

LAI Sacramento Waterfront Charrette

May 7, 2020

Overview

The Sacramento Waterfront Charrette was held on the afternoon of May 7, 2022, at the Sacramento Convention Center. 18 people participated. The Charrette was held as part of LAI's Land Economics Weekend hosted by the Sacramento Chapter.

LAI is an internationally renowned land economics society with a multi-disciplinary composition of members.

The City of Sacramento (City) saw an opportunity to participate in Lambda Alpha International (LAI) Land Economics Weekend through the LAI Special Charrette. The City requested that this charrette focus on the waterfront along the Sacramento River. The waterfront is a significant asset that the City has not been able to fully capitalize on. The City has set the vision of revitalizing the waterfront and creating a regional destination. But the City has been unsuccessful in getting many of the riverfront projects to the construction/implementation phase. The Charrette provided an way to leverage the LAI members collective expertise to help the City move past the visioning stage and create one of the great waterfronts of the world.

A few weeks before the Charrette the participants received a detailed briefing paper prepared by Ellen Sullivan from the City Manager's Office of Innovation and Economic Development.

Specifically, the charrette questions are:

- How might we best go about financing and implementing our highest waterfront priority, the Destination Sacramento Program, by prioritizing all or portions of the following projects and strategizing their funding and funding sources -Front Street Experience, Event Deck, and River Docks?
- What private and public projects discussed in the other waterfront districts would best help to stimulate waterfront development, and should represent high priority for support by the City? Can we envision a strategic linkage between them?
- What are the most important connections to be enhanced or developed between the waterfront districts and the adjacent areas to enable the physical aspects of this linkage. Is there a logical priority?

Summary of the Charrette



Assistant City Manager Michael Jasso provided an overview. The initial session was led by Tim Youmans, followed by two breakout sessions.

The major themes produced by the participants are:

Safety – The waterfront needs to be a clean and safe environment. Significant improvements in safety need to be put in place so that regional residents and visitors to the region feel that they are in a safe and clean environment. This includes policing, guides, comprehensively addressing homelessness, and on-going cleaning of all areas along the waterfront.

Pedestrian Bridge(s) – Sacramento and West Sacramento should work together to construct a pedestrian/bicycle bridge across the Sacramento River that is of international quality and design. The bridge would become a symbol for the Sacramento Region. This iconic bridge would be located between the Tower Bridge and the Pioneer Bridge. A pedestrian bridge was proposed in the 2004 Waterfront Master Plan.

Walking / Bicycle Circular Loop - While there are presently walking and biking trails along both sides of the waterfront, the route is not identified or marketed as a major circular tour. The first action should be marketing the present route as a comprehensive tour. Maps should be created and signage placed along the route identifying the route and the key amenities along the route. This should be followed up with continually improving the quality of specific sections of the route. The completion of the pedestrian / bikeways planned for the existing I Street Bridge and the new I Street Replacement Bridge should be a major improvement to the Loop.

Housing – More housing needs to be built nearby the Waterfront to increase the number of people that will use the waterfront attractions at all times of the day. More people means more revenue available to make improvements to the attractions along the Waterfront. The City should increase emphasis on the 'Live' part of 'Live, Work, and Play' goals for a thriving central city. The City should engage relevant stakeholders in identifying and removing significant barriers to living and owning homes in the central part of the city.

While there are substantial plans for increased housing in the Railyards, Richard Boulevard and West Sacramento's Bridge District, the cities should work with developers to try to build the proposed housing as quickly as possible. Also, the cities should identify additional sites along the river for increased housing. On the Sacramento side, redevelopment sites include the Railyard adjacent to the river once the Jibboom Street Ramp is demolished and the area currently with low density motels along Jibboom Street.

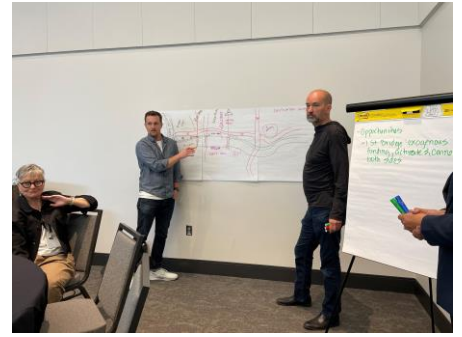
Construction Defect Litigation – To encourage ownership housing the State must relax the 10- year tail liability for condominiums. This litigation problem is significantly hindering if not an absolute bar to enabling owner occupied housing in the waterfront area. The development of high-density ownership

housing (condominiums) is an essential investment to the many faceted approach recognized as necessary for comprehensive improvement. While this is a state-wide problem, the lack of home ownership in downtown housing limits the range of people who could live downtown. The City should work with the State leaders to development methods to correct the present problems in Construction Defect Litigation.

Joint Power Agency (JPA) assisting Waterfront Use and Development – The Cities of Sacramento and West Sacramento along with local, State, and Federal agencies having interests in the Waterfront must consider forming a Joint Power Agencies to facilitate resolving jurisdictional issues associated with the use of the waterfront and development along the waterfront. A JPA was considered in the past but was not formed.

The JPA should have decision implementation authority and should only be formed if its purpose is to eliminate roadblocks and jurisdictional issues. It should not be formed if it creates an additional layer of government without eliminating problems with jurisdictional overlap. In the absence of a JPA so constructed, the continuation of piece-meal redevelopment initiatives is inevitable with successes and failures that detract from the enormous potential of the river frontage.

It should be led by a well-respected, non-political, former civic leader. Members would be jointly appointed for a term certain. There would be an agreed framework for authority and project approval. It should focus on implementation of strategies and projects, not a new Master Plan.



Charrette Participants

Front Row: Tim Youmans (Sacramento), Marilyn Palmer (Vancouver), Jim Musbach (Oakland), Jon DeVries (Chicago), Bernadette Austin (Sacramento), Michael Jasso (Sacramento)

Middle Ladies: Laurie Marston (Chicago), Jocelyn Frederick (Dodgeville, WI)

Back Row: Enric Massip-Bosch (Barcelona), Brain Crilly (Sacramento), Jason Silva (Sacramento), Phil Boname (Vancouver), Scott Phillips (Phoenix), Richard Cook (Vancouver), Michael Klein (Phoenix), Ian Lord (Toronto), Kirk Mettam, Allen Folks (Sacramento)

