to the river. We at Padre Dam would be delighted to increase the discharge of recycled water to the river system. We are currently constrained to 2 million gallons per day by permit from the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region. The permit is also very restrictive on nitrogen and phosphorous. Currently Padre Dam does not discharge any water to the watershed during summer months.

The interface of fresh water flowing in the river with the estuary or salt march at the mouth has been an issue. Several years ago (about 15) a Dr. Joy Zedler, then with SDSU was actively studying estuaries including the mouth of the San Diego River. At that time, a maximum flow from recycling plants was established to be 5 mgd to prevent dilution of the brackish water in the marsh. We do not have recent information. This is an area for additional study to support the notion of augmenting flows.

Acknowledged. Language modified on page 45.

5. Page 79. The City of Santee and Santee Lakes are mentioned in the same item. While it is essential to work with the City of Santee on Corridors, we wish to point out that Santee Lakes are owned and operated by Padre Dam Municipal Water District. More information on the Lakes is available on the website.

The District has adopted a master plan for upgrading and enhancing the lakes. Improvements include trail systems, additional RV camping, upgraded visitor center and lake improvements. As a neighbor, coordination on linking projects is appropriate.

We understand that Santee Lakes is outside of the study area, however mention of a clear trail connection to Santee Lakes with kiosk or trail head location, coordinated with the City of Santee would be an asset to the broader regional system. Santee Lakes is linked to informal trails that go all the way to Poway. Efforts are underway to formalize these trails and bring adjacent lands into a park system corridor.
Acknowledged, beyond study area.

6. We suggest that the report comment on the regional value of Santee Lakes ie. 420,000 visitors annually, campground, hiking, fishing, fitness loops, etc. And just a few steps away from the eastern edge of the planning area.
Acknowledged, beyond study area.

7. The report should also include mention of the Padre Dam Water Recycling benefits to the region. "Showcasing the promise of water reclamation." And it's water contribution to the river.
Acknowledged. Language added on p.45.

D. Written Comments Received

The San Diego Audubon Society very strongly supports the River Plan and feels that this document is a great start. The foundation of the plan is the vision and direction to work with the River as a whole, vs. a bunch of little fragments that are isolated physically as well as isolated in the way that we think of them. We strongly support this foundation. The specific projects discussed are a great catalyst. But, they need to be able to evolve over time as new opportunities arise and anticipated opportunities are lost. We hope that the document will emphasize the permanency of the basic vision and flexibility in finding and implementing specific projects that will work to implementing that vision.

We also urge that all of the improvements in the plan be selected, designed, and planned to minimize their impact on the natural functions of the River, water flow, water quality, wildlife movement, and wildlife habitat. For this Plan to be successful there needs to be continuity along the River. Any discontinuity in water flow, habitat, or trails will seriously degrade the whole project. The Plan needs to focus special priority to preventing future gaps and restoring previous gaps in flow capacity, habitat, and trails.
Acknowledged, integrated throughout master plan.

AVOID FILLING MORE OF THE RIVER'S FLOODPLAINS AND UPLAND BUFFERS

Plan needs to emphasize that we need to stop filling and channelizing the River as a major element in restoring the river. The documents Principles are very sound and inspiring, and they are really just common sense. But we have not used a lot of common sense with respect to the River in the past. The basic need to protect what is left of the River must be carefully stated and reinforced in the document, though it may seem obvious. It is not obvious to everyone. It may take considerable public investment, considerable persuasion, and aggressive enforcement of regulations to protect what is left, but without it the rest of the plan will provide much less value to the public and to the River's natural resources.

Language reinforced in several locations within the master plan.

SIDE CANYONS AND STREAMS

Besides encouraging projects that would reconnect streams and side canyons, it would be good for the document to include recommendations that would discourage projects that would tend to preclude the connections between the River channel and these tributary canyons and streams.

In cases where a better connection has already been precluded, encourage that wildlife movement culverts or overpasses be constructed under or over roads to provide some connections to isolated canyons and streams.

Language reinforced in several locations within the master plan, including p. 49.

HYDROLOGY

Principle Three: "Improve Hydrological Function" is appropriate, but pretty vague. We had hoped that it would be better amplified in the Recommendation section on Page 39. How will it be decided what flood flows the Plan should accommodate gracefully. How will that capacity be realized? Would the Plan support the elimination of riparian vegetation or further channelize portions the River to provide the needed capacity? Language of principle is revised and reordered as principle one. Language in recommendations is reinforced pp. 43-47.

We are very concerned with the recommendation "Augment flows to river" on pg 39. This seems to assume that additional year round flows would be a desirable feature. This will increase the growth of invasives and will tend to encourage vegetation that will obstruct flood waters or require costly and perpetual vegetation removal. It will exacerbate the conversion of habitat type that is likely to discourage some native species. The text claims that the augmentation would increase biodiversity. This is not supported and is not likely. With the presence of urban runoff we do not need to worry about the River becoming too arid. It will stay largely perennial. We urge that the plan work limit aseasonal flows to preserve as much ephemeral or semi-ephemeral habitat as practical to support a diversity of native species.

This "Augment flows to the River" recommendation seems to directly conflict with the goal of "let the River go to a more natural condition".

Language reinforced in several locations within the master plan.

DEEP PONDS FROM EXTRACTION SITES

The plan says that we should isolate the deep ponds from the river path. This would tend to additionally constrain the River's path. Please add a project that will seek to find clean fill material to make these ponds shallow so the River can flow through them without water quality problems.

Acknowledged. Additional language incorporated pp. 45, 82 and 83.

Deleted: .

EXTRACTION SITES

As extraction sites are closed in the river seek to change the reclamation plans to provide more area for river channel, over banks, and buffer zones and to minimize the filling of the floodplain for development sites.

Deleted: ¶

Language reinforced in several locations within the master plan.

Deleted: ¶

URBAN RUNOFF

The discussion on page 40 about the "reduction of non-point source loads" should specify that a program should be established to identify all of the points at which stormwater enters the River. Each should be evaluated for their water pollution, erosion, etc. impacts. An analysis of potential measures for prevention or for removal of that pollution should be made for each of them identifying the needed capacity, location, rough cost, and special difficulties or opportunities. Then each should be ranked in terms of cost effectiveness and we should start implementing them whenever opportunities arise.

Acknowledged, language reinforced on p. 47.

Please add to the Plan that a stormwater treatment basin for runoff from I-805 be constructed on the CALTRANS land on the south side of the River under 805. This is the property for which the Bragg Crane project was rejected by the City Council.

Acknowledged, language reinforced on p. 47.

Deleted: ¶
¶

ARIZONA CROSSINGS

Encourage that the Arizona crossings that cross the River in the Mission Valley area be replaced with bridges that would allow free water flow and wildlife movement and where possible, pedestrians and bicycles along the river

Acknowledged. Language reinforced in several locations.

