

# Folsom City Council Staff Report

<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	1/24/2023
<b>AGENDA SECTION:</b>	New Business
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Introduction and Direction to Staff Regarding the River District Master Plan Planning and Community Engagement Process
<b>FROM:</b>	Community Development Department

## **RECOMMENDATION / CITY COUNCIL ACTION**

Staff recommends the City Council provide input and direction to Community Development Department staff regarding the River District Master Plan planning and community engagement process. Staff is specifically seeking direction on the following questions:

1. Does the City Council desire to include an advisory or ad hoc committee in the River District Master Plan process?
2. If so, what make-up of community stakeholder organizations is desired?
3. If so, does the City Council desire councilmember (up to two) participation on the committee?

## **BACKGROUND / ISSUE**

The Folsom General Plan 2035 contains a specific goal and corresponding objectives providing for the preparation of a River District Master Plan:

*Goal LU 5.1 - Support the appropriate enhancement of Folsom's riverfront areas for current and future residents in order to increase public access, recreational opportunities, and economic development in consultation with federal, state, and regional public land management agencies.*

In support of this goal, on April 12, 2022 the City Council approved the use of American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funds in the amount of \$362,500 for project management services (\$62,500) and retention of a planning/environmental consultant (\$300,000).

The General Plan suggests that a specific long-range plan be established by “Engaging the community, stakeholders, and federal, state and regional land management agencies in establishing a vision for Folsom’s River District.” Conceptual district boundaries are illustrated on Attachment 1. The General Plan preparation process revealed that there was substantial community interest in improving access to Lake Natoma (American River), elevating its place in the community related to tourism, recreation, business and commerce, as well as protecting and celebrating historically and culturally important sites, and significant habitat and environmental resource areas.

## **POLICY / RULE**

Folsom General Plan 2035, Goal LU 5.1/Objective LU 5.1.2 – Consider the preparation of a River District Master Plan for Folsom’s riverfront area, that is based on widespread community engagement as well as coordination with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, California Department of Parks and Recreation, and Sacramento County Regional Parks Department.

Folsom Charter, section 2.04.G – Duties of the Mayor, indicates the mayor may “Establish and dissolve ad hoc committees, subject to the approval of the Council, but no such committee shall exist for more than one year.”

Folsom Municipal Code, section 2.35.040 – One Seat Limitation, states that “No person may hold more than one appointed commission, board, council or committee seat at a time. This one-seat limitation shall not apply to: (1) commission, board, council or committee members who are appointed to other commissions, boards, councils or committees as a result of, or by virtue of, their status as a member of a particular commission, committee, board or council; or (2) membership on ad hoc committees.

## **ANALYSIS**

Not only does the General Plan include specific goals and objectives associated with development of a River District Master Plan, but the entire General Plan itself contains numerous associated supporting statements. The Guiding Principles emphasize numerous opportunities that may be considered during the River District Master Plan process:

- The need for city gateway enhancements...
- Continue to be a premier recreation destination...
- Commit to high-quality design...
- Integrate the old and new areas of the city...
- Enhance Folsom’s heritage...

Master plans can take many forms from relatively broad such as the city-wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan, to relatively detailed such as a site-specific, individual park development master plan. Due to the variety of land uses within the conceptual River District boundaries, the distinct different land ownership interests between federal, state, city, and private entities, and the yet-to-be-heard community preferences, the form of the River District Master Plan has not been determined yet. In all likelihood, it will be a blend of both broad and

detailed ideas, depending on the location, opportunities, constraints, and community input. It is the goal of the master planning process to conclude with a River District vision that will stimulate and guide future land development decisions, create an inspiring vision of recreation opportunities and increased access, use, and appreciation of the river and lake.

It should be noted that the master plan will not in itself rezone any land or property. However, it will likely make recommendations for innovative opportunities within existing zoning, or even make recommendations for future consideration of land use changes. It should also be noted that the city's planning effort will specifically include consideration of the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area General Plan (FLSRA), the CA State Department of Parks and Recreation's guiding land use, development, and program document. The planning effort will indeed include close examination of land use and recreation opportunities that are consistent with the FLSRA plan and prioritize those for future consideration.

Of key importance to the River District Master Plan process and highlighted in the General Plan is "robust community and stakeholder engagement." While the community engagement plan has not been designed at this time, it is envisioned to be multi-faceted. Engagement will be both broad and focused. Tools with a broad reach such as the city's website/web page, and the monthly newsletter will be used. The retained planning consultant will also be tasked with bringing recommendations for additional engagement, whether in traditional formats such as public workshops, or digital engagement through online surveys, etc.

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) highly recommends the use of advisory committees or ad hoc committees for complex community planning issues. The City Council has recently used this strategy to help inform, guide and make recommendations on challenging subjects like Historic District parking and the disposition of surplus city properties.

There is likely more interest within the community than the recommended capacity or participation in an advisory committee. Industry best practice for the membership size of an ad hoc committee for this purpose is from eight to 14 members. Below is a list of stakeholder organizations (not inclusive) who may have in interest in River District advisory committee representation:

- Adjacent resident associations (i.e., Natoma Station and American River Canyon)
- Folsom Historic District Association (FHDA)
- Historic Folsom Merchants Association (HFMA)
- Historic Folsom Residents Association (HRFA)
- River District Organizing Committee
- Chamber of Commerce/Visit Folsom
- Folsom Auto Mall Dealers Association
- CA State Department of Parks and Recreation Department/US Bureau of Reclamation
- Local paddling advocates (i.e., Lake Natoma Paddlers, Folsom Kayakers & SUP)
- Friends of Lakes Folsom and Natoma (FOLFAN)
- Folsom Auburn Trail Riders Action Coalition (FATRAC)
- CSUS Aquatic Center

- Local equestrian advocates (i.e., Shadow Glen Riding Stables)
- Heritage Preservation League
- Friends of Folsom Parkways
- At-large residents or business owners

Staff requests direction on the following questions:

4. Does the City Council desire to include an advisory or ad hoc committee in the River District Master Plan process?
5. If so, what make-up of community stakeholder organizations is desired?
6. If so, does the City Council desire councilmember (up to two) participation on the committee?