IMPORTANT RESTORATION OPPORTUNITIES

FASHION VALLEY TROLLEY STATION RIVER RESTORATION

Please identify the area between the Fashion Valley Trolley Station and the Town and Country Hotel as a highest priority project. Currently the area is indicated as L8L, pg. 67 but the project does not include a hydrologic, ecological, or educational benefit in the table. This is probably the worst chokepoint in the River for water flow and for wildlife movement. It could be one of the most potentially visible and educational restoration projects along the river. We strongly encourage that the project and the table on pg. 67 be modified so that the project will have a major hydrological (better river flow),

ecological (better facilitate wildlife movement along the river at this chokepoint), and educational (by virtue of its high visibility), and not just recreational as indicated by the table. We urge that the undeveloped riparian area to the east of this project, between the River and the Union Tribune Building be included in this project.

| Acknowledged. Language added on p. 75 (L5S).

WATER HYACINTH TREATMENT PLANT SITE

Please specifically include the former "water hyacinth water treatment plant" site as a river restoration opportunity with a strong environmental recreation opportunity and discourage its conversion for upland uses. It is publicly owned, undeveloped, largely in the floodplain, and is ideal for a River Park venue.

| Revised language incorporated on p. 66.

FILL REMOVAL

Remove the cobble fill in the marsh area to the east and west of the I-5 bridge along the south bank of the river.

| Revised language incorporated on p. 63 (E23S).

HYDROLOGY AT INTERFACE BETWEEN FRESH WATER AND THE ESTUARY

Investigate the little dams between the I-5 and Pacific Highway bridges considering our new intent to feature the River rather than to subdue it. There is a lot of standing fresh water and soils that stay wet, therefore a dense patch of invasive trees, therefore a magnet for homeless people, and a serious litter, public safety, and water quality problem. I would hope that we would find out what the motivation for the dams was and see if they are consistent with our new vision for the River. If they are not, we should consider changing them. Allowing the brackish habitat to move upstream some could have a lot of habitat value. But, it would have to be carefully studied.

| Acknowledged, additional language incorporated.

BACKWATER MARSHES

Investigate the possibility for the additional marsh areas out of the main River flow, especially on the north bank of the River into the Southern end of Mission Bay Park. The area between Friars Road, West Mission Bay Drive, and I-5 is one possibility. The area called Calcutta that is used as a park worker's staging area is another. The project would be a tidal wetland area something like Famosa Slough but would be better connected to the River. It could be a great wildlife viewing opportunity and would serve as a refuge for wildlife and a seed source for natural revegetation after high flow events. It might be designed so that very large floods could flow through it into Mission Bay to reduce the flooding risk to Ocean Beach. But someone would have to make sure that it would not put Mission Beach at risk. It could require some bridges for Sea World Drive and/or Friars Road depending on the location.

| Acknowledged, language reinforced on pp 59 and 61.

BIKE PATHS: FRIARS ROAD MISSING LINK

About the bike path, it would be nice to ride a loop trail, for example starting at Rob Field, east on the bike path along the south bank, north across the Pacific Highway

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bridge, west on the bike lanes along Friars Road and then on the bike path along the north bank, south across the Sunset Cliffs bridge on the bike lanes and back to Robb Field.

The problem is the bike path along the Pacific Highway Bridge does not connect to the path along Friars Road. You have to either carry your bike down the steep riprap bank, or ride across the Pacific Highway Bridge, along Sea World Drive, etc. Neither are feasible for less athletic bicyclists. We need some connection to get from Pacific Highway down to the Friars bike path. It could be constructed traversing down the riprap bank.

Revised language incorporated on p. 63.

Another bike missing link is to get past 163 when riding along Friars Road. Going to either the East or the West, a bicyclist has to cross multiple lanes of on and off ramps that are pretty much at freeway speed. There could easily be a bike/pedestrian path under the 163 bridge linking to paths on each end. Some stubs for those paths already exist. It would also provide pedestrian and bike access to Fashion Valley stores for people that live along the River to the east.

Language reinforced on p. 75.

BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN PATH: MISSION CENTER PARKWAY BRIDGE

The Plan's maps show the "potential Mission Center Parkway Bridge". We urge that the bridge be designed just for pedestrians and bicycles and designed to minimize its impact on the River in terms of shadowing, flow obstruction, and visual impact. It would be nice if the bridge would have a slightly wider segment in the middle to act as a viewing area over the center of the River. This bridge should also be designed to facilitate foot access to the trolley and the IKEA Shopping Center for people working on the south side of the River.

Acknowledged, future of bridge is undetermined.

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ACTIVE RECREATION

The plan needs to identify adequate active recreation sites for the public in upland areas. If not, there is a huge risk that the substantial recreational needs of the residents in the Valley will provide pressure to encourage more filling or degrading floodplain area to get needed parks. This would cause greater impairment to water flow, water quality, or habitat value of the River.

Acknowledged. Language reinforced in several locations.

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E. Written Comments Received

The San Diego River Conservancy's (SDRC's) comments on the San Diego River Park Draft Master Plan (Master Plan) are organized into three sections: (I) Comments by the SDRC Governing Board Members; (II) Comments by the Executive Officer; and (III) Overarching Recommendations (Summary).

Water Quality is Common Theme

Water Quality (and related topics such as urban development, pollution prevention, and wetlands) was a common theme mentioned by several Board Members in their remarks regarding the draft Master Plan (see Section I). As discussed in the Executive Officer's Comments (Section II), the San Diego River's value depends on its water quality since it is the quality of the water that allows the River to support all of the beneficial uses (such as recreation and wildlife) that the San Diego River Park will offer and enhance. In Section II, I have provided significant information that the City may wish to consider incorporating into the Master Plan to address many of the Board Member's concerns.

I. COMMENTS BY THE SDRC GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

The following comments on the draft Master Plan were made by the Governing Board Members of the San Diego River Conservancy at their public meeting on July 9, 2004.

Include "No Development" Alternative: Entire Qualcomm Stadium Site Should be a Park

There are no parks in Mission Valley. So all the people that live in Mission Valley have no place to recreate.

"Mission Valley Central Park" concept plan developed and incorporated on p. 69.

Water Quality Recommendations Should be Augmented to Include Beneficial Uses, Water Quality Standards, and Pollution Prevention

Regarding Principle Three and the General Recommendations on Hydrology and Water Quality on page 39, it's a wonderful intent, but the recommendations in my opinion do not go far enough to address the water quality issues.

Additional language incorporated on p. 47.

Include a Principle on the Foolishness of Developing in the Floodplain

Additional language incorporated on p. 47.

Resolve the Conflict regarding the Area of the River that the Master Plan calls "Estuary" but City of San Diego calls "Land"

Acknowledged. No action taken as re-definition and mapping of wetlands is beyond the scope of the master plan.

Recommendation E7S:

This area is part of the Mission Bay Master Plan and it should not be in conflict with the Mission Bay Master Plan.

Acknowledged, integrated throughout master plan.

Emphasize Connectivity with Presidio Park

Language added in several locations throughout the master plan.

Mission Dam Flume still Exists and Pieces are Continually being Discovered

Bits and pieces of the flume are continually being found. So there are interpretive opportunities. We should be aware of the flume when we're planning trails.

Deleted: On page 60 of the Master Plan, it bothers me a lot that we're not looking at a vision that is an entire park. That's probably how Balboa Park and Mission Bay Park came about. Somebody said, let's make this area a park. It's very disappointing to me that there is not a fourth alternative that does not include development and that shows a greater vision for San Diego River Park that includes a park...another great park for our City with open space and possibly urban agriculture, that brings all the Principles in. ¶

Acknowledged and incorporated.

Must Have a Management Plan to Ensure Exotics are Not Reintroduced

“Eliminate invasive plant species and reintroduce native species” is only half of the task. To deal effectively with exotic species, you must also assure they are not reintroduced. So not only is the removal important, but the assurance that there is a management plan to prevent their reintroduction.

Language added in several locations throughout the master plan, including p.49.

Work with the Golf Courses to Implement Pollution Prevention

Language added in several locations throughout the master plan, including pp. 47, 67, 82.

Give Non-Golfing Public Access to the River Through Golf Courses

Language added in several locations throughout the master plan.

Tie Everything Together / Look at the River as a Whole / Link Canyons to Valley Floor

Language reinforced in several locations throughout the master plan, including p. 36.

Look for Synergism between People, Water, and Wildlife; Not Balance

Language added in several locations throughout the master plan, including pp. 9, 33 and 36.

Improve Hydrologic Junction Between Fresh Water and Salt Water at the Mouth

Acknowledged, language reinforced on pp 59 and 61.

Remove 1.5 Acres of Cobble Fill South Side of Channel Under Interstate 5

Language added on p. 63 (E23S).

Create Backwaters off the Estuary in Mission Bay to Provide Refuges for Wildlife and Vegetation

Language added pp. 47 and 48.

Replace all Culvert Crossings with Bridges to Allow Passage of Wildlife and Water

Language reinforced in several locations throughout the master plan, including pp. 45, 79 and 81.

The Plan should be Balanced in Favor of the Ecology

Acknowledged. Language reinforced in several locations in document, incl. p. 40.

Ask All Cities to Implement a Building Moratorium within One-half Mile of the River

Acknowledged. No action incorporated in master plan.

Common / Connectivity of Entire River Valley with Canyons and Open Space is Important

Acknowledged. Integrated throughout master plan.

We Need an Explicit Vision for the Pathway from Dog Beach to Inaja Memorial
Acknowledged and integrated in master plan.

Reorder the Principles: Move Principle Two to the End (Make it Principle Seven)
Order and language of principles has been revised.

Modify Language of Current Principle Seven: Balance People, Water, Wildlife
The language of Principle Seven needs to be modified to reflect the fact that the system is not balanced.
Revised language incorporated.

Consider Adding Kayaking Down the River as a Visionary Goal of the Master Plan
Acknowledged and incorporated into recreational component of plan.

Rivers can be a Community Identifying Element / Put Out a Community Challenge
From a statewide perspective, other conservancies use their water resource as a community-identifying element. In Tahoe, they use water clarity as the identifying element on what people need to do around the edges to keep Lake Tahoe clean. Ms. Scarborough puts out a challenge to each of us to engage the adjacent communities to keep the River clean
Acknowledged, integrated throughout master plan.

Overall comment about the draft Master Plan as a whole is that it is well written, very informative, and the principles and recommendations are generally good. The bulk of the following comments concern what is *not* written.

1. The Importance of Water Quality Must be Emphasized in the Master Plan
Additional language incorporated in several locations, including p. 45.

The Master Plan (and the Park itself) presents an outstanding opportunity to educate municipal land use planners, elected officials, private land owners (e.g., golf courses), and the general public about the critical role that they each play in degrading or protecting the River's water quality and hence the River's ability to provide human enjoyment and support wildlife. In order to effectively communicate the water quality message, I believe the Master Plan needs to address at a minimum the following topics/issues:

2. Urban Development and Hydromodification Have Caused Serious Water Quality Degradation
As a result of extensive urban development and hydromodification (i.e., structural flood control), the lower San Diego River is probably the most degraded and altered river system in the San Diego Region. To restore and protect the River, we must understand the impacts of land use decisions, urban development, and hydromodifications on water quality.
Additional language incorporated on pp. 119 and 120.

3. There is a Direct Link Between Land Use and Water Quality

A fundamental concept that is often overlooked is the direct link between land use and water quality. Land use practices during the past fifty years (commercial, residential, transportation, and industrial) have had profound and adverse impacts on the health of the San Diego River. The Master Plan needs to explain the direct long-term consequences of land use decisions on water quality including the basic concepts below.

Additional language incorporated on pp. 119 and 120.

4. Urban Development Increases Pollutant Load, Volume, and Velocity of Runoff

During urban development two important changes occur. First, natural vegetated pervious ground cover is converted to impervious surfaces such as paved highways, streets, rooftops, and parking lots. Natural vegetated soil can both absorb water and remove pollutants providing a very effective natural purification process. Because pavement and concrete can neither absorb water nor remove pollutants, the natural purification characteristics of the land are lost.

Secondly, urban development creates new pollution sources as human population density increases and brings with it proportionately higher levels of car emissions, car maintenance wastes, municipal sewage, pesticides, household hazardous wastes, pet wastes, trash, etc. which can either be washed or directly dumped into the San Diego River.

As a result of these two changes, the runoff leaving the developed urban area is significantly greater in volume, velocity, and pollutant load than the pre-development runoff from the same area.

Additional language incorporated on pp. 119 and 120.

5. Water Quality Degradation Increases with Percent Imperviousness

The increased volume and velocity of runoff from developed urban areas greatly accelerates the erosion of downstream natural channels and increases flooding potential. Numerous studies have demonstrated a direct correlation between the degree of imperviousness of an area and the degradation of its receiving water quality. Significant declines in the biological integrity and physical habitat of streams and other receiving waters have been found to occur with as little as a 10% conversion from natural to impervious surfaces. (Developments of medium density single family home range between 25 to 60% impervious).

Language reinforced pp. 119 and 120.

6. All Three Phases of Urban Development Impact Water Quality

Because all three phases of urban development have a profound impact on water quality, the Master Plan should provide recommended actions to reduce impacts during each phase.

(a) Land Use Planning Phase for New Development: Because land use planning and zoning is where urban development is conceived, it is the phase in which the greatest

and most cost-effective opportunities to protect water quality exist. When a local government incorporates policies and principles designed to safeguard water resources into its General Plan and development project approval processes, it has taken a far-reaching step towards the preservation of the water resources for future generations. In addition controlling the contribution of pollutants in urban runoff discharges in the early planning stages of land development is significantly more cost effective than retrofitting existing development to later remove pollutants.