The general project process is outlined below, indicating approximately a two-year schedule.

River District Master Plan Primary Tasks	2023				2024			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Vision, Boundary, and Land Use Concept								
Community outreach	X	X	X	X				
Solicit planning/environmental consultant	X							
Vetting draft vision, boundary, land use concept		X						
City Council review and direction		X	X					
River District Master Plan, Studies, and CEQA Analysis								
Preliminary Draft River District Master Plan			X	X				
Environmental studies and CEQA review				X	X			
Community and stakeholder workshops					X	X		
Revised Draft River District Master Plan						X	X	
Commission review and recommendation							X	X
City Council review and adoption								X

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The recommended action of the City Council is not a project as defined by the CEQA and therefore does not require environmental review at this time. As part of the master planning process, the draft River District Master Plan will be evaluated for potential programmatic impacts prior to the City Council considering adoption. Any future site-specific proposals will be analyzed on a project-by-project basis for environmental clearance consistent with the CEQA.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no additional fiscal impact as a result of the proposed action. Funds for both project management and future retained consultants have already been budgeted and appropriated in the amount of \$362,500. The source of the funds is from federal allocations from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

**ATTACHMENTS**

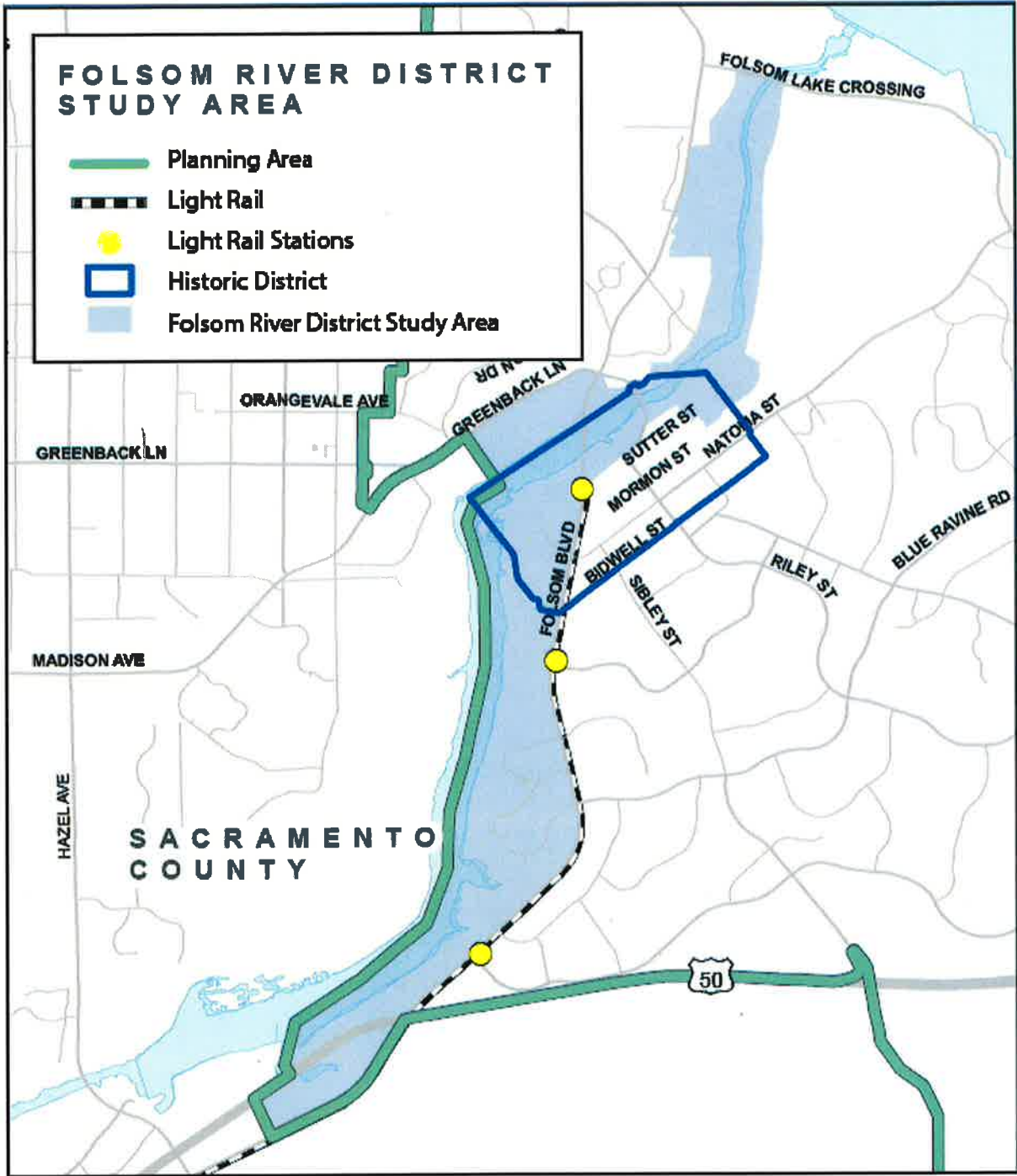
1. Folsom General Plan 2035 – River District Study Area Map

Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pam Johns", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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PAM JOHNS  
Community Development Director



Source: Folsom General Plan 2035 - River District Study Area Map, page 2-23