(b) Construction Phase: Siltation is currently the largest cause of river impairment in the United States. Sediment runoff rates from construction sites (or sediment disturbing industrial activities) greatly exceed natural erosion rates of undisturbed lands causing siltation and impairment of receiving waters. Pollutants from construction sites can be effectively reduced through the use of pollution prevention, source control, and treatment control best management practices (BMPs).

(c) Existing Development: Local monitoring results confirm substantial pollutant loads to San Diego receiving waters in runoff from existing urban development. A combination and range of pollution prevention, source control, and treatment control best management practices provide the most effective means of reducing pollutants from existing development.

Acknowledged, language reinforced on p. 47.

7. Pollution Prevention is Key to Improving Water Quality

The Master Plan should specifically recommend Pollution Prevention as a high priority for protecting the San Diego River. Pollution prevention is defined as the initial reduction/elimination of pollutant generation at its source. It is the best and most cost effective “first-line of defense” and should be used in conjunction with source control and treatment control BMPs. Pollutants that are never generated do not have to be controlled or treated.

Language reinforced p. 47.

8. Source Control and Treatment Control BMPs Supplement Pollution Prevention

Source Control BMPs (both structural and non-structural) minimize the contact between pollutants and flows (which carry pollutants to receiving waters) or which retain polluted runoff on-site (and out of receiving waters). The Master Plan should recommend that pollutants be identified and eliminated at their source. Treatment control (or structural) BMPs remove pollutants from urban runoff and are typically the least cost-effective BMP alternative.

Language reinforced p. 47.

9. Impacts of Hydromodification and the Loss of Wetlands

When the natural wetlands associated with the San Diego River system are filled, we lose the wetland’s critical ability to filter pollutants (before they enter the River), provide habitat, provide flood protection, and support numerous beneficial uses. When the River itself is channelized, confined, dammed, or otherwise altered, its morphology, natural flow regime, and function are significantly and adversely

modified. Because the River is now segmented, straightened, shortened, and parts of the natural river bed and bank substrate/vegetation have been replaced with impervious surfaces, erosion of downstream natural channels is accelerated, and flooding potential is increased. The River's natural ability to assimilate pollutants, provide habitat, support beneficial uses, and replenish beach sand are also permanently reduced or lost.

Language reinforced pp. 46 and 120.

10. Explain the Watershed Concept

As more pollutants are contributed from diverse sources along the River's length, the cumulative pollutant loading, volume and velocity of urban runoff intensifies as it travels through the watershed on its journey to the ocean. It is important to understand that inland sources of pollutants contribute to coastal impairments many miles away, and for this reason, the most effective way to protect receiving water quality is on an overall watershed basis. I was disappointed that the Master Plan did not explain the basic concept and significance of a watershed. Understanding the concept and acknowledging that neither the San Diego River nor urban runoff recognize political boundaries (as they flow downhill), is key to understanding how best to resolve the water quality impairments.

Language reinforced p. 120.

11. Master Plan Should Provide the Regulatory Framework

The Master Plan should provide an overview of the regulatory framework in which the River Park will be conceived, built, and operated. The Clean Water Act and the California Porter Cologne Water Quality Act are the primary federal and state water quality statutes. In the San Diego River Watershed, these statutes are administered by the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board, a key state regulatory agency.

Additional language incorporated on p. 24 and 110.

12. Explain Beneficial Uses, Water Quality Objectives, Water Quality Standards, and the Basin Plan

The Master Plan should include a definition and description of the beneficial uses and water quality objectives designated for the San Diego River and its tributaries. Pursuant to the governing statutes, water quality objectives are established at levels necessary to protect designated beneficial uses such as fishing and swimming. Together the beneficial uses and water quality objectives comprise the legally enforceable water quality standards applicable to the River.

There are numerous varied beneficial uses for the San Diego River that range from municipal drinking water supply; agricultural supply; and recreation to commercial fishing; and habitat for rare, threatened, or endangered species.

Language reinforced in several locations throughout the master plan.

Beneficial Uses and Water Quality Objectives are designated in the Regional Board's Basin Plan for the San Diego Region. The Basin Plan is a very important Water Quality Control Plan which is applicable to the entire San Diego Region and is

adopted by the Regional Board in a formal public hearing. The Basin Plan also includes broad discharge prohibitions applicable to the San Diego River Watershed. The Basin Plan should be discussed in the Master Plan.

Acknowledged, Additional language incorporated on p. 24.

13. San Diego Municipal Storm Water NPDES (MS4) Permit

The single most significant state regulatory permit governing water quality in the entire San Diego River Watershed is the Regional Board's San Diego Municipal Storm Water NPDES permit, Order Number 2001-01. The Municipal Storm Water Permit directs municipalities to implement an urban runoff management program on a jurisdictional and "*watershed-level*" that, at a minimum, includes the five following fundamental requirements: (1) Prohibit non-storm water discharges into its storm water conveyance system; (2) Implement best management practices (BMPs) to reduce pollutant discharges into the storm water conveyance system to the maximum extent practicable (MEP); (3) Ensure that discharges from the storm water conveyance system do not cause or contribute to an exceedance of water quality objectives in receiving waters; (4) Identify (actively find) and eliminate sources of illicit discharges; and (5) Enforce local municipal water quality-related ordinances and permits. A very important part of the BMP requirement is public education.

It is important to note that the Municipal Storm Water Permit holds municipalities responsible for the long-term water quality consequences of their land use decisions. Furthermore the Permit specifically directs the municipalities to protect water quality on a "*watershed-basis*" and to *conduct land use planning on a "watershed-basis"*. Land use planning on a watershed scale enables multiple jurisdictions to work together to plan for both development and resource conservation that can be environmentally as well as economically sustainable. To underscore the importance of and need for municipalities to work on a watershed scale, I recommend that the Municipal Storm Water Permit be reissued on a watershed-basis when it comes up for renewal in 2006.

Acknowledged, language reinforced.

14. The Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Impaired Waters

When the designated water quality objectives of a waterbody are violated and its beneficial uses are no longer protected, the Regional Board is required to add the waterbody to the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Impaired Waters. The Master Plan should explain the significance of the Section 303(d) list and provide the listed waterbody segments / pollutants and extents of impairment within the San Diego River and its tributaries.

The lower 20 miles of San Diego River, mouth of the San Diego River at Dog Beach, Forrester Creek, and Famosa Slough are currently designated as "water quality impaired" due to one or more of the following pollutants: Fecal Coliform (bacteria), low dissolved oxygen, phosphorus, total dissolved solids, pH, and eutrophic conditions. Designation as "water quality impaired" means that the water quality objectives for these pollutants are being violated and that the beneficial uses are not

fully supported or protected in these waters.

The Master Plan should also include a general discussion of the significance of biological assessments and a more comprehensive discussion of bioassessment results conducted in the San Diego River Watershed. Bioassessment data shows healthy aquatic communities in the upper portion of San Diego River Watershed and significantly degraded communities in the lower Watershed.

Acknowledged, Additional language incorporated on p. 24.

15. Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)

Under the Clean Water Act, the Regional Board is obligated to calculate a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for all waterbodies / pollutants on the Section 303(d) list of impaired waters. The purpose of a TMDL is to restore an impaired waterbody to health so that it will once again meet its designated water quality objectives and so its beneficial uses will again be supported and protected. The Regional Board is currently developing TMDLs for every bacteria-impaired waterbody in the San Diego Region including the San Diego River, Forrester Creek, and the mouth of the San Diego River. Following final TMDL adoption, the Municipal Storm Water Permit will be amended to include the TMDL prescribed numeric waste load allocations and reductions needed to ensure compliance with the bacteria water quality objective.

The Municipal Storm Water Permit (which is preventative) and TMDL program (which is restorative) are the two key water quality regulatory tools that will have the most profound impact on the future of the San Diego River. The Master Plan needs to recognize the role of these important regulatory mechanisms in the San Diego River Watershed and the River Park.

Acknowledged, Additional language incorporated on p. 24.

16. Additional Statutes, Regulations, and Agencies

The Master Plan should also describe the role and authority of the Department of Fish and Game and the US Fish and Wildlife Service in protecting wildlife resources and habitat. It should also provide a summary of applicable recommendations and regulations (e.g., all trails and signs must be a minimum of 100 feet from the drip line of riparian corridor). The Regional Board's Clean Water Act section 401-certification authority and applicability to the San Diego River watershed should also be discussed.

Acknowledged, additional language incorporated.

17. Additional Planning Documents

The Master Plan should also recognize SANDAG's Regional Growth Management Strategy. The Water Quality Element of the Strategy (SANDAG, 1997) outlines the types of programs that may be incorporated into the local planning and development review processes to improve the Region's water quality and comply with existing state and federal regulations.

Acknowledged, additional language incorporated.

18. Master Plan Principles and Recommendations

I strongly recommend that the Principles and Recommendations of the Master Plan reflect an understanding of the above concepts and regulatory framework. It is my hope that the Master Plan will move the Park in the direction of reducing water quality impacts due to land use decisions, urban development, and hydromodification. I also recommend that the Master Plan support a very strong educational component to teach San Diegans basic water quality concepts such as “you are part of the problem; here’s how you can be part of the solution”.

Consistent with the basic goals of the Clean Water Act, it is my vision that the San Diego River will some day be fully fishable and swimmable; and from a very long-term perspective, kayakable. Consider adding a Principle that conveys these themes. Lastly, I recommend providing more explanatory text for each of the Principles and Key Recommendations (e.g., clarify the distinction between Principle One and Principle Four; why are they separate Principles?).

Acknowledged, language reinforced in several locations throughout document.

19. Purpose or Objective Statement

The Master Plan for the River Park should include a purpose or objective statement.

Language reinforced on pp. 7 and 15.

20. Mission City Parkway Bridge – Recommendation L4L

Since the Mission City Parkway Bridge was not approved and does not exist, it makes little sense in recommendation L4L to “improve the Mission City Parkway Bridge over I-8 to connect people to uplands” (pages 67, 127). Either delete the recommendation or clarify the meaning. Do you mean consider a pedestrian-only bridge?

Keynote removed, p 75.

OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS (SUMMARY)

The following section *summarizes* overarching recommendations for the San Diego River Park and Master Plan. Some of the recommendations also reflect comments made by individual SDRC Board Members and many of the recommendations are supported in the San Diego River Park Conceptual Plan (California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, 2002). The central theme for the overarching recommendations is to restore the San Diego River to a more unaltered condition and naturally functioning river system that supports recreation and wildlife.

“Maintaining the quality of water and the functional integrity of aquatic ecosystems is essential to the health, economic status, and long term survival of the human race.”

1. Improve Water Quality

Because the River’s value depends on its water quality, a concerted effort should be made to improve water quality in the San Diego River at every opportunity. It is the quality of the water that allows the River to support all of the beneficial uses that the

River Park provides such as recreation and wildlife species and habitat. The Master Plan should discuss the beneficial uses and water quality objectives applicable to the San Diego River as designated in the Basin Plan for the San Diego Region. Acknowledged, language reinforced in several locations throughout document.

2. Limit Future Development in Floodplain

Limit further development in the floodplain along Entire River length. Strengthen floodplain ordinances as necessary. Consider re-zoning the floodplain as open space. Discuss the direct link between land use planning decisions and water quality. Discuss the impacts of urban development on water quality.

Acknowledged, language reinforced in several locations throughout document.

3. Make River-Sensitive Land Use Decisions

Consider modifications to the General Plan and Project Approval Process as required by the governing Municipal Storm Water Permit (San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board Order No. 2001-01) and recommended by SANDAG's Regional Growth Management Strategy (1997). Limit further conversion of natural ground cover to impervious surfaces. Conduct land use planning on a "watershed scale" (with neighboring jurisdictions) as required by the Municipal Storm Water Permit. Enforce numeric sizing criteria on new construction as required by the Municipal Storm Water Permit. Enforce the use of pollution prevention, source control, and treatment control best management practices at all existing development as required by the Municipal Storm Water Permit. Limit future resource extraction operations.

Acknowledged, language reinforced in several locations throughout document.

4. Limit Future Hydromodification of River

Work with Regional Water Quality Control Board and Army Corp of Engineers to limit further hydromodification (i.e., structural flood control) of the San Diego River. Discuss the impacts of hydromodification on river function.

Acknowledged, language reinforced.

5. De-Channelize / Remove Man-Made Flow Impediments

To the maximum extent practicable, consider removing, softening/naturalizing, or widening existing man-made channel structures. Remove man-made impediments to River flow. For example, replace culverts at all road crossings with bridges, eliminate flow constrictions, and remove cobble fill and dams at the River mouth.

Acknowledged, language reinforced in several locations throughout document.

6. Create or Expand Wetlands

Create or expand wetlands (natural, restored, or constructed) and backwater areas along entire River length. This will (1) greatly improve water quality by filtering and removing pollutants from urban runoff; (2) reduce flooding potential by acting as a sponge and releasing flood waters slowly; and (3) serve as a refuge for native flora and fauna, allowing them to survive and re-establish after major flood events. Discuss these important functions of wetlands.

Acknowledged, language reinforced in several locations throughout document.

7. Remove and Prevent Reintroduction of Exotic Species

Implementing an ongoing management strategy to prevent the reintroduction of exotic species is just as important as the initial removal. To the extent possible, initiate exotic species removal efforts at the headwaters and move downstream over time. Replant with native species.

Acknowledged, language reinforced in several locations throughout document.

8. Connect all Existing Parks, Open Space, Canyons, and Tributaries / Create New Parks

As recommended in the Master Plan, create connectivity (from a trail, habitat, and flow perspective) between the San Diego River and all existing parks (including Presidio Park), open space, canyons, and tributaries. Connectivity is wonderful for people and essential for animal biodiversity. Create new parks and maximum green-space at every opportunity. Consider dedicating the entire Qualcomm Stadium site as a park (without new development).

Acknowledged, language reinforced in several locations throughout document.

9. Use Pervious Surfaces

To improve water quality, use permeable surfaces (e.g., porous paving) throughout and adjacent to the San Diego River Park. To the maximum extent practicable, pervious surfaces should be used for all trails, parking lots, and other Park facilities. Encourage the use of permeable surfaces at new and existing developments adjacent to the River.

Acknowledged, language reinforced in several locations throughout document.

10. Emphasize Education

The Master Plan and the Park itself represent outstanding opportunities to educate municipal land use planners, elected officials, property owners (e.g., golf courses) and the general public about the critical role that they each play in degrading or protecting the River's water quality and hence the River's ability to provide human enjoyment and support wildlife. The Master Plan and Park should teach:

- Direct link between land use and water quality
- Pollution Prevention
- Best management practices (source control and treatment control)
- Watershed concept
- "You are part of the problem; here's how you can be part of the solution"
- Stewardship of the River and its natural, cultural, historical resources.

Acknowledged, language reinforced in several locations throughout document.

11. Add a New Principle Focused on Water Quality Themes

Add a Principle (or two) that conveys the water quality, land use / urban development, watershed, hydromodification, fishable / swimmable / kayakable, naturally functioning river system, and "need for education" themes. These themes (as described above) are the basic foundation of everything else we hope to accomplish in the River Park.

Acknowledged, integrated with principle one.

12. Relocate / Improve Sanitary Sewer System

As recommended on page 115 of the Master Plan, relocate sanitary sewers out of the riverbed; make sewers more accessible for maintenance and repair; and provide effective means for the physical containment of sewage spills. Until these changes are made, continuing sewage spills to the River are inevitable.

Acknowledged, integrated in master plan.

13. Comply with Department of Fish and Game Recommended Buffer Zones

To protect wildlife habitat and species, comply with all Department of Fish and Game recommended

Acknowledged, integrated in master plan.

14. Provide Public Access / Use Spur Trails / Provide Water Access / Regulate Public Access

It is very important to provide easy and frequent public access to the San Diego River Park. The River is a public resource and every opportunity for public access should be considered, including access along private property and golf courses. Frequent use of spur trails, viewing platforms, and boardwalks for scenic and wildlife viewing will reduce off-trail traffic. Pedestrian bridges across the River should be used to a lesser extent. Frequent direct access to the water for recreation (e.g., fishing, swimming, boating) should also be provided. As appropriate, regulate public access by spatial and temporal zoning restrictions, i.e., restrict access to specific sensitive habitat areas and/or during specific sensitive times of year (such as nesting season of endangered species).

Acknowledged, language reinforced in several locations throughout document.

15. Use Solar Lighting

To the maximum extent practicable, use solar lighting throughout the Park. For the protection of wildlife, the majority of the park (habitat areas) should not be lit at night. For the safety of people, selected urbanized areas of the park should be lit (restrooms, parking lots) using devices that reduce light from spilling into adjacent habitat areas.

Acknowledged, language reinforced on pp. 101 and 103.

F. Written Comments Received

General Comments:

Define "multi-use".

Defined on pp. 54 and 100.

May want to provide a north arrow or insert a label that indicate the north side and south side of the river (i.e. cross section on page 85).

Orientation note added.

Coordinate trail connections with the City of Santee that would connect to the County Riverway Trail planned in Lakeside (USDRIP Area). There could be a multi-jurisdictional River Trail that would run from the Ocean to El Capitan and the various trail linkages/segments are as follows:

- The City of SD indicates that their trails will connect to Mission Trails Regional Park.
- The City of Santee proposes trails along the San Diego River as part of the Edgemoor site, a development project to the west of Lakeside.
- The County is working on a 2.5 mile regional trail alignment in Lakeside called the "Riverway Trail".
- The Riverway Trail is located in the Upper San Diego River Improvement Project (USDRIP) area of Lakeside.
- This trail alignment would begin at the Sanitation District site in Lakeside, at the eastern border of City of Santee, and would run along the north side of the San Diego River to Hwy 67 and possibly connect to El Capitan in the future.

Acknowledged, language added regarding trail connections, p. 91.

Coordinate bicycle trail connections with the County's Bicycle (hard surface) Transportation Plan.

Acknowledged, language, p. 55.

G. Comments Received at the City of San Diego Planning Commission Meeting of August 19, 2004

Commissioners Present

Tony Letteri
Carolyn Chase
Dennis Otsuji
Gil Ontai
Barry Schultz

Commissioners recused

Mark Steele
Kathleen Garcia

- impressed, overwhelmed, supports everything
- facilitate education of history/school district involvement/dialogue with the district
- is it too late for the valley?

Acknowledged, language reinforced.

- Balboa Park and river connection is important
- education!/educational laboratory
- educate on sustainability/recycling water and other materials
- SD River preserve/park? not just a park/public perception

Acknowledged. Additional language reinforced regarding education and sustainability in several locations, including p. 103 and 110.

- impressed with the document as a whole
- weak existing conditions/zoning/property ownership/easements/private/public

Existing conditions section reinforced, adding land use, ownership, and floodplain mapping.

- provide page numbers on table of contents

Page numbers added.

- lagging behind on some existing plans/Linda Vista proposal on page 49

Acknowledged. Linda Vista sketch shown as a model of what can be achieved and is not to represent a specific proposal.

- refer to existing major pollution/Qualcomm stadium plume

Plume mapping has been added, p. 121.

- provide crime statistics

Language added, p. 116. Statistics are currently not available.

- connectivity with trails and bringing people in/build citywide connections

Acknowledged. Language reinforced in several locations in master plan.

- list all of the Friends Groups

Acknowledged. Confirmation of groups pending.

- infrastructure deficit/flood control system in Mission Valley/Levi-Cushman/several hundred million dollars/capital improvements/concrete channel

Acknowledged.

- community plan amendments

Acknowledged, integrated in master plan.

- a proposal just in front of the PC is proposal on our green space
- wonderful document/good start

Acknowledged.

- quality document/great
- principle 1/synergy/put people third/using “people” as justification for projects/we’ve made mistakes in the past

Acknowledged. Principle is revised, and reordered as principle seven.

- Page 66 & 67-Qualcomm/as a regional park/1st river valley and floodplain/recreation

- integration of MV Community Plan update/look at all 3/community plan/zoning/landuse

Acknowledged, integrated in master plan.

- integration has to occur at the CP level, otherwise would not be looked at equally
- need to look at open space park needs city wide/Qualcomm

Acknowledged. Planning study included assessment of inventory, p. 127.

- Qualcomm a regional park

Acknowledged, integrated in master plan.

- economic analysis/don't look just at dollars, but look at benefit to the people

Language reinforced.

H. Written Comments Received

- 1) Page 80, Recommendations: revise sentence to read "Establish an open space corridor through the Superior Mine redevelopment area. The appropriate design and width of the corridor should be determined by a site-specific land plan which considers habitat, hydraulic, recreational, access, and development opportunities."

Revised language incorporated.

Additional language revised on p. 80 for consistency.

Upper Valley - Recommendations, p. 80

Revised language incorporated in first bullet point.

Upper Valley - Recommendations, p. 80

Revised language incorporated in second bullet point:

Upper Valley - Recommendations, p. 80

Additional language added as bullet point.

Upper Valley - Recommendations, p. 80

Revised language incorporated in second paragraph.

Upper Valley - Admiral Baker Golf Course - Key Points, p. 80

Revised language added to fourth bullet point:

- 2) Page 81, Superior Mine Redevelopment/Key Points: revise sentence to read "Minimum 500' Open Space Corridor is recommended in addition to trail corridor/buffer" to "An Open Space Corridor, to incorporate within it a trail corridor/buffer, is recommended."

Upper Valley - Superior Mine Redevelopment, p. 81

Revised language incorporated in first paragraph, first and second sentences.

Additional language revised on p. 81 for consistency.

Upper Valley – Superior Mine Redevelopment - Key Points, p. 81

Third bullet point, as it is redundant to Upper Valley Recommendations.

Upper Valley – Superior Mine Redevelopment - Key Points, p. 81

Revised language incorporated in third bullet point:

- 3) Page 81, graphic rendering: remove the green shaded area from the western end of the Superior property and remove the words “Potential Improved Open Space”.

Graphic Rendering, p. 81

Remove reference to specific location for ‘Potential Improved Open Space’. Remove green area shown as potential open space and add green around existing smaller ponds. Add caption to graphic stating “River Park Concept at Superior Mine Redevelopment”.

- 4) Page 81, Key points: revise sentence to read “Acquisition of a site for development as a naturalized park with access to the river from Mission Gorge Road should be considered during the site-specific land use planning.”

Upper Valley - Superior Mine Redevelopment, p. 81

Additional language incorporated as second paragraph.

- 5) Page 81, Key Points: Add “The 100’ buffer indicated in the Land Development Code’s biological guidelines should be of such variable width as to protect the habitat and provide adequate areas for redevelopment.”

Upper Valley - Key Points, p. 81

Additional language incorporated as fourth bullet point:

- 6) Page 83, Keynote U3S: revise sentence to read: “Initiate dialogue with Superior Mine land owners and planners to explore potential to acquire land or establish open space easements to create, if feasible, an open space and/or park somewhere within the undeveloped land in addition to a habitat corridor. Explore the opportunity to broaden the river channel with potential to create meander, and a continuous multi-use trail.”

Revised language incorporated in Recommendations matrices:

Additional modifications elsewhere in the document to consistently reflect the intent of these comments are incorporated throughout the document.

General Recommendations: Hydrology and Water Quality, 43

Remove/circumvent obstacles that impede flow

Incorporate revised language in third sentence, first paragraph.

Incorporate additional language, second sentence, second paragraph.

General Recommendations: Hydrology and Water Quality, 44

Encourage the growth of appropriate native riparian and upland vegetation (add text to title)

Incorporate revised language in first sentence.

General Recommendations: Habitat and Wildlife, p. 46

Intent

Additional language incorporated in second paragraph:

General Recommendations: Habitat and Wildlife, p. 47

Recommendations

Revise language in first bullet point:

Establish Desirable and Appropriate Corridor Width Objectives. (revise text)

Revised language incorporated in second paragraph.

Additional language incorporated in paragraph at bottom of page 47 (italics).

Lower Valley – Recommendations, p. 64

Revised language incorporated in third bullet point:

Lower Valley – Riverwalk Golf Club Redevelopment Site - Key Points, p.65

Revised language incorporated in fifth bullet point:

Lower Valley – Qualcomm Stadium – Key Points, p. 66

Revised language incorporated in seventh bullet point:

Revised Plan Graphic - Recommendations, p. 72 and subsequent pages

Revise hatching labeled “corridor” on plan drawing to align with the 100 year floodway.

Change title in legend to 100 year floodway.

Confluence – Recommendations, P. 78

Revised language incorporated in fourth bullet point:

Design Guidelines

Corridors/Buffers, p. 95

Clarify in all locations: Habitat and Open Space Corridor (add text).

Revised language incorporated in last sentence, first paragraph and additional paragraph:

Revised language incorporated in third paragraph:

Habitat and Open Space Corridor, San Diego River, desirable total widths
Revised language incorporated.

Habitat and Open Space Corridor, Canyon Tributaries
Revised language incorporated.

Corridor Diagram, p. 95
Revised language incorporated in dimension title.

Cross Sections, p. 96
Revised language incorporated in dimension title.

Habitat and Wildlife Inventory, Wildlife section, p. 116
Additional language added in paragraph (same as p. 47 above):

I. Written Comments Received

E1S (p.53) - Proposal for feasibility study to remove jetty entirely at weir: hate to see energy and scarce \$\$\$ on study of undertaking so remotely likely, esp. when so many other excellent proposals in the draft MP will need to be accomplished and paid for. For example, feasibility of reconnecting Famosa Slough to the river channel and trail system.
Acknowledged.

E9S (p. 53) - Applaud the intent to improve a trail and open space connection between the San Diego River corridor with Tecolote Canyon. However, I am amazed at the suggestion, in the Implementation strategy, of such specific and intensive redevelopment proposals within the Mission Bay Park Master Plan sphere regarding a new bridge to Fiesta Island and removal of the causeway [not a Dike, which has negative overtones in this context]. I have two primary reasons for my objection to the Implementation suggestions:

1. A bridge replacing the causeway will not improve water quality - repeatedly studied and demonstrated that the “dead spot” would only move farther north, to in front of the Hilton hotel. [same answer for E6L, below]
 2. More importantly, a bridge to Fiesta Island located north of the mouth of Tecolote Creek would take away existing, well utilized open space parkland, and would require moving a very large much utilized children’s playground designed for Accessibility.
- Acknowledged, language amended.

SUGGESTED NEW VERBIAGE to replace specific comments re causeway & new bridge : “Collaborate with appropriate community and special interest groups to identify and develop trail connections from the San Diego River to Tecolote Creek and Canyon within Mission Bay Park.”
Acknowledged, language amended.

Regarding E9S reference to North/South pedestrian links via I-5 and railway bridge – the railway bridge seems problematic from a safety and security standpoint, and there are already sidewalks on the SW Dr. bridge over I-5 [Morena Blvd. at Tecolote, to SW Drive] even though sterile concrete - perhaps some giant planter boxes and textured surfaces?? Why has the Pacific Highway corridor & bridge connecting Rosecrans/Taylor St. to Sea World Drive not been included for study - this seems a far more feasible, less heavily traveled existing link directly into Mission Bay Park and East Mission Bay Drive, including a flat bridge with sidewalks across the San Diego River north of the I-5 overpasses. A 2-lane vehicular bridge over I-5 exists already and needs only to be upgraded / widened to provide pedestrian and bicycle access. Improvements linking Old Town via the San Diego River Park to Mission Bay Park would interface well with the MBP MP designation of the 2 parcels between SW Dr. & I-5 [SunRunner & “Ramada Inn” parcels] as parking lots for access to the Bay.

Acknowledged.

E13S (p.55) - Under Implementation - “Initiate dialog with Transportation Dept. to create shuttle links from the trolley at Old Town/Linda Vista and Ocean Beach/Sea World/ Mission Beach.”

Suggested new verbiage:

“ Participate in dialog with Transportation Dept. On creation of shuttle links....” Planning has been underway for several years by MTDB for rubber-tire shuttle through Sports Arena area from Old Town to bay and beaches. I agree that, at minimum, seasonal shuttles should also connect Old Town with Mission Bay Park and the north side of the San Diego River, perhaps connecting at Sea World with the Sports Arena route.

Acknowledged, integrated in master plan.

E17S (p.55) - Too low in the list and seems an afterthought subsequent to recommendations in E9S!!! Yes, definitely need to coordinate more closely and more formally than has occurred so far.

Acknowledged.

E3L (p.57), however, is phrased well to allow exploration of ideas without the recommendation(s) making too specific on how to accomplish the goal, even though I personally think the possibilities are limited severely by landfill boundaries at the eastern end of the estuary.

Acknowledged.

E6L & E8L [duplicative] (p.57) - consideration of modifications to create wetlands connecting Mission Bay and Tecolote Creek concerns me because planning on the Tecolote wetlands is well in process and I would hate to see it delayed by going off in a new direction that includes investigation of an estuarine link which would require intrusion into an existing landfill. Like the Weir Removal proposal, I feel these proposals are far too remote and costly, if even feasible - unlikely - and likely to generate polarization that may work against general support of the River Park planning efforts in the Estuary. The River Park Draft Master Plan recommendations are too specific and come across as re-planning of the Mission Bay Park Master Plan.

Acknowledged, language amended.

The second sentence of E6L - that a study should include evaluation of replacing the causeway with a bridge - should be removed altogether. There are at least 3-4 studies already on record that have determined a bridge replacing the Fiesta Island Causeway would not create measurable improvement in water quality at that location but would actually move a problem water area directly in front of a hotel lessee parcel. Why do we want to spend more time and money on something already demonstrated to be a hydrological non-solution for water quality purposes? There is already a thoroughly-thought through and adopted [though unfunded] Mission Bay Park Master Plan with specific plans for the southeast corner of Mission Bay – changing those plans would require a major overhaul of the Mission Bay Park Master Plan IF it were possible to obtain permits & funding for removal of the landfill so a wetland could be constructed. All of the elements of the MBPMP were considered as parts of a whole and major changes in one area will have impacts in other areas or aspects of park use.

Acknowledged, language amended.

E1L / E7L (p.57) - I applaud and support the proposal that interested groups work with Sea World to develop an interface with the San Diego River estuary, and with Mission Bay Park to explore a site for a River and Estuary Interpretive Center which can support the MBPMP interpretive program and complement the Interpretive Center which will eventually be located at the Northern Wildlife Preserve in NE Mission Bay Park.

Acknowledged.

F Comments received from the Foundation website:

Similar to Santee Lakes and Mast Park, a lush green place to walk, sit in the shade, play with the kids, watch birds, have picnics.

Acknowledged.

I have not read the plan yet, so these issues may be addressed in it. My concern is the section of the river that has sidewalks (around Mission Center Road). The vegetation in these areas is so dense and high that I don't feel safe walking there as I used to when the sidewalks were first installed. In addition, when I am walking there, I can't see the river. I miss having this access to the river. I don't know if it is practical to keep the vegetation maintained in a less overgrown fashion, but it seems that it would increase useage if it was. Also, I notice arundo (sp?) growing there, and that concerns me. Also, I wonder if there are plans to put an overpass for pedestrians on some of the busy streets. I know this is extremely expensive, but if you have a wish list, this would be a great addition and improve the ability to walk and enjoy the river. It is dangerous crossing on Qualcomm Way. I wish you success as you work to "improve" the river and access to it. I think your idea of a park on the acreage near the Stadium is fantastic and could be as valuable someday as Balboa Park or Mission by is today. I would hate to see the entire stretch of river "ruined" by condo and other development as it has been along the Mission Center Road area. Good luck!

Acknowledged.

A natural setting(less downtown indianapolis canal look). Less concrete. However utilize current technology and common sense too revert into a natural setting. Then, adapt for people(ecology first, people second). Common sense items for debate and consideration are:

1) As many US cities build blighted areas into river walks canal walks etc etc. San diego has a different more positive problem. The area is a natural waterway established thousands of years ago and still serves as waterway. Combine new techologies with ecology safeguards this SD river could be benefecial to children, schools, human walkways, home to wildlife, etc.. lots of positives within a city environment.

PS: chargers and city must be watched. stadium is crink in armor here. Donna Frye has my vote to raze stadium and build a greenbelt park. no concrete.

Acknowledged.

The concept of using the San Diego River as the center of an open space is great. I believe the recreational and tourist lure would off-set the cost. I've never had an interest in going to San Antonio Texas but the "River Walk" has peaked my interest and plan to visit it. I was born in Evansville Indiana. Why's that important? Well, even Evansville has established a "river walk" along the Ohio River. They have developed a "gaslamp" area adjacent to the river but the flavor of the river has been maintained. People are drawn from all over to visit this area for the recreational aspects on a 7/24 basis. During the day people use the river for water sports and the same people can use the adjacent development at night. We might even be able to re-establish a fishery that is sorely lacking in southern California. How hard would it be to develop a steelhead type run.

Acknowledged.

Please consider as much open access to the river as possible on a multiple use basis. The river has been a hidden jewel of the county for the county's fishermen and women. I trust their views and access possibilities will be taken into account in the decision -making process. We cherish and respect the limited access we currently have now , and would like to see any expansion of that access in the Masterplan

Acknowledged.

San Diego River Park is a vital link between the major natural forces of the county-- the mountains and the ocean. I am interested in your mission and have signed up today to become a member. Involving the community, especially youngsters in junior high, high school and colleges would make an amazing difference in generating awareness of this plan for the river. San Diego needs a "second" Balboa Park. If the current Quaalcom asphalt desert can be reclaimed, why not use this hub as a way to refresh the community?

Acknowledged.

I am glad to see some progress on this project. I was very interested when the First San Diego River Improvement Project (FSDRIP) went in. The positives and negatives of that project were informative, particularly the fish kill associated with the oxygen depletion form deepening the chanel. Your master plan looks good.

Acknowledged.

Please be sure to keep fishers in mind during the plan. The river is one of the few places left for people to fish for free and this should be a key point in any river plan.
Acknowledged.

End of Comments